

FELSTED SCHOOL FIVES

A brief history by David Barnes

We know from a reference in the Trustees Minutes that there was at least one Fives Court at Felsted in 1865. The standard of play around 1870 was good despite the lack of any organisational structure, but a letter from 1873 in the first edition of *The Felstedian* bemoans the decline of Fives in the School. 'There should be a Captain or Secretary elected, as for any other game; there should be a subscription amongst all those fellows who wish to go in for it.' 'There should be Fives matches all through the winter terms, and special matches for the championship at the Athletics.' 'There would then be some chance of our again producing players equal to those who have left during the last five years.'

This heartfelt plea was answered immediately. A captain was elected, a committee chosen and some club rules drawn up, mainly concerned with the responsibilities and privileges attached to membership, as well as the cost involved. Club membership would cost two shillings, and in addition a new 'fivesball' was to be supplied by the club for every doubles game, on payment of a half-penny from each player. An extra court had been added by this stage, since the elected captain, SL Rogers, wrote: 'We hope, by the aid of subscriptions, to be able to relay both courts shortly... and we propose to arrange Fives Matches as soon as possible.' 'As soon as our funds will permit of it, we intend to provide a Challenge Cup, to be played for annually.'

In March 1875, Rogers and GB Stocker were selected to represent the School against two masters (Messrs Welldon and Barton), winning the match by three games to two. Stocker was back two years later to play successfully for the Past against the Present. *The Felstedian* commented acidly: 'The less said about the play of the Present, the better.' These matches were played as doubles only; the idea of incorporating singles in a match as well came more than two decades later.

Competitive fives at Felsted in those far-off days consisted partially of Handicap contests, both Senior and Junior. The system involved redrawing the members of the winning pairs after each round, so the interest was maintained and no pair dominated. There was an unhandicapped 'Dormitory' or (from 1891) Inter-House Championship as well, with each social grouping entering at least one pair. Matches were played best of three games up to 15 points, but a feature of some of the rounds was the number of unplayed matches, with many pairs scratching. Obviously some Dormitories had little taste for fives!

The 19th Century Felsted attitude to fives is shown by an extract from *The Felstedian* editorial of February 1892: 'The three football matches in which most interest is centred – i.e. Old Boys', Highgate School and Forest School, were postponed from last term to this, and the list of matches has been further increased by one with the first Sherwood Foresters. There are the House Fives and Handicap Fives to employ the leisure hours of those who do not aspire to win honour in the sports.' This did not mean that these competitions were taken lightly by all; in 1893, 22 pairs entered for the Senior Handicap Fives, and 20 pairs for the Junior.

At the turn of the century, the only matches for the School team to show its qualities were those against the Common Room, and they were usually quite close affairs. JWHT Douglas, destined to become a famous cricketer and to captain England in Australia, was a member of a strong Felsted fives team which beat the Masters in 1901.

The Games accounts for 1901 show that entrance fees for the competitions brought in **£1.0s.6d**, while expenditure on balls from Messrs Prosser was **£15.15s.2d**. The balls must have worn out very quickly – or else the courts were perennially wet and the balls got too dark to play with. There is no actual mention in any report of wet conditions – or of rough floors and walls, for that matter. The only thing which seemed to curtail play was the absence of any electric lighting.

Felsted's first inter-school match was played away against Haileybury in March 1903. It was six-a-side, each pair playing the best of five games against its opposite pair. Haileybury won by 53 points overall and lost only two of the eleven games played. This unusual mixture of systems, where a side could theoretically lose on points and win on games, did not last long. Matches were also scheduled on the calendar for that season against Bedford Grammar School and the Old Haileyburians, but they were not recorded in *The Felstedian*.

The 1903 bill for fives balls was even more remarkable: from Messrs Hicks they cost £24.9s.2d, and from Messrs Wisden £9.5s.0d. At sixpence each, that would be 1,400 balls! A clue to the cause of this extraordinary expenditure is contained in an item of news from 1904: new roofs were fitted to the fives courts at a cost of £71, paid for out of the School Shop profits. As so often with fives courts, it was the leaky roofs which caused the problem!

The period up to the 1st World War saw regular fixtures established against Haileybury and Bedford, with honours fairly even. As frequently mentioned in match reports, the speed, size and colour of the 'foreign' courts – at Haileybury faster and smaller, and at Bedford white in colour and 'much shorter' – were cited in mitigation of a defeat, but the results were not always predictable, each school winning away on occasion. One of the best Haileybury teams contained FM Strawson, later a well-known court games player who was Chairman of the Jesters Club from 1934 to 1938 and then again from 1947 to 1953. The Jesters hold an annual Strawson Memorial Match and Dinner to commemorate all he did for the Club.

In 1910, a match report names two Felsted courts as the Inner Court and the Chapel Court. There seems to have been a third uncovered court as well, as a match report in 1912 states: 'Both the covered courts were used, and time and light permitted each pair to play three games.' Having three courts would explain the practice of playing three pairs per house in internal matches, although inter-school matches were usually restricted to two pairs. If the Common Room could raise a third pair, the bottom match was sometimes played on the day before the main encounter, possibly because the uncovered court was not in great condition. The Inner Court was preferred to the Chapel Court, but at least both had some protection against the weather.

The War put an end to inter-school matches, but some fives was played internally. The Masters could still put out a good side, with several housemasters and the Headmaster, the Rev. F Stephenson, actively involved, and this must have helped maintain the playing standard. The occasional Old Felstedian team also came to play in the years immediately after the War, and these visits increased after 1925, when the School built two new Rugby Fives courts next to the Armoury at a cost of £900 to the Tuck Shop Account.

The proximity of Cambridge meant that matches were played against various visiting Colleges, including St. Catharine's, Clare and Caius, as well as the Cambridge University Old Felstedians. Internal matches between Houses were keenly contested in the early 1930s, and the Common Room continued to provide a stiff test. After an RFA team had let the school down in 1931 by turning up late and with only two pairs instead of three, the Jesters IV that came to play in 1932 was of such quality that the result was a foregone conclusion, a loss by 53-180. The visiting team consisted of J Armitage, MJ Sieff, KC Gandar Dower and JF Burnet, and the report in *The Felstedian* read: "It was unfortunate that, to oppose the strong IV which the Jesters brought down we had to put out a team far from representative. It naturally resulted that all the games were one-sided, but our deficiency lay in the placing and not the actual hitting of the shots, and it is in the former that we should have gained some experience from the match; though we were nearly always out-generalled, yet some of the play was of quite a high standard, and that of our opponents was at once enlightening and perplexing to our IV.' Little did they know that Kenneth Gandar Dower was one of the most talented sportsmen of his generation and was National Singles champion that year; that John Armitage was captain of the victorious 1932 Cambridge University team and also a future National champion; and that Jock Burnet, the co-founder of the Jesters, was also in that Cambridge side. The fourth member of the Jesters side was to become a highly influential business leader, the first son of a life peer to be awarded a peerage in his own right. So the Felsted boys actually acquitted themselves well that day, and the report hints that they knew they were up against something special!

