

Greasley and Richard Quenby, Jeremy Over and Julian Morris made a strong top two pairs and there was little to separate the two. Our main problem was with the third pair taken from Jonathan Clifton, Richard Moore and Tim Slater, who rarely managed to win the point necessary to turn defeat into victory. Chris Greasley was an enthusiastic captain and was unlucky not to gain a place in the first team. Unfortunately, with nine out of the top twelve players leaving, the prospects for 1980 are not too encouraging.

Colts VI

Kimbolton (A) Won 7-2; Berkhamsted (H) Lost 1½-5; Oundle (A) Lost 0-9; The Leys (A) Won 8-1; Haileybury (H) Won 5½-3½; Harrow (H) Lost 2-7.

This proved to be a very mixed season for the Colts team, with three comfortable wins and three heavy defeats. Many of the players did not do any justice to themselves until after half-term, due no doubt to the lack of practice time and the weather. The first pair Adam Sylvester and Toby Morton were two talented individual players who never really won the points they were capable of. The rest of the team was taken from Wear, Bartle, Myers, Harmer and Melin. Bartle and Wear ended up as a consistent third pair, eventually promoted to second pair on account of their steadiness. Gustav Melin, a thirteen year old from Sweden who was with us for one term, returned everything, and forced his way into the team to play with Myers, who began to fulfil his true promise in the second half of term. Bill Harmer had great difficulty controlling his very classy looking ground strokes, and played for the team until half term.

U15 Results: Kimbolton (A) Won 5-4; Harrow (A) Lost 4-5.

U14 Results: Kimbolton (A) Won 9-0.

Apart from the strength of the 1st VI, the highlight of the term was the number of Remove and Fourth formers who were keen to play as much as possible. It is a pity that they have so few matches since there is nothing like the competitive atmosphere of a school match to make a young boy really concentrate; perhaps this can be rectified next year. Junior teams from: Hattan, Dimmock, Elphee, McDonald, Rose, Javadi, Williams, Waddington, Grant, Faulkner, Richman and Harmer or Melin.

Competitions Entered 1979

U19 Easter Counties Doubles – Won Plate Competition; U19 Glanvill Cup – Eliminated in the Preliminary Round; U18 Bedfordshire School's Doubles – Won; U16 Beds Schools Doubles – Runners Up; U14 Beds Schools Doubles – Won; Adam Sylvester won the county U16 Singles Tournament; U14 Eastern Counties Doubles Tournament – reached semi-finals.

These competitions provide very good match practice for the players, and, on the whole, the school representatives did well. The one exception was our early exit from the Glanvill Cup, played during an early May snowstorm, when Jones and Ayliffe had an 'off day'. Welti and Husain won two trophies, Melin and Faulkner did well to win the County U14

doubles event, and Adam Sylvester survived a thrilling 'three-setter' to take the county U16 singles. I.J.R.

Shooting

Well, this was the year when it all went wrong on the day. Not content with making the team shoot below par, the fates also decreed unforeseeable mechanical breakdown. You can spend hours and hours – and indeed we do just that – maintaining full-bore rifles in tip-top condition, but sooner or later something will give deep inside the weapon which is totally undetectable without major overhaul. Murphy's law being what it is, this always occurs at the moment of maximum inconvenience: in our case the Ashburton, the victim Philip Tam.

Until we went to Bisley, the season had been one of consistently high scoring accompanied by a pleasing modicum of success. And this, I think, was as it should have been. We had three Athelings as our backbone, in descending order of size Bill Amberg, Bill Kendall and Mirek Kirkillo-Stacewicz. Alongside them a youngish but reasonably experienced team were more than keen not to be outshone by their elders and tallers. As match succeeded match, so did confidence and know-how increase, even the cadets and reserves picked up trophies to compensate them for being the dogsbodies. Our score of 515, as guest school, in the Oxfordshire schools meeting was, I believe, the second highest team score recorded in 1979 under Ashburton conditions.

And so we came to Bisley, once again one of the favourites. We took a large party down, ranging from a trio of junior boys via loyal and helpful camp followers to the actual shooters. Monday morning saw us bright eyed and bushy tailed practising on Short Siberia range before the dew was off the grass, a nostalgic shoot since Short Siberia is shortly to become the national clay pigeon range, and will no longer be available to us. Tuesday and Wednesday were Wellington 200x and Iveagh 500x (pronounced Iver) days, and an opportunity to settle into the routine which shooting demands. Good scores came, too, with Nigel Greenaway putting in an outstanding 69/70 to come 3rd/700 in the Cadets Rifle Aggregate, hotly pursued by Bill Kendall (68), Neil Crawford and wet bob Robert Hopkins (a welcome Bisley addition as always) (67).

