



Cardiff Cavaliers Cricket Club

Celebrating 30 years of cricket – 2008

This document brings together various researches and personal reflections for the club's 30th anniversary with the Chairman's Introduction, the [Club's history](#), personal reflections ([Gog](#), [Warwick & Jez](#)) and then a fun look back at what else was happening in the world in [1978](#)

A Tribute to Cardiff Cavaliers Cricket Club in its 30th Anniversary Season in 2008 & to mark the launch of our Official Club History: letter from the Chairman

We're 30 years of age! I say 'we' as this club is all of us and well done to everybody past and present - what an achievement! Deserved congratulations must go to everybody who has made this rare milestone possible, including the 200 plus players who have shown the Cavaliers spirit, and everyone who has played an often unsung, but priceless part 'behind the scenes', in helping to run this great club. Part of our anniversary celebrations is the launching of this on-line history.

We have had our share of memorable moments and, like all sports clubs both professional and strictly amateur, like ourselves, these have included many 'highs' and, of course, some 'lows' as well. However, as we embark upon celebrating this proud achievement, I would like to reflect, very briefly, on the past and look forward to the future.

The club began in 1978 as a group of employees from various Post Office sections in different parts of Cardiff. That group was small and often had to overcome challenging difficulties, such as finding money to pay for kit, raising a full team, trying to stay competitive and trying to maintain enthusiasm, often in the face of regular defeats, but all these difficult hurdles were overcome. Over the years we have 'evolved' to the point that we now have a top class website (which you can see for yourself), last season [2007] saw us 'close our doors' as we had nearly 40 paying members, competitive teams in both outdoor and indoor leagues, a new home 'base' at the Cathedral School, magnificently supported annual tours and dinners, and financial solvency.

However, it's important not to neglect the efforts of the 'boys from 1978' and those who have come along since, to drive the club along its 30 year journey with, it must be said, some difficult times to survive. Therefore, an integral part of our anniversary celebrations is the launching of this History section which will ensure that all such efforts will, as far as possible, be permanently recorded and, above all, appreciated.

Unfortunately, much of the first 12 years or so of the records were not kept but this has not deterred us from carrying out this important piece of work.

Of course, the club must continue to look forward, and plan and prepare for the future. Tomorrow's matches will become our future history so it's our aim that this will be a 'living document'. In the years to come we will look to improve and build upon this impressive collection of material.

In leading this project, we are indebted to Warwick Armstrong who took on this mammoth task on behalf of the club - its comprehensiveness and readable style stands comparison with those of many other clubs and societies. We salute also three of our founder members - Graeme Brown, Nigel Moore and yours truly - who have been involved since the start and who continue to play and support in whatever way we can.

Thanks also to those who have ransacked their lofts, turned out their drawers, trawled their photo albums and, perhaps most taxingly of all, scoured their memory banks to help him get us to this stage.

We hope you enjoy reading about the [origins](#), traditions and [milestones](#) of the Cavaliers. Please feel free to comment on it, correct it, or add your own 'lasting memories' to help enrich the reader's experience - we especially want to try and fill in some of the gaps from the late 1970s and the 1980s so get in touch.

Steve Davis, Chairman 20 March 2008

Club history: an overview

The Cavaliers owes its "beginnings" to the efforts of two groups of employees in the late 1970s – one set being employees of Wales & The Marches Post Office who were working at the Post Office HQ in The Parade, off City Road (a site now occupied by Coleg Glen Hafren); and the other group being at the Telecom HQ at Coryton, Cardiff. At that time, there was a busy and active sports'n'social scene throughout the Post Office with staff taking part in many 'internal' sports events, including 5-a-side football, golf, skittles, darts and six-a-side cricket.

A small but keen group, including 'founder members to be' Graeme Brown and Dave Wall, began to develop a keen interest in cricket and started to organise, among themselves, some internal friendly matches in 1976 and 1977. These proved to be popular and successful and, as a result of rapidly increasing interest, a 'cricket group' began to form.

Some of them read in the South Wales Echo about a local league known as the Cardiff Midweek Cricket League and they began to consider whether to enter a Post Office team. One day during the summer of 1977 Graeme and Dave were playing pitch and putt at Llandaff Fields and stopped to watch a league game nearby. They went to watch a few more games and convinced themselves – and their friends and colleagues at work – that they should 'have a go' and enter a team too.

They set about raising funds and, thanks to a grant from the Wales & The Marches Sports & Social Club and their own efforts, they were able to get together enough money to buy some kit and enter the Cardiff Midweek League. Going under the name of **Post and Telecommunications HQ** they played their first ever competitive game of cricket in Division 4 against Welsh Folk Museum at Llandaff Fields on Tuesday 20 June 1978.