School matches started again in earnest in 1934, and with them came the usual reports of strange foreign courts. At Bedford Modern School: 'The structure of the courts ... differed considerably from our own, having a four-foot back wall with doors on either side wall, at the back.' At Forest School: 'The courts differed considerably from our own, being very long and having two buttresses on the left wall, a door at the back on either side and no roof, not to mention a board two feet higher than our own!' Singles were played as well as doubles in these matches, and Felsted did well to win both in view of the unfamiliar courts. That same year, St. Paul's 'brought down a strong team, which had had close matches with a number of the big fives schools; it must have been rather a shock to them to find us up to their standard, for they confessed to not having known that we played the game until two days previously.' The Paulines won 156-141. Good matches with the Masters (lost) and Allyn Old Boys (won) concluded the season, and *The Felstedian* recorded many thanks to Mr Reekie for the time and trouble he had taken in the coaching. HE Reekie was a fine player and was eventually to be Headmaster of the School from 1951-1968.

(From this point, I have only taken samples of my notes from various years.)

In the period **1930** (first Public Schools' Championships) to **1939**, Felsted entered 5 times, but without major success. Fives was nonetheless in a healthy state, as 1934 proved.

In 1936, DM Matthews, the previous year's Captain of Fives, was selected for Oxford and became the first Felstedian to play in the Varsity Match.

The Fives and Squash courts were used as paint stores during the War. Felsted had been evacuated to three large houses near Ross-on-Wye.

'In 1945 huge dumps of unevacuated furniture had to be removed from Chapel, Laboratories, Gymnasium, Fives Courts and Sanatorium.' In the summer of 1945, there was 'some tennis on the very rough Sanatorium courts and a few clumsy attempts to play Fives'.

1947 'In September less than twenty boys in the School had played fives. At the present time well over a hundred play, the courts are seldom empty and the standard, although it does not compare with that of the years before the war, is rapidly becoming higher. Next season we should be able to renew with confidence some of our previous fixtures. At the moment the fives authorities are seriously handicapped in obtaining balls. However, old stock has been just sufficient for us to be able to play the House matches and the Under 16 House matches.'

Matches resumed against Bedford Modern (from 1949), Haileybury (from 1950) and Forest (from 1951). Only the latter brought success. One has the impression that Fives had been relegated somewhat. The Inspection Report in May 1949 had said: "Swimming, Athletics, Boxing, Squash, Fives and Cross-Country Running are called 'Minor Sports' and have to find their places, in the main, in free times on the other days (i.e. not half-holidays), or, sometimes, after 'Major Sports'." In 1952, the Fives report read: 'There were no old colours available for this year's team, and the only member left from last year's VI was AN Pearson.' 'The first match had to be cancelled as it came too early in the term and the team were completely unprepared.'

In the period 1953 (the first post-war year for which the RFA has complete records) to 1969, Felsted entered the Public Schools' Championships 7 times, so there was still activity in the courts. The old fives courts were converted into a store, leaving the pair built in 1925. An outstanding player emerged in the mid-fifties, GC Willsher, who went on to represent Cambridge three times (1957-59) in the Varsity Match.

School matches continued into the 1960s against Bedford Modern and Haileybury, and clubs such as the Clove Club, Jesters, London University, and the Old Felstedians came to play at Felsted. AR Morley captained the Fives team in 1969 and was to go on to play for Oxford in 1970 and 1971. Entries from Felsted for the National Schools' Championships were becoming rarer: only three of the next fifteen years saw members of the School competing.

The first master-in-charge mentioned by name at Felsted is EC Dowdeswell, who signed the fives report in 1971. The previous year had been 'disastrous', with only one win out of seven matches, but results were better this year. Apart from the regular opponents, Merchant Taylors' School and the Old Strandians had been played and there was a respectable Colts team. House fives was going well.

The next report I examined was from 1977, and the name of DR Everett appears as master-in-charge. By this stage, the RFA Club, led by the indefatigable Tom Wood, were on the fixture list – this was a fixture that was to last until 1994/95, with a variety of match managers. Another very active Club which played against both the School and the Old Boys at this time were the UCS Old Boys. Whitgift had also briefly been taken on as school opponents.

In 1980, HH Bohling played for Cambridge in the Varsity Match. He was one of a group of a dozen keen Old Felstedians who played regular matches against the RFA Club and

other Club opponents in the 1980s. This was a tribute to David Everett, a caring and enthusiastic master-in-charge, who inspired many Felstedians to enjoy fives. His 1984 side, led by S Vogel, was a good example of the results his approach achieved. Felsted won all their senior matches that season, with the exception of two encounters with the Old Bedfordians. The Jesters, RFA Club, Old Felstedians, Haileybury and Bloxham were all beaten, and a visiting American side provided the icing on the cake. *The Felstedian* reported breathlessly: 'Fives VI v The USA was THE fixture of the season. It turned out to be 7 a side doubles. DRE's computer worked out a way of each player getting four games, each with a different partner. We won by 33 points!'

The Everett years deserve a fuller treatment, but the next fives report I have dates from 1992. A very full programme of matches had by then been established. UCS, Bloxham, Eastbourne, Sutton Valence, Tonbridge and Oundle all feature on the calendar that season, as well as the faithful RFA Club, Jesters and Old Felstedians. Leading players were CJ Blunt (who was to play for Cambridge in the Varsity Matches of 1994 and 1995), R Kilmartin, J Scofield and A Homer. Blunt and Kilmartin entered both the West of England Schools and the Nationals.

1993 was David Everett's last report. It wasn't a vintage season, despite seasoned players (Anton Homer, Julian Scofield). Ram Jenner & Iain Murray 'added some body to the blend'. There were early season defeats by club sides, plus damp courts. The players turned out regularly, but 'the small number of players now in the School restricts experience'. Victory was achieved on the indoor courts at Hampstead (against UCS). 'The cornerstone of Fives and the prospect of its continuing place in the sporting calendar lies in the Inter-House competitions. The results this year again show that the available talent is concentrated in two or three Houses. The results show only one change from last year! Anton Homer became the overall champion, keeping the cup in Mont's which was also Chris Blunt's House. It is to be hoped that the gloves will be handed on with enthusiasm for this esoteric but fascinating game.'

