

## Australian Bar Association Cricket Tour to England and Ireland - July 1987

The recent Law Conference in London and Ireland coincided with a Cricket Tour organised by Bill Gillard Q.C. of the Victorian Bar and Stirling Hamman. The tour followed the highly successful tour in 1982 when the Australian Bar Association team was led by Roger Gyles Q.C. The team initially comprised Stirling Hamman, Larry King, Thos. Hodgson and Peter Maiden from New South Wales, Bill Gillard Q.C., Bruce McTaggart and Philip Trigar from Victoria and Judge Bob Hall and Tony Smith from Queensland. Other players joined the touring party over ensuing weeks.

The first week's cricket was based in the West Country around Bath. Four games were played on Village Greens in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. The local hospitality was overwhelming and the team had great trouble in acquiring the fitness or form that was to be required for the two "Test Matches" to be played against the English and Irish Bars. In the initial games only Hall showed form with the bat. King was suffering with the dreaded flu, but managed to bowl a substantial number of overs. Maiden was stricken down with a back complaint and unable to play. As a consequence Hodgson kept wicket for the first three matches.

The First Test Match against the English Bar was played at Radley College near Oxford. Gyles Q.C., who came virtually straight from Heathrow, captained the side and Callaway Q.C. was included to open the batting. The Australian Bar scored 222 for 8 from 45 overs. The Victorian contingent of McTaggart and Gillard Q.C. scored 50 and 49 respectively, Smith made 42 and Gyles 36. The English Bar Association managed to score 186 in reply with Hamman taking 4 for 39 and McTaggart 3 for 23. Thus the Australian team retained the "Ashes".

The next game on tour was against the South Hamstead club in London for whom Chandra Sandrasegara once played. Co-opted to the game were Rod Peters, John Ireland and Peter Gray. The opposition declared at 7 for 187 leaving the Australian Bar to score the runs in 42 overs in dark and threatening conditions. After a poor start Hamman came to the crease at 3 for 21 and scored an impressive 79. Gillard scored 27 before he was run out for the second consecutive time and at 5 for 137 the prospects of victory appeared slim. Gray (13) and Hodgson (16) kept the scoreboard ticking over, however it was Ireland who emerged as the hero with a swashbuckling 26. A towering six off the second last ball of the match by Ireland gave the Australian Bar a thrilling victory. The only sour note was that Tony Smith who had limped from the field had suffered a serious injury to his leg which caused him to miss the remainder of the tour.

Flushed with success the team travelled to Dublin to play the Irish Bar at the famous Trinity College ground. On the day of the game the team was taken to the University Club at St. Stephen's Green. A magnificent luncheon was provided by our hosts who treated us to some vintage French wines. The demon fast bowler, Larry King, who had imbibed with great enthusiasm was, as a consequence, unfit to open the bowling. Doubtless he was celebrating the announcement, the day before, that he had been appointed a Justice of the Supreme Court of New Guinea.



*Taking the field against Capt. Hawkins XI*

The Australian Bar declared at 5 for 149 with significant contributions made by Gillard Q.C. (47 not out) and Peter Gray (20). The Irish batted competently and in the last over of the game scored the winning run. They now claim to be world champions. Their hospitality that evening at the Kings Inn was overwhelming and no doubt reflected their victory.

Matches followed at Dumfries (the Bar lost) and Carlisle (the Bar won). Following Carlisle the tour went through the Yorkshire Dales to Harrogate and Lincoln. Unfortunately, however, no cricket was played, because of the inclement weather.

The touring party then travelled to Stratford-upon-Avon where Thos. Hodgson had organised the game of the tour against Captain Hawkins' XI at his privately owned ground near Daventry in Northamptonshire. The oval was so beautiful that the match was delayed as a number of the team behaved like Japanese tourists in taking masses of photographs. This was the quintessential English cricket ground with its thatched roof pavilion surrounded by roses in full bloom. For many to play at this ground was the highlight of the tour. Captain Hawkins' XI declared at 8 for 155. In reply the Bar could only muster 106. The result, however, was of little significance as it was such a grand and memorable occasion.

The final match of the tour was played against Wellesbourne near Stratford. The Australian Bar failed by 20 runs to pass the Wellesbourne total of 156.

In all, notwithstanding the fact that more matches were lost than won, an enjoyable time was had by all. Gillard Q.C. batted with great consistency and top scored on a number of occasions. He is a young player for the future! Hamman and Hall, despite their running between wickets, played some notable innings. Phil Trigar fielded brilliantly and held five catches, one of which at backward point against Wellesbourne was of classic status. The bowling was consistent and honours were spread out amongst the bowlers. The team, however, lacked a real strike bowler.

The tour was punctuated with numerous incidents, the most memorable of which included Gillard Q.C. and Hodgson remaining in the Ladbroke Hotel in Bath for some 30 minutes after it had been evacuated after a bomb scare, having totally ignored the alarm as a "Fawlty Towers" fire drill. Hamman's long distance driving and also his negotiation with a female hotel proprietor to obtain a refund of a deposit; Smith's means of drying his cricket gear from car windows on the way to matches and King's apoplectic fit of laughter after witnessing Hodgson run himself out at Stapleton.

The tour was a great success and all members who are interested in cricket are encouraged to participate in the future. □

Peter Maiden and Thos Hodgson.