

# Young England's tunes of glory

## Shooting



Vivian Jenkins

FARN BAINBRIDGE, the President of the Rugby Football Union, looked like a man who had suddenly discovered the elixir of life after this. He had just seen the England school-boys, 19-group, at hospitable

and England's future, surely, cannot be entirely bleak with young men like this waiting to break into the top class game.

Almost most of all, though, I liked the look of a stocky little scrum-half, Ian Peck, of Bedford School. His timing of the pass, and the way he moved the ball straight off the ground to his fly-half without any delay of lift-back, were the first things to impress, but in general play, too, he met almost every requirement. One gathers that he has already played for Bedford at senior level, and was reserve scrum half for the East Midlands against the Barbarians. Small wonder, because if ever I saw a top scrum half of the future, this should surely be one.

Park quickly proved that, in spite of the practice games we had had against BMS, we were very short of tournament experience and a number of careless mistakes resulted in a heavy defeat. In the second game against Brighton College things began to fall into place and the Seven ran out easy winners. In the last game of the first day the Seven really 'clicked' and, playing some delightful 'sevens', easily defeated Ashridge who in the previous round had beaten Prior Park. This meant that in order to win our section we had to defeat Stowe on the second morning by fourteen more points than Prior Park defeated Brighton College in their final game. In spite of beating Stowe by 26-4 the School Seven found they had not done quite enough because Prior Park beat Brighton by nearly as much and so qualified for the knock-out section. They went on to win the Tournament. It was a great pity that we met them so early in the Tournament but nevertheless it was a most enjoyable return to Rosslyn Park Tournament.

Those who played in the 'Seven' were: Peck (Capt), Holbrook, Lloyd-Williams, Boyd-Moss, Murray, Tribe and Carr. The reserves were King and Spencer.

### England Schools

After the England 19 Group final trial, this year's Captain, Ian Peck, was selected for the England squad. He was named as a reserve against Japan but after a very good game for Midlands East against the Japanese Schoolboy side it was no surprise when he was picked for the England side to play Scotland. Roger Holbrook, who scored two good tries for Midlands East against the Japanese was also brought into the squad as a reserve winger. Peck had an outstanding game against Scotland and his scrumhalf performance gained some favourable press comments. Holbrook also gained an England cap in the Scottish match when he came on as a replacement at halftime. The game ended with a 'Bedford' try when after a strong run from the halfway line Holbrook put Peck in for a try. Peck then also played for the England side against Wales and France, scoring another try in the latter game.

David Murray was a third Bedford member of the Midlands East side that played against the Japanese.

A.M.T.

Despite a gloomy forecast, we have had a marvellously successful '22 season. Indeed, I find it difficult to believe our results. In December, the Club was faced with the loss or withdrawal of two Colours and one team squad man. This term we had to face up to the non-availability of two more Colours and two first-choice men. And yet we managed to achieve a higher overall standard than ever before, and, when we did have all our squad to call on for the Home matches, we twice in succession broke our Country Life record, the second time dropping only 11 points out of 960 on group, rapid and snap.

Rather than give a dull chronological survey of our wins, I would like to isolate a few aspects of the term's shooting, and refer the results seeker to the end of this article.

In the nine Senior matches, we had to call upon sixteen boys to represent the School - not because of fluctuating selection policy a la Rugby Union, but because the oarsmen were not available for Away fixtures. Indeed, we owe a special vote of thanks to the Master in charge of Boats for keeping our team afloat on two particular occasions and for being most patient and helpful throughout. In these nine matches, 83 groups were fired of which 80 were ½ inch or better (room for improvement here. . .) and this steadiness especially highlights the tremendous quality not only of technique but also of sheer character which is the great strength of our club. Even experienced shots feel the tension when the moment comes to fire a group in competition, however many ½ inch groups he may have shot in his life. In the Chapman Cup too, - the graveyard of reputations - only 1 group out of 128 was dropped. Snap shooting became a kind of joke by the end of term, the full VIII scoring 473/480 in the last two matches, and the Club notching up 1174/1200 in the last five. But then snap shooting under Country Life conditions is simply an exercise in fast grouping. . . Rapids were where we lost points, since here above all experience is essential. To illustrate this I quote scores once again: the full VIII dropped 21 points out of 640 whereas in the three preceding matches we dropped 70 points out of 960.

But success was not limited to the Club. The CCF also had a bumper year. For the Assegai Trophy (RAF) and the Ozanne Shield (all three services), the CCF cannot draw freely on Club teams since most members leave the CCF when they have completed their two years service. And yet the RAF team only dropped 10 points with Roger Butters, scoring his first 100, ahead of Hugh Lloyd-Williams (99) - neither of these team members - and a gaggle of 98s and one 97. The more fancied Ozanne team, though, dropped 13 points, but 10 points better than last year when we came a bad second to BMS. We will not know how we have done in these matches until all the cards have been scored centrally, and, when you can't see the whites of the opponents' eyes, there's no knowing what may happen. It has always been a matter of principle for us not to shoot unsupervised postal fixtures, but CCF competitions are always shot without external supervision. I hope that, now that the National Country Life competition is to be shot under independent supervision, CCF competitions will come into line. The disparity in standard we have encountered in the past between postal and shoulder-to-shoulder scores is almost unbelievable sometimes.