Prior to that match it was became clear that it would not be possible to raise a full team so a youngster, Steve Davis, who had transferred from Bangor that week was 'roped in', but not even he could prevent the team being bowled out for 30, a defeat and a difficult debut season in the league, finishing bottom of the division, with just a single victory to its credit which, ironically, was against Nat West, who convincingly won the division and whose only defeat was in that game.

Nevertheless, enthusiasm remained high and the club was now 'up and running' to such an extent that they also decided to enter the annual Wales & Border Counties Post Office Cup competition, playing as Wales & The Marches Post & Telecommunications Sports & Social Club [arguably a contender for the shortest club name in the history of any sport.]

At that time there were a number of 'sources' for players, including engineering staff; transferees from other parts of Wales and the Marches; as well as staff at The Parade and Coryton, one of whom was a certain Graham 'Joey' Newbury. Some friends and relatives 'joined in' but primarily, in these early years, the club consisted of Wales & The Marches employees and colleagues in Post Office Telecommunications, which subsequently became British Telecom (BT) in 1981.

During this period, the club did not attempt to participate in many weekend friendly matches, choosing to concentrate very much on midweek league cricket. However, the club did undertake its first ever tour in 1985 to Alderley Edge in Cheshire and played a match against colleagues and friends in the area.

However, this was the beginning of a period of change within the Post Office. Following its privatisation in the mid-80s British Telecom was effectively split from the Post Office and, as a result of staffing and structural changes, the Wales and The Marches Post Office was disbanded and its staff dispersed, with the consequent closure of its Sports & Social Club.

An entirely separate club, comprising mostly postmen at the main headquarters in Penarth Road, was already well established – known as Cardiff Post Office it was also playing in the Cardiff Midweek Cricket League and had financial support from its own Sports & Social Club on the site. With structural changes affecting many of the workers, the majority of the club that was to become the Cavaliers as we know it today were based at or connected to the Penarth Road HQ.

This enabled the club to draft in some newcomers and was grateful too for financial support but it came with some pressure to merge with the Cardiff Post Office club and become its unofficial 2nd eleven. The club members, though, were keen to resist this notion and retain an identity of their own. To this end they were very grateful to receive an offer of sponsorship in the form of club clothing from Joey's wife, who at the time was an air stewardess with Air Europe. In recognition of this the club was re-named as **Inter European Airways**, Air Europe's 'working' title' at that time, in 1986.

A new name also signalled some early success, with the club finishing 3rd and earning promotion back to Division 4 (having been 'relegated' in a technical re-alignment of the Midweek league as part of its expansion.) However, the club was now fighting a losing battle in its efforts to maintain its links with the Post Office in the face of strong competition for recruiting talent from the Cardiff Post Office club. In an effort to survive it began to bring in friends and others from outside and so, in 1988, there was yet another name change to **Post Office Cavaliers** in order to try to emphasise an entirely separate identity from the other team but to maintain some sort of link with its origins.

The next few years were mixed with hard work behind the scenes ensuring steady consolidation 'on the field' but further and inevitable weakening of links with the Post Office sports and social club, and this culminated in the ending – by mutual consent – of any financial support in the early 1990s.

Furthermore, the conditions for playing matches were rapidly deteriorating: outfielders were often uncut for long periods, pitches poorly maintained and often dangerous, and there were sporadic but increasingly numerous instances of bad behaviour by some opposing teams. All of this was starting to have an effect on the enjoyment of the game and probably had a part to play in the difficulties the club was experiencing in maintaining enthusiasm and raising a full team, as well as the need to play two matches a week on many occasions.

In order to address both of these issues the Annual General Meeting of the club in 1995 took the momentous decisions to pull out of the Cardiff Midweek League and to change its name to **Cardiff Cavaliers**. The name change was to reflect the need for the club to become 'open' and the club applied successfully to join the Willow League that year to seek a more appropriate competitive environment and to play on private, and usually better, pitches and outfielders, which its teams were encouraged to do. [Interestingly, the Willow League was also thought to have been formed in 1978 and to celebrate both 30th anniversaries the Cavaliers played a Willow League Chairman's XI on 17 July 2008.]

In its debut season the club achieved a mid-table finish and reached the Cup final, losing narrowly to Leisure & Amenities [later to become Oz Bar Wizards and now known as Cardiff Bay Barbarians] who also went on to become that year's League champions.

Over the next few seasons the club performed respectably, usually finishing mid-table, but struggled to raise full teams and was entirely dependent upon a small, hard working group who were determined to keep the club alive. The club played its home games and many of its other league and cup fixtures at Caedelyn Park, off Ash Grove in Whitchurch.

At its AGM in 1999 the decision was made to play at Llandaff Oval, a ground at the rear of the UWIC campus on Western Avenue which, at this time, was better maintained.