Sadly, they weren't. *The Felstedian* has no further fives reports after this date, and the courts, although still standing, are a sorry sight, with metal clamps holding the walls together and furniture and building materials filling both. The RFA has recently advised on the work needing to be done in order to bring them back into playable condition.

David Barnes (RFA Archivist), with many thanks to Christopher Dawkins, the Felsted School Archivist, for his help and interest.
June 2015.

January 2019 update:

I have heard from Christopher Dawkins that the decision has now been taken to knock the courts down and build classrooms on the site.

D.B

See next page Page 6) for photographs taken in 2014

See page 7 for Notes



Notes from David Barnes's visit to Felsted School in July 2014, also incorporating material accessible online.

As early as **1865** there is a reference in the Trustees Minutes to the 'Funds of the Boarding Establishment for keeping the Cricket Ground and **Fives Court** in proper order'.

The Felstedian Nov 1873. Letter regretting the decline of Fives: 'I have been very sorry to see it flagging half by half.' 'There should be a Captain or Secretary elected, as for any other game; there should be a subscription amongst all those fellows who wish to go in for it.' 'There should be Fives matches all through the winter terms, and special matches for the championship at the Athletics.' 'There would then be some chance of our again producing players equal to those who have left during the last five years.'

Dec 1873. Report on the Sixth Form v the Upper Fifth. Best of five games, won by the Sixth. 'This would undoubtedly have been a much closer match if the Upper Fifth had taken care not to make 'serves'.'

Some of the November letter's suggestions have been carried out. A captain has been elected and a committee chosen, by whom the following Rules have been drawn up:

I That there shall be a captain to be nominated by the Sixth and Fifth Forms, assisted by a committee of three, to be chosen by the captain.

II That a club shall be formed of those who are willing to pay an extra subscription, which subscription shall be fixed by the committee.

III That the members of this club shall have the privilege of playing on the **Courts** in preference to others.

IV That for every 'four' game a new fivesball will be supplied by the club, on payment of a half-penny from each player.

V That the senior boy playing shall be held responsible for the names of the four players, and that the names shall be given in to the captain.

VI That at the end of every week the amount owed for games played during that week shall be paid to the captain.

Committee: SL Rogers (Captain), PR Wilson, HFS Ramsden, GB Stocker. N.B. The subscription for the School will be one shilling; for members of the club two shillings.

Same edition. Letter from SL Rogers, the elected captain. 'We hope, by the aid of the subscriptions, to be able to re-lay **both courts** shortly; and to give a further stimulus to the game we propose to arrange Fives Matches as frequently as possible.' 'As soon as our funds will permit of it, we intend to provide a Challenge Cup, to be played for annually...' 'We earnestly hope that the School will second our efforts to revive the game of Fives, in which hitherto Felsted boys have always excelled.'

March 1875. GB Stocker and SL Rogers were selected to represent the School. Stocker bt Rogers in the final of the qualifying competition 2-0.

This pair played Messrs Welldon and Barton in the match v The Masters and beat them 15-11, 15-9, 15-15, 10-15, 15-3.

Dec 1876. Fives (doubles) Handicaps draw. Handicaps range from scratch to +6. 10 pairs.

Feb 1877. Past v Present. GB Stocker & EE Baker (Past) bt H Halford and CE Orman 2-0. 'The less said about the play of the Present, the better.' A bit cruel considering the score in the first game went to deuce and in the second to 15-8.

Dec 1877. Results of first round of Handicaps. 12 pairs. 4 of the scratch pairs won, 2 lost.

Feb 1878. F Freeman & CN Beevor (3) bt SW Skilton & ER Wawn in the final of the Handicap Doubles. The system involved redrawing the members of the winning pairs after each round.

1978/79. 2 more Handicap competitions. One of them was won by PM Beaumont & C Mitchell, who beat JES Moore & AF Mitchell in the final. The other was won by AK Holt & WC Thorne (5) beating FR Pemberton & GD Halford in the final. 'The results of the **Junior** Handicaps will appear in the May number.'

June 1882. TH Solly & SA Clench (3) bt F Yolland & AH Conder in the final of the Junior Handicaps.

'The Dormitory Championship has now been decided, No 4 having gained a well-earned victory.' 18 pairs entered. Games played best of three up to 15 points. One of the matches was won 15-14 in the final game. No handicaps. Final: No 4 (B Copland & F Yolland) bt Rev. AW Rowe's house (EF Rowe & FW Orman) 15-7, 15-14.

19 pairs entered the Annual Fives Handicaps, starting Feb 26th (1882). Top handicap 10.

March 1883. Senior Handicaps Final: F Yolland & JT Smith (2) bt GD Halford & JW Burnside (scratch).

Oct 1883. 18 Dormitory pairs listed. Nos 1, 2, 3a, 3b, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12a, 12b, 13, 14, 15, 16/17, 18-19, Rowe's House a, Rowe's House b (one Rowe in each pair!).

The final was between no 4 (F & W Yolland) and Rowe's a (EF Rowe & G Ford). No 4 won 2-1. Game scores unclear: 'A very exciting finish, each side getting one game (14 all), and the Yollands winning the last by 5 points.'

May 1884. EF Rowe & WH Clerk bt F Yolland & ARB Hearn in the final 15-11, 15-12. Rowe & Clerk were drawn together in the 2nd round, semi-final and final! Some thing fishy?

Feb 1885. JT Smith & TG Hodson (1st pair) and EA Hensley & CV Bell (2nd pair) represented the School against the Masters, WO Nares & JP Maud (1st pair) and Rev. D Ingram & CH Pearson (2nd pair). *Again the scoring is unusual, or unusually expressed: 'First sett 2-15, 15-11, 15-13. Second sett: 15-0, 15-6. Final sett: 15-13, 4-15, 15-11.'*

'Owing to the delays caused by examinations, the final tie could not be played off till this term, when on Monday Feb. 2nd, Mr Ingram & Mr Pearson beat Smith & Hodson by two games to one, the victory thus terminating with the Masters by two setts to one.'

