



The British Rugby Classic

Saturday 17th May 1997



ROBERT THORNEYCROFT
PRO ACTIVE COMMUNICATION

Rodher Thorneycroft are proud to be event organisers for today's Land Rover British Rugby Classic. For Tim Rodber and I, this is the second major rugby event we have organised, the first being The Discovery Tour of West Africa sponsored by Land Rover which raised approximately \$25,000 for the injured Ivorian rugby player Max Brito.

I would like to thank Jim Campbell and Tracy Kettle of Land Rover for their assistance for today's game.

Without major corporate support the Harry Birrell Scholarship Trust would be unable to generate the much needed funds required to send an underprivileged child to St Andrew's College, Grahamstown, South Africa, in perpetuity.

Tim sends his apologies for not being present at today's game, he will be flying today with the British Lions to South Africa. I am sure our classic Lions playing today would want to wish our current Lions every success, on their forthcoming tour.

Harvey Thorneycroft

OXBRIDGE CLASSIC XV

BRITISH CLASSIC XV

15	Audley Lunsden		Full Back	Gavin Hastings		15
14	Charlie Haley		Right Wing	Rory Underwood		14
13	Rory Maloney		Centre	Scott Hastings		13
12	Paul Flood		Centre	Stuart Potter		12
11	Michael Joy		Left Wing	Ian Hunter		11
10	Alan Buzza		Outside Half	Craig Chalmers		10
9	Niall Hogan		Scrum Half	Robert Jones		9
1	Chris Clarke		Prop	Gary Pearce		1
2	Michael Patton		Hooker	Brian Moore		2
3	Ian Buckett		Prop	Paul Rendall		3
4	Alastair Medows (C)		Lock	Derek White (C)		4
5	Jim O'Callaghan		Lock	Wade Dooley		5
6	Max Duthie		Flanker	Mike Teague		6
7	Nigel Richardson		Flanker	Finlay Calder		7
8	Brendan Nasser		No.8	Dean Richards		8
16	Jim Jenson		Replacements	Peter Dods		16
17	Rob Ashworth			Paul Winter		17
18	Kevin Spicer			Peter Winterbottom		18
19	Richard Yeabsley			Alan Clarke		19
20	Ivan MacKenzie			Rupert Moon		20
21	Mathew de Maid			Harvey Thorneycroft		21

THE HARRY BIRRELL SCHOLARSHIP TRUST would like to thank the contributors OUIREC, Finlay Calder's Lions, the Oxbridge players and in particular Land Rover for making this day possible.

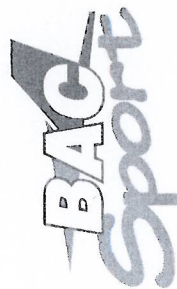
For those who would like to support this charity in the future, please write to:

The Harry Birrell Scholarship Trust
Flat 5, 13 Bedford Gardens, Kensington,
London W8 7EE

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and Spedegrafix

Introduction by

Nick Mallett

Old Andean, Oxford Rugby Blue and Springbok Player.

A few weeks after being appointed as assistant coach for the Springbok tour to Argentina and Europe at the end of 1996, I received a letter from Harry Birrell. It must have been at least 15 years since I last had any contact with him, having spent time in France. It was a quite incredible letter in which Harry reminisced in amazing detail about events that happened 25 years ago. I was honoured that he remembered my part in these events and that I had made an impression upon him during my time at St Andrew's. On reflection I feel quite sure that there are many other old Andeans who have passed through his hands, to whom Harry could write a very similar letter. He was a wonderful schoolteacher and an outstanding cricket and rugby coach.

Harry encouraged me on leaving St Andrew's, to apply for a Rhodes scholarship enthusing about his own time at Oxford and obviously believing that I would benefit from the experience. Unfortunately I was perceived to be more rounded on the sporting and social side than the academic and a stuffy highbrow selection committee thought that I wouldn't cope with the academic level required. My appetite whetted and competitive instinct vexed, I applied for and won a University of Cape Town scholarship for the same value but without the pomp and ceremony. Ideal for me. Harry was right, my two years were memorable. A Blue at

cricket and rugby confirmed the Rhodes selection committee's worst fears, but I'm happy to say that in choosing the easiest of post-graduate courses, an Upper second was my two fingered response to their lack of confidence in my academic ability. Great days indeed – for the record we won the rugby and drew the cricket.

Today's event is a wonderful way to honour a true all-rounder and congratulations to the trustees of the Harry Birrell Scholarship Trust for initiating this educational opportunity. Good luck for the match today. Let it be played in the spirit of amateurism where effort on the field is more than matched by alcoholic consumption and rugby friendship in the bar afterwards.