For a while the club continued to experience difficulties in raising teams and results suffered, leading to table-propping finishes in 1999, 2000 and 2001 but the members' spirit and commitment meant it wouldn't be long before it flourished again. Allied to better playing conditions and the creation of its first ever web site new members started to join.

By 2003, and despite finishing bottom of the League again, the club reached its 2nd Willow Cup Final and won its first ever piece of silverware in beating GST by 11 runs in a match that will long live in the memory of those who played for, and supported, the club on that dramatic night. Reaching the final was memorable as well with the club winning an earlier round in an unprecedented bowl-out by one hit to nil, the dead-eyed bowler being Mark Simpson.

The 2004 and 2005 seasons brought further success with the club winning the Willow Plate, a competition for teams finishing in 7th place or below in the League proper. 2006 saw the launch of new web site under our own domain name [www.cardiffcavaliers.com] which, in just three years, has been a source not only of rich enjoyment and useful information but also a great source of attracting new members.

With concerns over the cost and, more importantly, the rapidly deteriorating quality of Llandaff Oval, the club sought out new arrangements and, when the opportunity presented itself in 2007, moved to The Bishop's Field at the nearby Cathedral School.

That year saw the club post a notable achievement by finishing in the top half of the League and therefore qualify for the Willow Shield competition for the first time since the competition was introduced in 2001 for the top finishers in the League proper. It also reached its 3rd Cup Final before having to give

best to a classy South Glamorgan Education team. However, we 'won' the vocal bragging rights with 19 of the 23 spectators being club members (the rest being neutrals.)

In terms of other 'honours' the club has won, on several occasions, the 'Ashes' and the 'C&H' Trophy, which are separate annual series of matches against our old friends and adversaries from Chartered Trust CC and Highways Hurricanes CC respectively which have been held since the mid 1990s.

Since joining the Willow League club members have grown in self-confidence and gained an increasing appetite for weekend friendlies against some of the more 'established' cricket clubs in and around South Wales and these games now form an integral part of the fixture list. The club's reputation for its honesty, integrity, good sportsmanship and willingness to give opportunities to all, regardless of ability, has won universal respect and recognition throughout the local cricketing community and has been instrumental in helping it develop and maintain a rich portfolio of weekend venues and opponents.

Alongside these games, the Club has also had the confidence to organise annual tours and, after somewhat tentative efforts in the late 1980s, these are now keenly supported and saw a record 20 Cavaliers descend upon Amsterdam in August 2008 for a special 30th anniversary tour.

It has always been an entirely voluntary organisation without ever having its own ground or anywhere that it could really call a 'base' apart from the very earliest times during the early Post Office years. It is, therefore, a testament to its reputation for espousing the competitive yet friendly spirit of the game of cricket that it continues to attract new members and has established an enviable fixture list. It is financed entirely by its members' subscriptions, match fees and surpluses generated from social activities and club clothing.

The club now has over 30 members and, in 2007, had to select a team for every one of its 47 fixtures, a far cry from the days of having to cancel games or rely on the opposition to bolster our numbers so that we could have 11 on the field.

Thanks to the work of the founder members – and many others behind the scenes over the years – the club has survived difficult times and now, with many of the newer members being youngsters, it gives the opportunity for all who love the game and the Cavalier ethos to 'don the shirt' for many more years to come and write the future chapters of this club's rich and proud history.

[Created: April 2008; minor revisions October 2008]

Cardiff Cavaliers – The beginning “a personal reflection” [Steve Davis]

When I first came down to Cardiff to work at the Postal Headquarters at 35 The Parade the first person I worked with on the 5th floor was one Graeme Brown. I started at the beginning of June 1978 having previously worked at the Head Post Office Bangor, North Wales.

Bangor GPO was the only works team in the Caernarfonshire & Anglesey Cricket League and I had played for them on a few occasions when they were short. My only previous competitive experience of cricket was several school games against Pwllheli and Botwnog and the usual schoolboy games in the summer holidays with my mates.

Two other players in the Post Office team were the Doughty twins from Caernarfon who I played Rugby with for Caernarfon & we had played in school together. Their father was the Postmaster at Portmadog and they qualified by association (not grannygate but postiegate a la Graham Henry).

Another Bangor GPO player who was a young boy of 15 at the time was Tony Smith who is currently a Superintendent of Police in South Wales and played for Hoovers in the South Wales league and I believe is currently playing for Pentyrch.

To move on to the early Cavaliers days, one sunny day in around late June Keith Patterson from the Finance section came around to say they were looking for people to play cricket for the Postal & Telecomm HQ side in the Cardiff Midweek League. Brownny and I volunteered as the equipment was being supplied from the Sports & Social Club funding and all we had to do was turn up and play.