This deserves a whole paragraph of analysis and explanation! First, a 'sett' is a term used in Eton Fives, not in Rugby Fives. We use the term 'match' to describe the encounter between two pairs, as well as for the encounter between two teams. Second, the scores of the first 'sett' are the wrong way round: they should be 15-2, 11-15, 13-15, according to the way the second and third 'setts' are expressed. Third, why were Hemsley & Bell denied the opportunity to beat Messrs Nares & Maud, unlikely though that might seem from the evidence?

In a modern Rugby Fives match between schools or clubs, we play two games of doubles against each pair, plus (usually) a game of singles against one's opposite number. The scores are all added up at the end to decide the final result of the match, so here, the Masters would have scored 103 points and the School 77, with two (or three) games

unplayed. Of course, the old system of scoring on games rather than points usually came up with the same winners!

Still Feb 1885. Large entry for the Handicaps, both Senior (16 pairs) and Junior (12 pairs). Senior Final: EA Hensley & CEH Smith bt TG Hodson & BK Wilson 13-15, 15-13, 15-4. Junior Final: CW Singer & EA Addison (2) bt RC Proctor & LA Bell (scr.). Dormitory Championships. Many scratchings! 6, 7, 5, 2, 10, 12a all scratched... a bad sign. 13 are to play 3b and 3a to play 12b in the semis.

Feb 1886. Senior (12 pairs) and Junior (11 pairs) Handicaps draw. Senior: top handicap 6. All the pairs rated at scratch won in the first round. Final round: HM Rose & TG Hodson (3) bt AO Wallace & CV Bell 12-15, 15-7, 15-7. Junior: results of round 1, but only the draw for round 2. Dormitory Fives: first round shows three scratchings. Final: EA Hensley & RB Hill (13) bt CV Bell & EM Bell (15) 15-5, 15-8.

Feb 1887. Senior (17 pairs) and Junior (12 pairs) Handicaps draw. First and second rounds of Senior show 4 scratchings. Junior has four out of six! Things get more serious in the second and third rounds. Some interesting scores in the second round (Juniors) i.e. 18-13 and 19-15. This means that they were setting to 5 from 13 all (normal for that time) but also to 5 from 14 all (not normal, 14 all should be set to 3). But they were only Juniors, so may not have known the system too well.

June 1887. Finals: Seniors: HN Paterson & WG Smith bt AWC Kennedy & R McDouall (6) 15-8, 15-10. Juniors: CF King & FG Bull bt D Deane & H Breton (3) 15-10, 15-10. 14 Dormitory teams announced: 1, 2, 3a, 3b, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12a, 12b, 13, 14, 15, Rev. AW Rowe's. Three scratchings in the first seven matches, only one three-game encounter, plus a 15-12, 15-14. Final: 3a (HN Paterson & AHG Rose) bt 7 (FH Walker & CR Bland) 15-10, 15-9.

We skip now to Feb 1889. Junior and Senior Handicaps draws. Past v Present match April 5th. Past: HN Paterson & AC Faulkner (OFs) and two masters, J Sargeant & Rev. JES Moore. Present: FJ Meyrick & AT Poole; DH Meggy & FP Joscelyne ma. One game only against each pair. Result Present 3, Past 1. Meggy & Joscelyne won both their games. Dormitory Fives draw and first round. One scratching, other matches all 2-0 except one.

Feb 1890. Dormitory Fives won by DH Meggy & AT Poole (13), beating H Breton & R McDouall (12a) who scratched in the final! First round of Senior Handicap shows 15 pairs. First round of Junior Handicap shows 18 pairs. Semis of the Senior are worth recording: P Blount & CF Simons bt FP Joscelyne & EH Kealy 15-13, 15-14. The report says that the second game reached game-ball all, meaning that 14-14 was not regarded as deuce. Second semi: DH Meggy & GL May beat CB Hayden & JF Southgate (receiving 10!) by 15-12, 15-13. The report pays tribute to Meggy's 'splendid play'. 'Meggy's services were absolutely impossible to take, and his play in the back court was magnificent. Considering Southgate is quite a beginner, he played very well in the back court, though he was rather at sea in the box.' (This last comment is unclear to me.) Meggy and May won the final easily, 15-1, 15-0! In the final of the Junior Handicap, S Garrard & HTC Weatherhead bt HP Wiltshire & F Singer.

Feb 1891. Final of the Dormitory Fives from 1890. GL May & FP Joscelyne (15) bt P Blount & GR Blount (4) 15-10, 15-5. (Meggy & Weatherhead lost in the s/f to May & Joscelyne 6-15, 15-10, 7-15.) Match v Old Boys was curtailed for **lack of light** and ended

in a draw, 4 games all. Teams. School: GL May & CB Hayden (won 1); DH Meggy & PC Blount (won 3). OFs: HN Paterson & FJ Meyrick (won 2); H Breton & R Lee-Barber (won 2). The first Inter-house Fives competition started this year (1891), replacing the Dormitory Fives. Houses: Gepp's, Salisbury's, Cleave's, Moore's. Final: Moore's (GL May & FP Joscelyne) bt Gepp's (DH Meggy & RW Stephenson) 15-7, 15-14. Senior H'cap Final: Joscelyne & Stephenson bt CB Hayden & TE Chapman 15-4, 15-9. Junior: GR Blount & AC Ingram bt HF Cooke & GH Lobb 15-6, 15-3.

Feb 1892. The attitude to Fives is shown in an extract from the Editorial:

'The three football matches in which most interest is centred – i.e. Old Boys', Highgate School and Forest School, were postponed from last term to this, and the list of matches has been further increased by one with the first Sherwood Foresters. There are the House Fives and Handicap Fives to employ the leisure hours of those who do not aspire to win honour in the sports.'

Senior H'cap final: RW Stephenson & S Potter bt TG Thornton & EW Hughes 15-3, 15-?.

Junior H'cap final: KJ McEwen & PC Curteis bt RH Godwin & PM Druce 15-11, 15-4.

Past v Present: School (RW Stephenson & AS Paterson) bt OFs (HN Paterson & DH Meggy) 11-15, 15-10. Only two games could be played in each tie. School: FP Joscelyne & JH Metcalfe) bt R Lee Barber & LG Thomas (sub) 15-14, 15-14. Two 'thoroughly exciting' games. Joscelyne & Metcalfe then beat HN Paterson & Meggy 15-14, and Stephenson & AS Paterson beat Lee Barber & Thomas 15-7. School won 5 games to 1.

Feb 1893. 5 houses entered for the House Fives Cup: Gepp's, Salisbury's, Moore's, Cleave's and Williams'. Final: Williams' (Sandys & Joscelyne) bt Gepp's (Stephenson & Weatherhead) 15-13, 15-11.