In South Africa we look forward to the arrival of the British Lions and the entire country is expecting a very tough series. Unfortunately I am no longer involved with the Springboks in a coaching capacity due to events beyond my control, but would like to think that the Springboks will retain some of the style that we showed in beating France and Wales on tour. We should do enough to take the series. If we don't then I might be back in the coaching job quicker than Dr Louis Luyt thinks!

Nick Mallett

Rhodes & Smith Scholars

Harry Birrell reflects on the opportunities afforded to these young students

There are four schools privileged to have an annual closed Rhodes scholarship to Oxford University: Diocesan College (Cape Town), South African College (Cape Town), Paul Roos Gymnasium (Stellenbosch) and St Andrew's College (Grahamstown).

St Andrew's College is unique, however, in that it also has the added advantage in being able to send a closed scholar to Cambridge University on the same basis as the Rhodes Scholarship. It happened this way. Douglas Smith of Somerset was a cricket professional at St Andrew's for over 40 years. A few years before he died he walked into a solicitors office in Grahamstown and said he was leaving everything to St Andrew's. He instructed the lawyer to copy Cecil Rhodes' will with regard to his scholarship to Oxford. His direction was that where the name of Cecil Rhodes appeared, the name Douglas Smith should be substituted and wherever Oxford appeared it should be crossed out and Cambridge should be written. How remarkably simple!

St Andrew's has over the years had a bond not only with the Universities. Many pupils of the school have been of 1820 Settler stock and most of the staff, particularly in the early days, came out from the United Kingdom. Since the school was founded in 1855, eleven of the sixteen

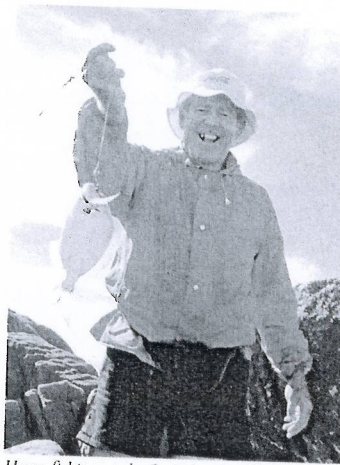
headmasters were Englishmen ordained by the Anglican Church.

Now the link between St Andrew's and England might be strengthened in that four young people, Andrew La Trobe (Rhodes Scholar), Steve Sparrow and James Elliot (past Presidents of the Vincent's Club) and Liz Brearley (past President of Oxford Ladies Blues

Committee) have all been so enamoured with St Andrew's College that they are aiming to collect sufficient funds to enable under-privileged youngsters to attend St Andrew's as scholars. These four individuals have seen what St Andrew's has to offer. Yet in spite of living and working in the heart of the Universe – London – they have such fond memories of St

Andrew's that they are aiming to solidify the link between St Andrew's and the United Kingdom. Their object is to collect pounds so that they will be able to pay Rands for under-privileged pupils to attend this famous school. I wish these four fine young friends success in their noble endeavour. As an elderly man I dream that their project will come into being, and that some of these scholars will one day become Rhodes or Douglas Smith Scholars.

Harry Birrell



Harry fishing at the St Andrew's college shack at Cliphaut in South Africa

"Something of Value"

BBC correspondent Cliff Morgan looks forward to a great day at Iffley Road, Oxford.

What a party. What a reunion for the British Lions of 1989 which instinctively won a test series. Saturday 17th May will not only mark the departure of Fran Cotton's Lions to South Africa but a great day at Oxford. The British Classics XV playing an Oxbridge Classic XV will represent an afterglow of a fabulous period of rugby history. Just reading the names will create beauty to our eyes.

Lions captain Finlay Calder and the majestic Gavin Hastings, England hooker Brian Moore and the indestructible Peter Winterbottom, Rory Underwood, Wade Dooley and Dean Richards, Mike Teague, Robert Jones and so many others, with the gift for the calculated risk and self trust when they launch this newly formed charity.

Being a British Lion for me was a dream. On my mother's knee I learned that Bob Deans did not score at Cardiff Arms Park in 1905 – that's not very Welsh – but the game was always closer to me than speech or action. It became a reality in 1955 in South Africa, a sun drenched sub continent where rugby was adored.

One day will forever stay in my memory when we won the first test at Ellis Park Johannesburg by 23 points to 22. I still remember the majesty of Jeff Butterfield of England and his beautiful passes to the wingers Cecil Pedlow and Tony O'Reilly of Ireland. The power of Phil Davies who was just like the big centres we have today and the grit and tactical knowledge of Dickie Jeeps at scrum half. But it was the forwards who won that match – seven forwards after half time when Reg Higgins was carried off. There were no replacements in those days long ago. They

held South Africa and then they beat them.

