

THE HISTORY OF CRICKET

Cricket was the first sport introduced at Grammar when, in 1888, **Mr Hodges [1888-1900]** decided that it would build character, manliness and loyalty. This short article will deal with the development and successes of the sport in the period up to the start of World War II, a period during which the School had great success and produced cricketers of some note.

In the period 1888 to 1914 Grammar as a school and in association with the Old Boys dominated Cricket competitions in Townsville. Until 1892 the School team was not recognized by the local association but was allowed to play "friendlies" against club teams. Due to the success achieved by the School they were allowed to enter the Junior competition in 1893 and subsequently the Senior competition in 1895. From that year until 1902 the team dominated the competition but much of the success was due to the presence of Masters and Old Boys in the team. As a consequence the interest in Cricket began to wane among the students. In 1902 **Mr Miller [1901-1904]** decided that only students and Masters could play for the team: out of this decision the Old Boys formed their own club named the "Past Grammars Cricket Club" and from 1903 to 1914 the local competition was dominated by the two teams associated with the Grammar School.

Mr Rowland [1905-1938] further fostered Cricket at the School when he formed two "second elevens" and they played against the local State Schools such as Central, West End and Belgian Gardens. Furthermore he divided the School into four teams, Blues, Greens, Yellows and Reds and in doing so established Colour Matches and instigated the genesis of the House System developed by **Mr Whight [1939-1946]**.

Prominent student cricketers at this time were **G.F. HALL [1909]**, our first Rhodes Scholar, and **F. JOHNSON [1908]**. In 1908 they were selected to represent Townsville in Inter-city fixtures. It is interesting to note that Grammar's first Queensland State player in **FRED TIMBURY [1901]** never represented the School at Cricket at 1st XI level.

Due to World War I the local Cricket competition was cancelled in 1915. The competition was reinstated in 1919 but it was only with the appointment of a past student, T.B. Whight that a renaissance occurred in Cricket at the School. For the next decade and a half Cricket flourished in Townsville and in the School: much of this was due to the influence and coaching of Mr Whight. Through his association with the "All Blacks" Cricket Club the top echelon players from the School were allowed to play in the local club competition. As a consequence students and past students such as Roy Andison, Frank Sides, Bill Kogler, Harry Smallwood, Glen Baker, Alan Tait and Ron Vine went on to represent either Queensland or Queensland Country. Roy Andison scored 181 not out against a visiting New South Wales team in 1928 while all of the above, with the exception of Glen Baker, represented North Queensland in 1930 against a New South Wales team that included such cricketing legends as Bradman, McCabe, Kippax, Jackson, Fairfax, Ives and Rigg.

Cricket at the School was not neglected and regular fixtures were played against local schools and the Charters Towers' schools. In addition the "colour matches" instigated by Mr Rowland continued and there was an annual Past versus Present Students fixture that was traditionally played on St Patrick's Day. When Mr Whight was appointed headmaster in 1939 the first decision he made was to introduce the House system: the Houses were named after the first three headmasters and were given their colours that they still retain to this day. Cricket came to an end in 1941 due to the outbreak of hostilities with Japan. The last matches were played against Mount Carmel College and the Christian Brothers School, Grammar winning both of them.

Grammarians who have represented Queensland at Cricket are:

Fred Timbury: Played for Queensland from 1904-1908. He played six matches, scoring 59 runs for an average of 7.37 and took fourteen wickets at an average of 38.12 with best figures of 4 for 46.

Frank Sides: Played for Queensland from 1930-1935 and Victoria from 1937-1939. He played twenty-six matches, scoring 1308 runs at an average of 31.14. This included one century [131 runs] and nine fifties.

Alan Tait: Played for Queensland from 1933-1936. He played five matches, scoring 126 runs at an average of 18.0. He also took 6 wickets at an average of 66.5 with best figures of 2 for 38.

Glen Baker: Played for Queensland from 1936-1942. He played twenty-nine matches scoring 1531 runs with one century [157 runs], eleven fifties and taking 13 wickets at an average of 42.92, with best figures of 3 for 17.

POSTSCRIPT:

Fred Timbury also played Rugby Union for Australia and was a Queensland Tennis champion. In 1911 he gave it all away and moved to Roma to pursue his interest in gas exploration. He later became mayor of Roma and a prominent citizen in the district.

Glen Baker and **Frank Sides** enlisted in the Second World War and both were killed in New Guinea in the latter months of 1943.

Alain Tait completed a dentistry degree at the University of Queensland before returning to Townsville. He was a member of the Board of Trustees from 1939 to 1945 and was Chairman of the Board from 1941 to 1945, guiding the School through the difficult times at the Rosslea campus.

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