The first game from what I recall was at Llandaff fields and we were playing the St Fagans Museum side. In the team was a certain Nigel Moore a schoolteacher from Caerphilly who lived in Ely, Cardiff and a very good fast bowler called Mike Oake. The wicketkeeper was Chris King; other players were Phil Davies primarily a batsman, another bowler Richard Jones who was a dentist and others, Graeme Brown, Gareth Parsons, Keith Patterson and Sid Witham the Head of Personnel. The Telecomm HQ representative was Dave Lee.

We did our best but lost handsomely as the St Fagans Museum side had a very good fast bowler called Harry – we nicknamed him “Top deck” after a Top Deck shandy advert popular at the time where a fast bowler is refreshed & faster after a swig of the concoction. I seem to remember not many of us had whites and I played in a coloured T-shirt and track suit bottoms. After the game I think we retired to the Halfway pub on Cathedral Rd for a bevy and I had to return to Caerphilly where I was lodging with one Trefor Griffith who played one or two games in the future. The picture of the team during that first year and the stats will be available.

One of the main characters in those early years was a “Tonker Watkins” who had one shot the full swing & hoik over leg. He was a Ponty boy through and through and I have a couple of tales about him – Gareth Watkins was a Rugby prop playing for Rhydfelin, University educated but a “man’s man”. One day he was seen returning from town carrying a large pot of gloss paint in one hand but not by the handle, when I asked him why he said “Only women carry it by the handle”.

On another occasion he was in the office and desperate for a game of rugby as the Valleys had been frost-bound for several weeks in around winter of 1985. I arranged for him to turn out for Cardiff Civil Service 2nds against St Joes 3rds on the Saturday and as they kicked off 5 minutes before us I stopped to have a look at the game – the first scrum went up, the ball moved away & Tonker Watkins was throwing punches at the opposition front three. After the game in the bar I mentioned this to him and he replied “first scrum, you’ve got to let them know you’re there”. Last seen in a blazer driving a coach for a living.

One of our first trips away was to a friendly Sunday fixture around 1980 at Christ College Brecon against Brecon Post Office. This was undertaken with a minibus borrowed from BT and driven by the Yorkshire Terror Dave Lee. We had a great day out and ended up in one of the first Brecon Jazz festivals that Sunday night.

We also took a trip to the North West of England in the early 80’s to play the North West Postal HQ at Manchester. This game took place on the Saturday and we were supposed to play Graham (Joey) Newbury’s brother’s side on the Sunday – unfortunately it rained. We stayed in a hotel in Alderley Edge that Joey’s brother had organised because the owner liked cricket. It was a “cracker” with a night club attached and visited by Manchester United players fresh from the Charity Shield game at

Wembley that day. In the club were Gordon Strachan & Jasper Olsen. In the car park was an amazing collection of sports cars. I can remember that there was a piano in the bar and later that night one of our party insisted on trying to play it and after last orders a couple of our boys took over as Barmen and helped us continue drinking.

The following morning I woke up with a terrible hangover and a frightful sight in front of me. I was sharing a room with Steve Cracknell one of the BT HQ boys. Steve and I had first met on a Post Office Youth week at Dumbleton Hall, Evesham in about 1974 and he had started playing cricket for us at the behest of Joey Newbury in around 1980. The frightful sight was what he was wearing and shoving in my face which was a pair of underpants with a face of a mouse and it had a six inch tongue. I was nearly sick and needless to say did not room with "Crackers" again.

During this time we continued playing in the Cardiff mid-week league with occasional trips further afield and forays in the Post Office Cup of Wales & the Marches Postal Board. I served as Club Secretary for a 3 year stint from around 1982 to 1985 and during this time the Chairman was one Gareth Parsons the father of two current players Dave & Huw. Garry enjoyed his cricket but was not the most athletic player in the world and one of his main phrases was "Is it in the club constitution?" He was always a stickler for the rules and kept Brownie on his toes.

In 1986 I was sent back to North Wales to work for a couple of years and I played cricket up there for Caernarfon Rugby Club, linking up with the Doughty twins again and played for Beaumaris on Anglesey, as the Post Office Bangor team had gone by this time. Around 1987 I was invited to join the tour of the Post Office HQ team to Shrewsbury where we played Llanfyllin on the Saturday - I was bestowed with the dubious honour of being Captain and this was compounded by the fact we only had 9 players. We borrowed one from our opponents who claimed to be a bowler and after the opening bowlers had a go at Llanfyllin I tossed him the ball expecting great things. He was a worse bowler than me and chucked down wides, long hops & full tosses in his two overs that went for about 40 runs. That night we were staying in a small hotel in Shrewsbury and as is customary had an ale or two, visiting were another cricket team from Oz and they challenged us to a singing competition. As Captain I am pleased to say we not only outsung them but outdrunk them as well.