The VIII was picked on Wednesday evening, and we quietly got on with the preparations for the Ashburton – a bit too quietly perhaps? I think we were so well organised that we slightly lost sight of the competition and were consequently not as sharp mentally as we could and should have been. Ashburton day traditionally starts with a lie-in and it was 0645 before D.A.A. came round. By tea-time it was all over and the main party on their way back to Bedford. The professionals, of course, stayed on for the ten days of the international meeting with its successes and its failures, joined now by the Old

Bedfordians — a rising force at Bisley. Bill Kendall shot and coached ably in the international matches, the first Bedfordian to shoot in the A. G. Bell team, and then went to Canada with the other two Athelings where the GB teams senior and — oh woe — junior lost convincingly.

And now the future: .303's are on their way out; in 1981 it will be all 7.62s if plans continue to go to schedule. We will be ready for this, and 1980 will be a most important transitional year, giving the team a new challenge and new horizons.

In conclusion, I wish to pay our tribute to RSM Coblenz without whose quiet and persistent administrative work behind the scenes we would often have been bullet-less or beret-less. It is with much regret that we were never able to entertain him at Bisley on Ashburton day because of his CCF commitments at annual camp; but perhaps it is just as well because I fear even more of his hair would have turned grey than has already done so on account of the shooters.

Results:

Beat Oundle 504-496.

Surrey Open 1st (488), Colt Pair 1st; M. C. Laville won Drayson Tankard.

Oxfordshire Schools 1st (515).

Sussex Schools 5th (503).

Bell Meeting 3rd (506).

Ashburton 11th (489), Cadet pairs (114), 9th Man 9th (46).

Kenya Trophy: 1. M. A. Kirkillo-Stacewicz 459;

2. N. C. Crawford 451; 3. W. B. Kendall 448.

Sowman Shield: 1. W. B. Kendall 553;

2. W. M. Amberg 546.

NRA Bronze Medal: 1. N. T. Greenaway 195;

2. M. A. K.-Stacewicz 194; 3. W. B. Kendall 193.

Donegall Bronze Badge: R. E. Hopkins 64.

Minor Sports Colours: N. C. Crawford,

N. T. Greenaway, M. C. Laville.

VIII: W. B. Kendall (Captain), W. M. Amberg,

N. C. Crawford, N. T. Greenaway,

R. E. Hopkins, M. A. Kirkillo-Stacewicz,

M. C. Laville, P. P. Y. Tam, 9th Man: M. C.

Salsbury; Cadet Pair: B. A. Caves, Salter.

Honours: W. B. Kendall shot for UK Cadets in the Inter-services match and for Great Britain Under-19 in the A. G. Bell Match.

W. M. Amberg, M. A. Kirkillo-Stacewicz and W. B. Kendall were members of the 1979 Athelings team.

T.J.E.

Swimming

With the demise of our own pool during the summer term when work started on the new sports' centre, our activities were forceably curtailed. We restricted ourselves to three school matches, and the Bishop's Stortford Junior Festival, and considering our

training facilities the teams performed remarkably well.

Inevitably all our matches were away, and we first visited Felsted for a quadrangular with Aldenham and Westminster. The home team swept the board, but despite some shaky swimming from our Seniors, our Juniors managed to pull us into second place.

After our annual sound defeat at Bishop's Stortford, though this year our Juniors managed a draw, we travelled to Uppingham for another quadrangular with Haileybury and The Leys. This time Haileybury, with a very strong senior team, took first place, and after some complicated scoring it was agreed that we again were pulled into second place by our Juniors.

The Inter-House competitions this year were cancelled, and unfortunately it seems that we will still be without our pool next year. However, we look forward keenly to the facilities that will soon be available, and it is encouraging that we have a strong and enthusiastic Junior element in the squad at present who will be able to revitalize School swimming in 1981 when we should be fully operational.

R.A.E.

Hockey

The Permaprene Pitch

The official opening of the new permaprene surface at the Gordon Fields was held on Sunday October 14. The pitch is the first of its kind in the country and its rubberised polyurethane top should make it the most genuine all-weather surface that exists at present. Its main use will be for hockey in the Easter term and tennis in the summer, but it can be used for soccer, rugby skills, cricket coaching and athletics. The opening day was blessed with fine weather so the pitch was not really tested, but hopefully the surface will provide continuity when the British climate is at its worst.

The first match was between the High School and Dame Alice, playing for the newly presented 'En-Tout-Cas' Challenge Cup. The girls were slightly overawed by the size of the pitch, the speed with which the ball ran, and the dew on the pitch found some of the girls' footwear lacking; decently ribbed or pimped trainers are essential on a damp surface. The game also revealed the differences in coaching techniques between men and women; very few girls showed reverse-stick skills, one of the first things taught in the boys' game. Even so, there were some good players on show, and the High School won 1-0.

The Great Britain and England players who were to compete in the afternoon's showpiece trained for an hour and then a Bedford School XI played the Head Master's Invitation XI. The Head Master raised a team of ex-Internationals many of whom had