Senior H'cap: 22 pairs entered, none scratched in round one. Semis have an interesting score: Stephenson & Potter bt Sandys ma & Ingram 15-8, 13-15, **19-16**. Was this game set to 5 from 14 all? It looks like it.

Junior H'cap: 20 pairs, two scratched in R 1. Semis: McEuen mis (minimus?) & Druce bt Sandys mi & Blakiston 15-11, 15-11. Brown quart. & Morris mi – a bye. The report says that the School may, in future, 'expect some very strong players, the play on this occasion being better than has been seen among the juniors for years'. The final was disappointing, McEuen and Druce winning 15-0, 15-0!

Now there is a gap of 7 years, as I decided that I had investigated the 19th Century long enough and wanted to move on a bit!

Feb 1901. School beat Masters 2-1. Mr Grégoire's knee gave way and the match between the second pairs could not be completed. Scores: RHC Westmacott & FWW Pickance bt Rev W Elwyn & FW Stocks, Esq. 15-8, 15-13; bt Rev. AV Grégoire & AG Kent, Esq. 14-19, 15-13, 19-16. JWHT Douglas & JM Ashcroft were beaten by Rev. W Elwyn & FW Stocks, Esq. 8-15, 19-16, 19-15 (actually equal on points, 46-46).

Inter-House competition won by Elwyn's (FWW Pickance & G Stoddart) who beat Windsor's in the final 15-1, 15-5. Their first round match v Gepp's (Westmacott & Douglas) went to 7-15, 19-17, 19-16! This score shows they were still playing set 5 from 14 all.

Note: Johnny Douglas was a famous cricketer and captained England in Australia.

Senior H'cap: 18 pairs entered. No final results given. Junior H'cap: 17 pairs entered. Won by A Gullick & V Taylor who beat LC Bott & HG Janion 2-0 in the final.

The Games accounts for 1901 show that entrance fees for the competitions brought in **£1.0s.6d**, while expenditure on balls from Prosser was **£15.15s.2d**. The balls must have

worn out very quickly – or else the courts were perennially wet and the balls got too dark to play with. There is no mention in any report so far of wet conditions – or of rough floors and walls, for that matter. The only thing which seems to curtail play is the absence of any electric lighting.

Feb 1902. Draw v Masters 2-2. School: RHC Westmacott & JM Ashcroft (won 1); RS Preston & PN Warren (won 1). Masters: Rev RF Elwyn & FW Stocks (won 2); HES Cooper & AG Kent (won 0). House Fives won by Clark's (PA Bird & RS Preston) who beat Gepp's (RHC Westmacott & PN Warren) 15-12, 12-15, 15-11. Senior H'cap final: RS Preston & G Stoddart bt RHC Westmacott & CS Moseley 15-11, 15-11. Junior H'cap final: HE Kinder & JL Beaumont bt RC Lyle & AR Thomas.

March 14th 1903. **Match v Haileybury (away)**, lost by 53 points. RS Preston & G Stoddart lost to ES Hoskyns & WM Grylls 11-15, 15-10, 9-15, 8-15 (43-55) (first to win three games). AL Gullick & RW Clayton lost to JC Ford & CR Frisby 15-7, 8-15, 7-15, 8-15 (38-52). EFE Partington & U de B Charles lost to JD Munby & RC Carlile 5-15, 8-15, 8-15 (18-45). Totals: Felsted 99, Haileybury 152. *This is an unsatisfactory mixture of systems, in that for each pair to play best of five games and then add up the points as well might allow a side to win on points but lose on games – or vice versa. Both sides could claim victory!*

On the calendar, but not recorded in The Felstedian, are matches scheduled v **Old Haileyburians and Bedford GS**.

Same year. Senior H'cap **SINGLES**. @@ entries, top handicap 8. Two first round scratchings. Match v Masters lost. Preston & Stoddart lost to FW Stocks & Rev RF Elwyn 7-15, 19-18, 3-15. Clayton & DEC Wood lost to WF Beard & MB Tasker 9-15, 10-15; lost to Stocks & Elwyn 3-15, 5-15. No score recorded for Preston & Stoddart v Beard & Tasker.

House match final: Windsor's (RW Clayton & AG Collier) bt Clark's (RS Preston & DEC Wood) 15-10, 15-9. Final of the Senior H'cap SINGLES: Preston bt Collier 15-10, 10-15, 15-9. Junior H'cap SINGLES final: Jewell (rec 6) bt Balcombe (scr) 15-13, 15-9.

1903 Games accounts show subscriptions at **9s.3d.**, while balls are more expensive than in 1901 (from Hicks: **£24.9s.2d.** and from Wisden: **£9. 5s.0d.**) There is also an item marked down as 'Ling, Brake: 12s.', which I take to be the transport costs for the Haileybury match.

The 1904 matches v Haileybury and Bedford Grammar School had to be abandoned because of illness. The House Cup was won by Clark's (Preston & Wood), who beat Elwyn's (JL Beaumont & AR Inglis) 15-5, 15-7 in the final. Match v Masters was lost 0-4. Details: (School names first) AR Thomas & EFE Partington lost to Rev. RF Elwyn & FW Stocks 9-15, 5-15; lost to AG Kent & MB Tasker 7-15, 6-15. RS Preston & DEC Wood lost to Elwyn & Stocks 13-15, 4-15; lost to Kent & Tasker 15-12, 2-15, 7-15. Senior H'cap Doubles included 4 masters and had 12 pairs. Final: Stocks & Tasker bt Elwyn & Partington 15-10, 15-11. (3 masters involved – not a good sign.) Junior Competition was abandoned – not enough entries. New roofs were fitted to the fives courts at a cost of £71, paid for out of the School Shop profits.

1905 Felsted v Haileybury (home). Match won 3-0. Details (Felsted names first): AR Thomas & JE Hill bt JD Legge & GR Jackson 15-5, 15-13, 15-1. EFV Briard & ES Ulyat bt CV Walker & HF Sawbridge 15-3, 15-8, 15-12. AM Downton & D Portway bt CE

Woodhouse & HA Leakey 15-5, 15-10, 15-10. Masters again beat School 4-0: Stocks & Elwyn bt Thomas & Hill 15-9, 15-7; bt Briard & Ulyat 15-4, 15-9. Kent & AJ Hook bt Thomas & Hill 15-9, 15-11; bt Briard & Ulyat 15-8, **19-17**. School lost to Bedford GS by 28-120 points. Senior H'cap (10 pairs) final: Mr Stocks & Portway bt Ulyat & Thomas 10-15, 15-5, 15-11. Junior H'cap 5 pairs entered. Final: Page & Sharp 2 bt Jewell 2 & Brooke 15-3, 15-2.