In 1988 I returned to South Wales and linked up again with the team as I worked in the Post Office Management Centre next to the BT HQ at Coryton. Here I worked with Graham Waters who I persuaded to turn out for us, he told me he had played a little bit of cricket. He went into bat in his first game at no4, he looked at the first two balls then started to play some lovely strokes, hitting straight sixes at will. When he came back in the question was asked who he had played for previously and the response was he hadn't played for a few years but used to turn out for Hampshire seconds. The great shame was that he loved squash and this limited his appearances to a very few games for us - he was a class act. During this time I also played for the Cardiff Exiles on the weekends.

This takes us to 1991 when I once again left Cardiff to work in Milton Keynes and lived in Towcester. I played cricket for Towcester & Rugby and returned to Cardiff to the team around 1995. I will leave the other stories to the likes of Graeme Brown as to how the Honourable Moore arranged for him to have his teeth knocked out in Richmond and how Tonker Watkins proved Babbling Bill Brookes was not a Postcode Expert. Also remind Brownie to tell you the tale of how Elfyn Morgans shirt ended up in a mess in Greece when the Honourable took a dirty step.

And, Gentlemen, as they say, the rest is History.

Steve Davis

Chairman 2006 to date [2008]

Secretary 1982-85

Player 1978-86, 1988-91, 1995 to date

A Captain's Memory from 1995 [Warwick Armstrong]

Sunday 3 September, 1995. The last day of what at the time felt like a long, at times successful, and at other times, challenging season for the club. To put it into some form of context, the preceding 31 matches of the 1995 Season had been something of a new adventure. This was our first season as 'Cardiff Cavaliers', our first season of participation in the Willow League and our first season under my Captaincy. Looking back, there was doubtless much that I could have done differently. Going into that season, I had at my disposal, arguably, the services of about eight or nine players in total, who could be described as both regular players and 'experienced' in at least one or more of the three disciplines, with about as many, and more, who were less experienced, and still learning the ropes.

Such numbers meant that, on most occasions, half the team selected were the experienced crowd, the other half the less experienced. It meant that, as Captain, I felt I had to strike a careful balance between getting the best possible results for the Club and making our less experienced players feel valued and involved. I wonder how many of you remember my famous 'involvement percentages', a curious formula aimed at measuring how much involvement in terms of batting and/or bowling everyone was getting. It might seem funny now but at the time it was a big issue in keeping support and loyalty going in the club.

My attempts to square this particular 'circle' did, initially, have some success though. After an opening day friendly defeat to Cardiff Casuals at the Cathedral School, we had splendid victories in our opening two league games, and a one wicket victory over Lisvane in a weekend friendly. In June and early July we continued strongly in the League and advanced to the final of the Willow League Cup. I remember, in particular, Mark Ryan's belligerent century against Penarth Sports at Caedelyn and our dramatic one run win against Minex (now Uni Staff) at Llanrumney with John Arwyn taking three wickets in nine balls at the end to turn the match. However, that match on 6 July that year signalled an unfortunate turning point for the team.

We began to lose one or two of our regular, stronger players to other commitments and then proceeded to go on a run of 15 successive defeats, which included six league matches, a midweek friendly, three weekend friendlies, two tour matches in Cheltenham, two Ashes games against Chartered Trust and, sadly, the Cup Final against Leisure & Amenities (now Cardiff Bay Barbarians), that season's league champions, although in the latter of these matches, I remember a truly hostile spell of fast bowling from Sean Carter, probably the quickest-ever bowler we've ever had in the club. Few of us might know that Sean was a Yorkshire colt and actually made one first-class appearance, under the name of 'A N Other', and so surely counts as the Cavaliers' only ever former first class cricketer.

So whilst spirits and morale remained remarkably high, confidence was, naturally, a little low to say the least when we embarked upon our final game of the season on 3 September against Blaenrhondda CC at Treorchy. Maybe my fellow long-standing club members can correct me here, but if memory serves me right, I'm sure I won the toss, and my mind told me in order to 'make a game of it' to put Blaenrhondda in to bat knowing, more likely than not, that should we be heavily defeated, as had been the case more often than not in recent games, it would at least be a longer 'day out' for both us and our opponents, the latter of whom would at least have had a decent bat.

How wrong was I to be! Not only did we get early wickets, but we kept taking wickets at regular intervals and, with the help of some great outfield catches, we bowled out Blaenrhondda for 111, and we consumed tea in a buoyant mood and went in to bat with a rare, but welcome, air of confidence. Continuing my season-long approach of trying to 'involve' everybody, I put out a batting order consisting in the top and middle order of some of our lesser experienced players and those who hadn't bowled in the Blaenrhondda innings.