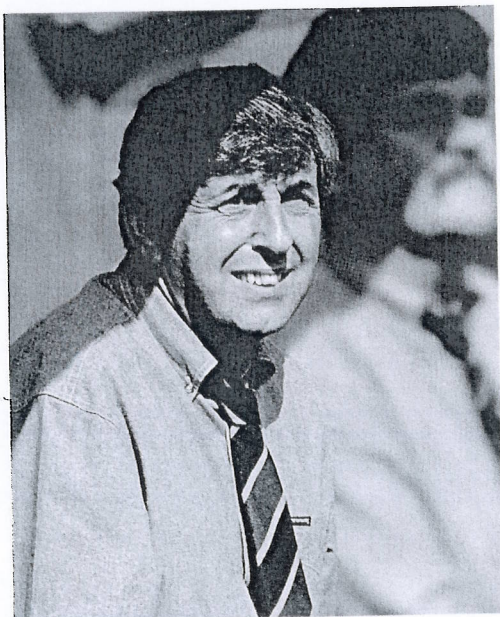
In fact Jack Van Seffe, their full back, who was a crocodile hunter, missed an easy conversion. As the ball went past the post, Billy Williams of Swansea hugged me and said: "I'm glad we went to chapel last Sunday!" The chapel he referred to was St Columbus Presbyterian where we listened to Emlyn Jones preach his sermon. When Reid of Ireland sang 'September Song', Tony O'Reilly played the piano, everyone did something to entertain our hosts. That is what touring with the Lions is all about. It's about laughter and delight and stories. It's about discovering that things in a geography or history book were a reality.

My father gave me a book to read before we went on tour. It was called 'Something of Value'. The title was taken from an old Basuto proverb. If a man gives up his good ways and throws away his ancient customs, he'd better have something of value to replace them.

That is what sport is all about, it is about insight and that enrichment of the spirit which comes only when you care about others. That is why I nod my head when I think about rugby players. ("He shall cast forth his roots and his branches shall spread.")

Isn't it marvellous what four Oxford graduates aim to give young South African children, an education in the name of Harry Birrell, whose faith over the years, has moved mountains. Isn't it wonderful that young men who have been privileged to play top class rugby want to be part of giving ... of caring for others.

Cliff Morgan



Ian McGeechan

Ian McGeechan, the Northampton Director of Rugby discusses previous and future British Lions tours with Harvey Thorneycroft

Tuesday, 1st April 1997, the night before the British Lions Touring Party is announced. There is an air of expectancy amongst many of the Northampton players, that a number of their team mates will be selected to tour South Africa in the summer. The likely players previously announced in a 62 man squad are not so confident, all suffering from pre-selection nerves.

On 17th May 1997 Ian McGeechan will embark on his third tour as British Lions coach. His first as a player was in 1974, the memorable unbeaten tour of South Africa. He recalls "This was my first overseas tour, the only tour I had been on prior to this was the Easter Tour of Gloucester and Coventry with Headingley."

Many of the players that were selected for the 1974 tour had been part of the all conquering 1971 tour of New Zealand, which was the first time the British Lions had won a test series. For Ian McGeechan this was a truly momentous experience being able to play with the likes of Willie John McBride, Gareth Edwards and J J Williams.

Ian recalls that this was Willie John McBride's sixth British Lions Tour which lasted four months and was only interrupted by five days of rain whilst they were in Cape Town.

The first time IM coached the Lions was in 1989 in Australia which was one of the only countries he had not visited. Prior to the tour the critics at home had not expected us to win many games, as the tour party was made up of all new Lions. It was therefore great for team morale, when we started winning many of our games. It was also a great shock when we lost the first test of a three match series. It was Finlay Calder who brought the players together for the second test which we eventually won.

IM recalls speaking to Robert Jones prior to the game, encouraging him to stand on Nick Farr Jones' feet as soon as the first ball was put into the scrum. Many of us will recall the ensuing fight between the two scrum halves that resulted after the first piece of set play. By preventing the half backs from playing we restricted the Australians' control and overall possession. It was our physical presence with the likes of Wade Dooley and our fierce rucking which allowed us to win the second test and go on to win the third test, having had a week off in the Gold Coast.

IM looks forward to the forthcoming tour of South Africa. This is the first professional Lions Tour and will be quite different. The memories of a long domestic season will be forgotten in South Africa. For the South Africans, a British Lions Tour is regarded as the ultimate in touring sides. Playing for the Lions is a totally different experience. Lasting only eight weeks the tour's success or failure is based upon the players and how they gel together. 1989 saw the most victorious British Lions Tour of recent history. Its accomplishment was based upon having a strong mid week side.

IM remembers the mid week side of 1989, it was captained by Donald Lennihan and aptly named "Donald's Donuts." The mid week side won many of its games and put pressure on the test side. I wish the Harry Birrell Scholarship Trust every success for the match at Oxford on the day I leave with the Lions to South Africa.