Two matches were played in 1906, one away to Haileybury (lost 109-155) and one at home against Bedford GS (won 104-89). Details of the away match (Felsted names first): Thomas & Ulyat lost to GR Jackson & BMS Mackenzie 11-15, 9-15, 13-15. Briard & Portway lost to HF Sawbridge & RY Hedderwick 15-18, 11-15, 7-11. RC Lyle & JS Youle lost to RS Yorke & JH Mason 2-15, 6-15, 18-14, 17-18. Details of the home match: Thomas & Ulyat bt VHT Fields-Clarke & RFM Atkinson 15-1, 13-15; bt CJ Lloyd & L Deal 15-10, 17-16. Briard & EH Porter lost to Lloyd & Deal 10-15, 4-15; bt Fields-Clarke & Atkinson 15-8, 15-9.

Note: These two matches show the different systems in use at the time for school matches: both were decided on points, but the first involved playing one match against your opposite pair, best of five games; and the second, two games against each opposition pair (the modern system).

The House Challenge Cup was won by Windsor's (C).

1907 Fives v Haileybury, lost by 8 points. Match v Old Haileyburians cancelled. On the calendar there are two Bedford matches scheduled, one home, one away, but no results indicated.

1908 (N.B. There is a photo of the 1908 Fives VI.)

Match v Old Haileyburians (2 pairs) on Saturday Feb 22nd. The visitors won by 13 points. Details (Felsted names first): FE Sharp & EH Porter bt AV Deane & HS Short 15-10, 15-13, 12-15. FC Oakley & CJS King lost to H Sayer & CV Walker 8-15, 9-15, 11-15.

Two House matches were played. A (Porter & King) bt D (RP Quayle & EW Morris) 15-1, 15-4; E (KMB Cross & RS Knight) bt B (NJ Brooke & JA Sherwood) 15-6, 15-9.

Match v Bedford GS on March 11th, won by Felsted 78-46. Details: FE Sharp & FC Oakley lost to HO Sutherland & WH Miles 10-15, 8-15, 15-4. EH Porter & RH Heath bt HB Dawes & PH Lawless 15-2, 15-7, 15-3. Playing Porter in the second pair worked!

House match: C (Sharp & Heath) bt A (Porter & King) 15-7, 15-8. Final: Windsor's (C) bt Elwyn's (E) 15-2, 15-1.

1909 The House matches expanded to three pairs per house, two games against the opposing pair. Windsor's (T Allen & AV Santos; RH Heath & ND Howe; FE Sharp & JD Hawkins) bt Elwyn's (RH Palmer & HB Rose; LB Brierley & G Clayton; KMB Cross & LR Halford) 90-35, winning all six games. Stocks' (AG Thurlow & H Pakeman; NJ Brooke & CK Waller; LG Blackmore & AU Levick) bt Hornsby-Wright's (MARG Fitzmaurice & AWG Wildey; C de C Hamilton & WC Moore; SCM Archibald & AFH Round) 92-41. Again all six games went the way of the victors, one of them to 17-15 (set 3 from 14 all).

Match v Haileybury (home). Lost to a better side, 49-87. FE Sharp & NJ Brooke lost to RS Stafford & HJC Hammond 5-15, 12-15. RH Heath & LB Brierley lost to LR Pennell & JF Field 10-15, 0-15. T Allen & KMB Cross lost to GW Lock & KP Smith 11-15, 8-15.

Match v Bedford GS (away). Won 77-65, overcoming the white colour and slowness of the courts. Sharp & Heath bt PH Lawless & D O'Brien 15-7, 15-13, 10-15. Allen & Brooke bt R Wilkinson & GB Reeous 7-15, 15-10, 15-5. House matches: Windsor's bt Clark's 90-13. Final: Windsor's bt Stocks' 90-20.

1910 Match v Masters. **Inner and Chapel Courts** used. Masters won 125-70. Scores (Masters first) FW Stocks & RP Medley bt NJ Brooke & ND Howe 15-9, 15-5, 15-9. Rev F Stephenson (Headmaster) & JH Owen bt AMP Scaife & CK Waller 15-4, 15-11, 15-2. WK Armitstead & Rev EI Robson bt AFH Wiggin & AG Thurlow 15-11, 18-17.

Match v Haileybury (away) was badly lost. The courts were faster and smaller than the Felsted ones. All 18 games were lost (3 pairs played 2 games against each pair). No scores recorded! Teams – Felsted: Brooke & Howe; Scaife & Waller; Wiggin & Thurlow. Haileybury: JF Field & **FM Strawson**; KP Smith & HB Salmon; HG Vincent & PR Frere.

Note: Frank Strawson became a well-known court games player who was Chairman of the Jesters Club from 1934 to 1938 and again from 1947 to 1953. The Jesters hold an annual Strawson Memorial Match and Dinner to commemorate all he did for the Club.

House match: Elwyn's bt Medley's by 75 to 65. Match v Bedford GS, played in the Inner and Chapel Courts and lost by 87-109 points. Scores: Brooke & Howe lost to NS Maltby & REC Weigall 29-33; bt DS O'Brien & A Reaves 25-16. HW MacGeorge & AMP Scaife lost to Maltby & Weigall 13-30; lost to O'Brien & Reaves 20-30. House matches: Stocks' bt Elwyn's 90-46; Windsor's bt Montgomery's 75-68. Final: Stocks' bt Windsor's 92-58. Played in the Inner Court. 'A break has been made at last in the number of years that Windsor's have held this cup'. 3 pairs played 2 games against opposing pair.

1911 Match v Masters in the Inner Court. Masters won 6 games to 2. Scores: FW Stocks & RP Medley bt ND Howe & ER Allen 15-4, 15-4. The Headmaster & JH Owen bt DN Morgan & WJ Nicol 15-4, 11-15, 15-3. WK Armitstead & JE Montgomery bt LR Halford & NH Moller 10-15, 15-7, 15-10. House match: Elwyn's bt Medley's 84-67.

Match v Bedford GS (away). Two pairs. 'Our players never seemed to be comfortable in the courts, which are much shorter than ours.' Bedford 134, Felsted 72. Details: ND Howe & DN Morgan lost to NS Maltby & G Field 10-15, 8-15; lost to RT Peel & GM Beville 9-15, 6-15. ER Allen & LR Halford lost to Peel & Beville 18-15, 3-15, 12-15; lost to Maltby & Field 6-15, 3-15.