Oh dear! Two hours and 28 nightmare overs later, normal service was resumed, we were 56-8 and staring yet another defeat to finish the season in the face. Numbers 9 and 10 were none other than myself and Brownie, with Geoff 'Fester' Lewis at 11. However, we were able to see off the next couple of overs without any further loss of wickets thanks to our patient approach and in, I think, about the 33rd and 34th overs our patience was rewarded with both of us collecting a couple of boundaries.

The next twenty minutes or so was, to put it mildly, tense but both Brownie and myself kept our heads, mixing cautious treatment of the good deliveries with selective hitting of the bad balls, and good running between the wickets. We could almost hear the boys on the boundary 'counting down' the runs as we inched our way towards the target of 112. At the start of the penultimate over, three runs were needed for victory. I played four straight balls before a loose one allowed me to turn it to deep square leg for a boundary. Cue joyous scenes and quite a few celebratory beers at the local alehouse and later on that night in Roath to celebrate the end of 15 matches and eight weeks of hurt.

Only one win, I know, but it must have counted for something as I was re-elected the following season as Captain, though with a message to put myself on the line a bit more and not to worry so much about involvement. Captaincy is not an easy job as my predecessors and successors, including Jimmy, will tell you but it can be useful on your CV, and at times, quite rewarding.

Warwick Armstrong

Treasurer 1991-94

Captain 1995-96

Secretary 1997-2000

Player 1990 to date [2010]

Records & milestones: my part in their downfall by Spike Milligan (aka The Dog Whispering Oracle) [Jeremy Sparkes]

It wasn't until I saw the club records and year-by-year milestones that it struck me what an important role I had played in them ... just as Arkwright and Granville duelled with the man-eating till in Open All Hours, Morecambe wouldn't have been half the man without Wise, and Roy Rogers had his Trigger so there was a role for me as follows:

2003: our victorious Cup run

- this Cup tie against Sevenoaks also featured a never-been-seen-before bowl out as the scores were tied; only Mark Simpson of the 22 players was able to hit the wicket
I was 12th man that night and so I quickly had to take charge at the end of the match proper and devise, on the spot, a bowl out and get it underway while it was still light. Had this been left to the captains, they might still have been debating the respective merits of different methods long after closing time.
- 238-2 v Cynon Valley Wanderers at Aberdare 12-7-03 - our 4th highest team score (which also saw a record 3rd wicket partnership between Warwick and Andrew Steadman and included an unbeaten century for Warwick)
However, none of these things might have happened had it not been for me and Wayne "I didn't join this club to win trophies" Childs. We lost Nick early and I joined Wazza. After marking my "Middle, please" guard I then wondered why the opposition weren't ready as only 2 men were in my sight, one of them the bowler. I followed the line of Wazza's eyes to look behind me to espy the keeper, 5 slips, 2 gullies and a leg slip. Clearly they hadn't seen me play - or perhaps they had! However, as the game progressed the field spread somewhat and I played a no-ball backward of square and was comfortably running my bat in for the second when the keeper finally got round to breaking the stumps somewhat needlessly and appealed. "Not out" declared Wayne at square leg. "Howzat" roared the keeper again. "Not out" iterated Wayne. "But he can be run out off a no-ball" declared the keeper, disregarding the fact that I'd run my bat in and made my ground. "Oh" said Wayne, then in a contemplative fashion that the venerable Bede would've deemed worthy of more spiritual matters, "it was a no-ball wasn't it. Must've been out then as you're so persistent." Much to my chagrin, I had to leave the field of play which brought Andy to the crease and the rest, as they say, is history. This was the first of many Child-ish dismissals I suffered and every time he'd seek me out before I could lay hands on him and say, disarmingly, "You know, Jez, I think I might have got something wrong there." For one who found it difficult to judge the trajectory of a ball going way down leg side at the most optimistic and ambitious appeal of a bowler, it's quite a revelation that Wayne is now making his way up the rugby reffing ladder cos he can tell what's going on in the ruck, maul and scrum ...

2004

- Dominic Dwyer sets record (still stands) for the most runs in a single innings smashing 163 not out v Highways Hurricanes at Llandaff Oval on 29 June
Grizz had appointed me to open with Dom and we quickly rattled up 80-odd for the 1st wicket (of which I contributed a magnificent 12) and a few records looked on the cards until the Aussie called for a suicidal single that would've seen him out by a mile. However, not being known as the Oracle for nothing, I realised that if I moved sharply I'd be the one whose ground was 'put down' and so sacrificed my wicket in the cause. Obviously feeling guilty, Dom decided to stay out there ...
- Tour to Torquay. Ivybridge 170 (39.3 ovs) (Boardman 3-16, Armstrong 2-15). Cavaliers 172-4 (33.5 ovs) (Steadman 51no, Hutchings 47). Won by 6 wickets
Yet again invited to open proceedings with Nick after a hearty tea the pitch was very oddly shaped with a short boundary on one side and a humongous swathe of countryside on the other. So much depth and space was there that we completed an all run 5 that didn't feature an overthrow. It was on attempting to repeat the feat that I was run out, narrowly, going for the 5th for the second occasion which brought Steaders to the wicket. On seeing how easy it was that even Jeremy could make runs, Steaders decided the wicket suited him and led us to our victory that set the tour off in great vein.