1976 will long remain an outstanding .22 year, but it should be clearly associated with Robin Hatcher who has performed outstandingly as a shot (winning the Croker Cup two years running) and who, for two years, has captained the School with sensitivity and ambition. He, though, I am sure would be the first to acknowledge the support and loyalty of the other members of the Club. It is a sadness and, in its way, an injustice that he will not have a full VIII for the Ashburton in July in the year when Bedford School stands better placed than ever before to win the Shield for the first time, for 1976 brought us not only talent but also, from a tight-fisted Ministry of Defence, a full complement of new .303s, and, thanks to the generosity of the School, we will at long last be properly equipped for full-bore shooting. It looks as if we shall have three or four range dates for practice next term. Give us bad weather, and we will sweep all before us.

*Results:*

v Kimbolton	594-550
v Cambridge University	1490-1489
v The Leys	1090-1020
v Haileybury	726-669
v Oundle	731-657
v Wellingborough	729-622
v Bedfordshire CRPA	1487-1453
v Old Bedfordians 1st	749-744
2nd	721-677

*Team:* R. M. Hatcher (Captain), A. J. Amberg, H. Collins i, D. F. Fraser, Gulson, A. J. Hamilton, Hopkins, Kendall, S. P. Manley, P. I. Mounfield, P. J. H. Neate, N. C. Smith, Kirkillo-Stacewiz, Stearns, P. T. Williams, J. D. Farmer-Wright.

*Croker Cup* – Top Match Aggregate: 1. R. M. Hatcher 1083/1125; 2. P. J. H. Neate 1075; 3. A. J. Hamilton 1073.

*Chapman Cup* – Individual Trophy: 1. P. J. H. Neate 243/250; 2. R. M. Hatcher 239; 3. S. P. Manley 235.

*Club Colours* – A. J. Amberg and P. T. Williams.

*Honours* – P. J. H. Neate has been selected to tour Canada this year with the UK Under-19 team, the Athelings.

T.J.E.

## Fives

### Schools' Championships

Mark Lloyd Williams' success in winning the Schools' Singles Championship at Whitgift should not be accepted as a formality just because Bedford School has provided the champion so frequently since 1960. Runner-up in 1975, Mark had played and beaten on different occasions most of the leading contenders but knew that there would be few margins for error. Mark's abilities of determination, concentration and stamina allied to a maturing skill saw him through to the final without dropping a game where he beat Barr of Sedberg 11-7, 11-7. His victory created a new record in the competition in that no other school has ever won the Jester's Cup in three consecutive years with three different players. It has been won by the same player two years running on a number of occasions and, of course, P. Mellor (3 wins) and M. Chesworth (1 win) brought the cup to Bedford School four years running.

The fact that our other efforts at Whitgift mostly ended in the semi-finals should not be dismissed as failure as it

indicates being among the top four schools at those respective events.

*Senior Singles:-*

A. N. Harbert had byes and walk-overs to the 3rd round where he lost to Handy (St Dunstan's) 7-11, 7-11.  
A. M. Lloyd-Williams beat M. C. J., Nicholas (Bradfield) 11-3, 11-0. S. J. Constantine (Malvern) 11-0, 11-2.  
R. Day (BMS) 11-5, 11-0. O. C. Lawson (Bristol Grammar) 11-3, 11-2. R. N. Barr (Sedbergh) 11-7, 11-7.

*Senior Doubles:-*

Bedford I (Lloyd-Williams and Harbert) beat Denstone 4-11, 11-8, 11-3. Sedbergh II 11-7, 11-3. lost to St Paul's I 8-11, 8-11 (Semi-final).

*Colts Signals:-*

N. W. Kirkby beat Cunningham (UCS) 11-0, 11-1 beat Wilson (Rugby) 11-1, 5-11, 11-1. lost to Monmickendam (Oundle) 6-11, 6-11.

C. B. Hurt beat Jones (Merchiston) 11-3, 11-5, Rooke (Alley's) 11-1, 11-1. Reeve (Radley) 11-5, 11-7. lost to Straker (St Dunstan's) 7-11, 2-11 (Semi-final)

*Colts Doubles:-*

beat U.C.S. 11-0, 11-1. beat Merchant Taylors 10-12, 11-6, 11-4. lost to St Dunstan's 3-11, 11-12 (Semi-final)

### Summary of the Term

Statistically the season was less successful than of late in that the 1st and Colts IVs lost their unbeaten records against schools which had stood for two years, and the junior teams did not win any of their three matches. On the other hand most of the school matches were won in an enjoyable manner by narrow and very wide margins. There is a strong indication of the end of an era of easily achieved superiority. For many years the best ball players have been drawn to fives as the only competitive ball game of the Easter term. Now that Hockey is becoming established as a major sport it is inevitable that some of the best talent will be lost to hockey with a few going in the direction of squash. This situation can only be treated as a challenge and much more team coaching will have to be introduced in order to maintain standards.

*1st IV and 'A' IV*

Strong at singles and without a left-hander less effective at doubles defeats came at the hands of St Dunstan's and St Paul's the two strongest schools this season. All other matches against schools were won, some by very large margins indeed. Ian Peck dropped out to concentrate on his rugby career but Mark Lloyd Williams easily took over the mantle of No 1. Andre Harbert played a very attractive game without quite the physical assertiveness to be completely dominant while Hugh Lloyd Williams and Gareth Quarry played with encouraging power and determination which augers well for next year. Space does not permit a personal reference to all players but mention should be made of Richard McGregor Cheers who has never been more than a supporting player since the under 15s but ended his school five career undefeated at singles in all school matches that he had ever played in.

*Team from:* Peck, A. M. Lloyd Williams, Harbert, H. R. Lloyd Williams, Quarry, McGregor Cheers and Prescott.

*Results:* beat Haileybury by 141 points, 'Oundle by 67 points, Merchant Taylors' by 103 points, Rugby by 127 points and BMS by 30 points.

lost to Cambridge University Sparrows by 45 points,