Match v FC Oakley's team. 2 pairs. Narrowly lost by 5 games to 6. Results: Howe & Morgan beat FC Oakley & NJ Brooke 15-8, 8-15, 15-6; beat W Darlington & AR Reven 7-15, 15-12, 15-13. Allen & Halford lost to Darlington & Reven 8-15, 10-15; lost to Oakley & Brooke 15-12, 8-15, 13-15. Points score would have been School 129, Oakley's 141. House matches semis: Windsor's bt Stocks' by 37 pts; Elwyn's bt Montgomery's by 10 pts. Final: Windsor's bt Elwyn's by 30 pts. (3 pairs per house.) Senior H'cap Final: ER Allen (C) & WJ Nicol (D) bt R Nicholson (C) & LCP Scaife (D) 18-16, 15-8.

1912 School v NH Moller's team. Two pairs. School won 143-71. HAR Crookham & H Linares bt WB Johnson & DA Marriott 15-2, 15-5, 14-17; bt NH Moller & TS Whittaker 15-2, 15-10. WJ Nicol & AJ Beard bt Moller & Whittaker 15-8, 15-2, 9-15; bt Johnson & Marriott 15-6, 15-4. House matches semi: Medley's bt Windsor's by 36 pts; Final: Medley's bt Stocks' by 26 pts. (3 pairs per house.) Match v Masters was lost 1 game to 6. Crookham & Linares lost to Mr Stocks & Mr Medley 12-15, 8-15; Beard & GG Elliott lost to Rev F Stephenson & Mr Owen 11-15, 17-18; GH Raby & A McLeod lost to Mr Armitstead & Mr Montgomery 15-6, 6-15, 12-15. Masters 99 pts, School 81 pts.

School v CA Eves' team. Visitors won by 12 points. Scores: Crookham & Linares bt CA Eves & TAM Gardner 15-4, 15-11, 15-11; bt CD McIver & FGS Baker 15-11, 15-11, 16-17. Beard & Elliott lost to McIver & Baker 10-15, 11-15, 8-15; lost to Eves & Gardner 15-8, 7-15, 4-15. School 146, Eves 158. Senior H'cap Final: Crookham (B) & JA Moore (A) bt Scaife (D) & HW Duffield (D) 18-17, 15-6.

1912 (November) School v Masters. Masters won 138-70. Stocks & Medley bt D Longden & H Linares 15-5, 15-5, 15-5; The Headmaster & WK Armitstead bt A McLeod & EI Wynne-Jones 15-5, 15-14, 18-17; Owen & Montgomery bt EWC Wace & GM Heath 15-6, 15-6, 15-7. School v NH Moller's team. School won by 17 pts. **Both the covered courts** were used, and time and light permitted each pair to play three games.' Linares & McLeod bt A Habsen & NH Moller 15-0, 15-1, 15-11; G Gale & D Whitehead bt D Longden & EI Wynne-Jones 17-15, 15-3, 15-9; EWC Wace & GM Heath bt F Whittaker & G Marriott 18-17, 17-15, 18-16. School 124, Moller's 107.

1913 (Feb) School v HAR Crookham's team. School won 137-85. Linares & McLeod bt Crookham & Elliott 15-5, 15-8, 15-5; bt Duke & OR Hawkins 15-2, 15-3. Wace & Wynne-Jones bt Duke & OL Hawkins (sic) 15-12, 15-4, 10-15; lost to Crookham & Elliott 12-15, 10-15. DJ Longden (captain) was absent. House matches: Hornsby-Wright's (Elwyn House) bt Windsor's 81-48. Semis: Medley's bt Stocks' 72-57; Montgomery's bt H-W's 76-56. Final: Mont's bt Medley's by 18 pts. (3 pairs playing two games against opposing pair.)

Calendar for Easter Term 1914. Fives House Matches scheduled for Mon 16th Feb., Tuesday 17th Feb., Thursday 19th Feb. Final House Match scheduled for Tuesday 19th March.

1914 Feb. The School versus The Masters (Dec. 8th and 9th). The Third Pairs played on the first day, when the Masters established a lead of 10 points. On the second day, the First Pairs played in the Inner Court and the Second Pairs in the Chapel Court. Details: A MacLeod & EI Wynne-Jones tied with JH Owen Esq and RP Medley Esq 15-8, 12-15, 11-15. EWC Wace & GM Heath lost to the Headmaster & WK Armitstead Esq 16-18, 6-15, 15-18. AG Calthrop & RE Hopkins lost to JE Montgomery Esq & FG Turner Esq 13-15, 3-15, 15-11. Masters 130, School 106.

1914 March. House matches played on 5th, 16th and 19th February. Doubles only are played, 3 pairs per house. All points scored count towards the result. Two games only against the opposing pair, no other games. Typical score: 81-66. Houses are called: Montgomery's, Hornsby-Wright's, Stocks', Windsor's, Medley's. Final House Match: Armitstead's v Medley's, played on Mon Mar 9th, won by Armitstead's by 5 points, 75-70. Teams. Armitstead's: GE Ingle & AG Calthrop; VS Woodiwiss & GM Heath; MV Beningfield & FH Brown. Medley's: RL Bicknell & RB Beavor; OL Burt & LAS Fox; JG Dixon & AR Solly.

Gap here during the war years.

1918 Feb. The School 83, The Masters 87. Teams. School: EA Forbes & EA Berry; WJ Tomlinson & FG Whybrow; EC Bethune & PH Adams. 3 from B, 2 from C, 1 from D. Masters: JH Owen & RP Medley; Rev F Stephenson & JE Montgomery; SJ Evans & ER Adair. The second pairs played three games, the others only two. If the second pairs had only played two games, the School would have won by 3 points!

1920 House matches only on calendar.

1921 Match scheduled v Mr Gray's IV.

1922 Fives v OFs at Whitsuntide. Details: (OF names first) RH Heath & LE Stephens beat W Dupré & JS Balfour 8-15, 15-6; FH Collier & JR Becket beat AS Roberts & BM Cantrill

15-10, 15-3; AA Moller & L Gilbert lost to DHS Cameron & WHC Ford 3-15, 15-18. OFs won by 4 points. House Matches: Windsor's (C) bt Medley's (A) by 44 pts. Semis: Elwyn's (E) bt Montgomery's (D) by 51 pts; Cooper's (B) bt Windsor's (C) bt 53 pts. Final: Cooper's bt Elwyn's by 20 pts. No School matches on calendar.