2005

- take on inaugural Chairmanship of the Willow League. I know cos I was that soldier, um, I mean Chairman ...

2006

- Warwick Armstrong sets a new club record for the most runs scored in a season with 671
Just as with Mr Dwyer, I was called upon to open with Wazza and in almost a re-run of 2004 I had to sacrifice myself in the cause and, again, was not to be disappointed as Warwick was a veritable run machine once he got in.

Since these days, the weight of high office has affected my ability to influence matters on the pitch but having passed on the seals of secretaryship to young Ross I hope to rekindle my efforts in the coming season and reprise my walk on (but more often it seems, walk off) role in Cavalier milestones.

Jeremy "Oracle" & "Dog Whisperer" Sparkes

Club Secretary 2005-2007

Player 2003 to date

1978 this was the year that ...

... Linda Carter burst on to our screens as Wonder Woman and Lycra helped keep in all the wobbly bits that wanted to burst out as the jogging craze gripped the nation ...

... and perhaps after much lobbying by the distaff side, seven inches was no longer reckoned to be enough and so 12 inch vinyl discs were introduced ...

... on the cricketing scene, David Gower graces the first class county circuit for the first time and Kapil Dev makes his first class, one-day and test debuts (but still missed out on the Cavaliers so didn't quite get a full set that year) ... a certain I T 'Beefy' Botham became the first man to score a century and take 8 wickets in an innings in a Test match (he also couldn't get a look in with the Cavaliers' selectors, a tradition of fickleness that has continued to this day) ...

Now for a month-by-month look back:

While Emilio Palma was born in Antarctica making his birth the southernmost in history on 7 **January** 1978, birth was also given this year to a much more significant body that has become renowned, certainly in English-speaking cricket circles if not throughout the world – the nascent Cardiff Cavaliers came into the world, the brain child of a certain Mr Kenneth Graeme Brown, and the birth was assisted by the mid-wives Chairman 'Gog' Davis and The Honourable Nigel Moore, and encouraged in this endeavour some time later by El Presidente 'Joey' Newbury.

Not that this was our club's original name, it being changed from the Post Office Head Quarters Home for Retiring Gentlemen Cricketers some years later by deed poll to better reflect its social approach to the game and its going 'open'.

We bade farewell to legendary English cricketer Herbert Sutcliffe and the real life Chariots of Fire star Harold Abrahams.

Saturday Night Fever topped the charts and was rumoured to be among the choices for an anthem for the Cavaliers but more often it was a case of simply "uh, uh, staying alive, staying alive".

Sweden became the first country to ban aerosol sprays so truncating the old joke about the man who goes into the chemists in Sweden and asks for deodorant ...

Significant others: the future Italian goalkeeper, Gianluigi Buffon, is born; it was his athleticism between the sticks that led to the terms "buffonery" and "acting like a buffon" becoming legendary.

Meanwhile, as **February** began Roman Polanski skipped bail – an idea that has occurred to many a Cavalier when summoned before Judge Davis, except that their fate would be much worse if they failed to take their punishment.

Blue-stockinged Anna Ford makes TV news history by becoming the first female newsreader on ITV.

Later this month the People's Republic of China lifted its ban on the works of Aristotle, Shakespeare and Dickens. It is not yet known whether residents of PRC are able to read the Cavaliers match reports or to immerse themselves in the wisdom of the Oracle dispensed on the web site ...

Significant others: Born this month John Tartaglia was just 16 when he found a use for his right hand as a puppeteer on Sesame Street and Muppetry has yet to feature in a match report ...

As **March** progresses the Amoco Cadiz spills its oily cargo on the coast of Brittany, a forerunner of many instances where the turning circle of a Cavalier has been likened to a tanker leading to red-faced run outs.

Significant others: Didier Drogba is born; little do Mr & Mrs D realise what impact he will have on so many lives around a tiny corner of London known to some simply as "The Bridge".

April 1st sees Dick Smith (yes, it is his real name) tow an iceberg into Sydney Harbour. It is rumoured that Aussies were so disgusted at the thought of warm beer that drastic action was required

As April progressed the first radio broadcasts from Parliament were heard. We have not been able to establish yet whether the first question to Prime Minister James Callaghan concerned the forthcoming inaugural fixture of the newly founded cricket team hailing from his constituency.

The Blues Brothers make their debut and certain similarities between Jake and Elwood with Gog and Brownie continue to be made.

