

## CLIVE HOWARD ECKERT (1932-2001)

In his moving tribute at the Service of Thanksgiving for Mary and Clive last September, David Evans recalled how he first met Clive at the age of 13 at Bedford School. Clive, one term senior, was assigned to look after the new arrival, and the first of the countless pieces of helpful advice he gave David over the years was to write his name on the label (not the lid) of the jar of Robertson's jam that had to be made to last until half-term, so that nobody could steal it.

Clive was a fine mathematician and a keen cricketer and fives player, who always put more back in than he took out. His farewell notice in the Bedford School magazine pointed out that as Head of School, he had maintained discipline 'in a consistent and unobtrusive manner, and he left the School running better than before. He had a way of getting his officials to work for him and support him, which made him popular. He was always happy as long as there was work to do; his energy, great organising ability, authority and unabating cheerfulness made him one of the best Heads of School we have had.' It was also recorded that he had spent much time 'coaching the Lower School at fives, an unselfish policy which should bear fruit in a few years'.

At Cambridge, Clive took a first in Estate Management and as a result was invited to return as a University lecturer, which he did part-time for 15 years, as well as working with his father in the family surveying and property management business. He had remained a keen fives player at Cambridge and represented the Sparrows at a time when the Blues team was at its strongest. He was a member of the University RFC touring team to Scotland in 1956, as indeed was Colin Hindson, whose obituary appears in this issue.

Two of Clive's major contributions to fives were as Secretary of the RFA Club from 1957 to 1960, and as a dedicated member of the Club committee from then until 1976. He was also elected a Vice-President of the RFA, in recognition of his contribution to the game.

Clive was married to Mary, who died just 11 days before him, for 41 years. They were both interested in music, sailing and travel, and between them they also made a further major contribution to fives in that two of their sons turned out to be very good players. Neil, now living in Sussex, was a member of the winning National Schools Doubles pair for Merchant Taylors' in 1980, and Simon, who now runs the family business, still plays with the OMTs.

Clive was not a winner of fives championships, but he was champion to play with and against, and he epitomised the friendly, generous spirit which still prevails in fives today.

*David Barnes*



*Clive Eckert (centre) with Tom Wood (left) and Geoffrey Rimmer (right) at the President's Cup party in 1980.*

*from The RFA Handbook 2001-2002*