Significant others: Jon Smit, the Springbok captain and hooker, experiences a harrowing birth when the womb collapses and has to be reset while the obstetrician checks the binding.

On 5 **May**, Pete Rose of the Cincinnati Reds gets his 3,000th major league run but is still not offered a game with the Cavaliers because he doesn't know his rounds from pillar boxes.

Significant others: Jordan (the person, not the country) emerges and her family, somewhat presciently, sell the rights for providing her nappies.

June 1st sees the Soccer World Cup kick off in Argentina and the Cavaliers get well under way with their inaugural fixtures. TV viewing figures are not yet available under the government's 30 year rule – perhaps we'll be luckier later on in the year.

Significant others: somewhat of a rarity, a basketball player from Germany is born, going by the wonderful name that sounds like it could have been made up to describe the Oracle's jokes – Dirk Nowitzki

As the baking summer continues into **July**, Louise Brown (no relation to one of our August founders) becomes the first test tube baby but still, to this day, scientists struggle to discover the rare mix of elements that comprise the quintessential Cavalier. We, of course, know that true Cavaliers are born, not made.

Music lovers everywhere swamp the BBC switchboard as airtime is given to Terry Wogan's version of the Floral Dance, an even worse attempt at speak-singing than Telly Savalas managed with "If" or Lee Marvin did with "Wandering Star".

Significant others: Irish rugby player, Shane Horgan, enters the world.

Double Eagle II becomes the first hot air balloon to cross the Atlantic. In other sporting fields the Commonwealth Games open in Edmonton in **August** but cricket is not included, thus denying the very epitome of amateur spirit in the form of the Cavaliers the world stage that would so benefit its status as a paragon of sportsmanship. Perhaps we can make a bid for London 2012.

Significant others: perhaps a cricketer came up with the name for the American group The Strokes, whose musician, Julian Casablancas, was born this month. Allegedly, it wasn't his real surname but, as with many courting couples, he was named after where he was conceived but Mum and Dad couldn't remember which of the white bungalows they'd actually stayed in.

September brings bad news: Bulgarian dissident Gorgi Markov is assassinated on the streets of London using a poison-tipped umbrella and Pope John Paul I dies after just 33 days as Pontiff – it was his successor's term of office that led to the creation of the Pope-Mobile, which has been a feature at Cavaliers games in recent times under the charioteership of 'Caesar' Searle.

The Camp David Accord is signed, signalling a new era in Arab-Israeli relations, an event which stole the limelight from the Cavaliers' reflections on their first ever season. It was also farewell to Jack Warner (not that one!), the founder of Warner Bros film studios, departing with the epithet "That's All, Folks!"

Significant others: the model Jodie Kidd was born this month (well, so was England rugby world cup winner Ben Cohen but I guess not many young Cavaliers would have had his poster on their bedroom wall.)

The year heads into autumn with the news in **October** that smallpox has been eradicated and the Cavaliers plan their first dinner but reporting of this important event is affected by the strike in **November** at The Times, the ominous signs of disruption and discontent among Fleet Street's finest (well, that's how they like to refer to themselves.)

Significant others: at last, Wikipedia has a cricketer in its birthday listings! Indian batsman, Virender Sehwag, is 30 this year.

December sees the return of democracy to Spain after 40 years of Franco's dictatorship, leading to a West End revival of My Fair Lady with Eliza Doolittle being taught to say "The reign in Spain ..."

Former Liberal leader Jeremy Thorpe appears in court accused of conspiracy to murder, a trial and subsequent acquittal that kept Private Eye busy for many issues.

England won the first test at the Gabba by 7 wickets dismissing Australia cheaply in the first innings (Willis 4/42, Botham 3/40) and 'Rags' (Derek Randall) top scored with 76 in England's reply giving us a 170 run lead. Second time round Australia fared a little better with Old, Willis, Botham and Miller sharing the wickets but could only set 170. Rags again, with a man-of-the-match display, led the way with an unbeaten 74. England went on to take the Ashes series 5-1.

Significant others: Donna Williams is born and is obviously influenced by her family's decision not to allow her even a cuddly toy. In 1999 she co-founded Neopets, an online kennels and cattery which by 2007 boasted 144 million accounts and 212 million cyberpets (apparently, Steaders has been denied an account in case he manages to crush any through careless use of his slash and delete keys ...)

6 English bowlers appeared in the top 20 Test list with Botham and Willis occupying 1st and 2nd places respectively. However, only Gower (12th) and Boycott (14th) made the equivalent batting list.

This ends our brief review of 1978, the year that heralded the formation of the Cavaliers. If you wondered why you know all about the Cavaliers but not so much about the world events referred to above then you can work out for ourselves which has had the most lasting significance. QED!

If you have any memories of that time or a photo showing off your hair style or trendy clothes, please let us know.