1923 School v Masters. School won by 5 games to 2. Scores: W Dupré & JS Balfour bt Mr Owen & Mr Medley 18-16, 15-13. DHS Cameron & JG Tomlinson bt The Headmaster & Mr Armitstead 15-11, 15-9. WHC Ford & FW Girling lost to Mr Telfer & Mr Cornwall 15-10, 13-15, 6-15. Points: School 97, Masters 89.

*1925 New courts opened, according to a match report from 1934. Craze's 'A History of Felsted School' (page 274) confirms this: **Two new Rugby Fives courts were built next to the Armoury at a cost of £900 to the Tuck Shop Account.***

1926 March. School beat TM Shankland's VI from Cambridge by one point. PG Rossel & SW Behrend drew with TM Shankland & JG Tomlinson 15-13, 13-15; R de P Gauvin & JO Gilbert lost to HS Robin & GRR Bacon 1-15, 5-15; FG Norton & FN Webb beat PD Fee-Smith & TE Burrows 15-1, 15-6. *(I feel that Mr Shankland's team won this match by one point, if the above details are correct!)*

1927 School lost to St Catharine's College Cambridge 108-115. Scores: SW Behrend & EG Pyne lost to AK Judd & GH Bacon 7-15, 6-15, 9-15. NF Webb & FG Norton lost to AP Dearsley & IW Naylor 17-16, 15-11, 9-15. CJ White & HF Cresswell bt Rev HG Chaytor & Donald Portway 15-10, 15-5, 15-13. House matches. Windsor's (C) bt Elwyn's (E) 78-56. Montgomery's (D) beat Medley's 94-35. Windsor's (C) bt Cooper's (B) 76-58. Final: Windsor's defeated Mont's 89-57.

1928 School bt Cambridge University Old Felstedians. Scores: NF Webb & WJD Cooper bt JG Tomlinson & DHS Cameron 15-6, 15-9, 14-15. RWJ Egerton & RJ Stuart King bt TM Shankland & D Portway 15-4, 15-5, 15-5, 15-6 (?). RC Parker & CJ Smalley bt EG Pyne & TE Burrows 15-3, 15-0, 15-5. No doubt as to who won this match!

School bt Caius College Cambridge by 129 to 88. Scores: Webb & Cooper bt Mayne & White 8-15, 15-2, 16-18. Egerton & S-King bt Webb & Martin 15-11, 15-9, 15-5. Parker & Smalley bt O'Brien & Wason 15-11, 15-10, 15-7.

Dec 1928 'Fives. The standard was poor, only Parker (E) showed any idea of placing or hitting low. Elwyn's won the Senior House Cup, and Cooper's (B) the under XVI.'

1929 House matches. Cooper's (B) bt Cuttle's (C) 89-66. Semis: Cooper's bt Elwyn's (E) 71-60; Montgomery's (D) bt Medley's (A) 79-54. Final: Mont's bt Cooper's 92-65. Under XVI. C bt D 80-51. Semis: C bt A 74-56; E bt B 72-63. Third Place: B bt A 81-35. Final: E bt C 87-57. 'There was a very keen interest taken in Fives, and some good games took place between the Houses.'

1930 House matches. Senior Final: Cooper's bt Montgomery's 92-52. Juniors. C bt E 81-42. Semis: B bt A 94-48; D bt C 72-62. Third place: C bt A 86-48. Final: Cooper's bt Mont's 81-76. 'Fives is still a very popular form of exercise, and considerable keenness is shown for places in the House team.'

Match v CUOFs. School 135, CUOFs 17. Not a good match. RA Brabner listed as captain. Match v Clare College Cambridge. Clare 199, School 180. Details: GE Reindorp & PCE Rose bt WM Russell & J Walley 13-15, 15-10; lost to HE Reekie & J Reekie 12-15, 8-15;

bt HP Coghlan & WCW Brice 15-6, 15-1. RL Macgregor & CEN Wyatt bt Russell & Walley 21-20, 15-12; lost to the Reekies 9-15, 5-15; did not play the 3rd pair. HJN Skelton & LF Stubbs bt Coghlan & Brice 14-18, 15-4; lost to the Reekies 3-15, 4-15; did not finish v Russell & Walley 8-15, 8-8.

1931 House matches. E bt D 83-59. Semis: B bt A 90-21; E bt C 60-26. Final: Cooper's (B) 82, Elwyn's (E) 39. U XVIIs: C bt A 78-41; B bt D 75-20. Semis: C bt B 66-63; Ingle's (G) bt E 72-58. 3rd place: B bt E 75-42. Final: C bt G 60-20, the third pairs not playing. Match v CUOFs. GE Reindorp & RL Macgregor bt RA Brabner & WJD Cooper 12-15, 15-7. PCE Rose & CEN Wyatt bt C Portway & GCI Gill 15-9, 15-7. School 57, CUOFs 38. Match v Masters (Nov 4th): Cond & Mason lost to HE Reekie & PG Rendall 8-15, 17-18; bt HH Cuttle & TE Hodgson 15-6, 17-15; bt HL Harris & EH Lockwood 15-4, 15-7. Symondson & Edwards lost to Reekie & Rendall 6-15, 6-15; lost to Cuttle & Hodgson 11-15, 5-15; lost to Harris & Lockwood 9-15, 5-15. Cooper & Taylor lost to Reekie & Rendall 8-15, 12-15; lost to Cuttle & Hodgson 11-15, 11-15; bt Harris & Lockwood 15-18, 15-8. School 201, Masters 241.

Match v RFA (Nov 18th). One pair arrived at 2.30, the other at about 3.45. No third pair, so Messrs Reekie and Hodgson stood in. One of the RFA players, Glassborow, was outstanding. Details: Mason & Cond lost to Mant & Richards 11-15, 6-15, 4-15; lost to Glassborow & AN Other 3-15, 1-15, 9-15. Wakefield & Edwards lost to Mant & Richards 7-15, 14-17. Darkness prevented further play, but the third pair (Gundry & Lowe) lost 2-15, 3-15, 4-15 to Reekie & Hodgson.

A most unsatisfactory match, reflecting poorly on the RFA.

1932 The Jesters brought a very strong side, consisting of J Armitage, MJ Sieff, KC Gandar Dower & JF Burnet, and the result was predictable: 53-180. I quote the excellent report in full: 'It was unfortunate that, to oppose the strong IV which the Jesters brought down we had to put out a team far from representative. It naturally resulted that all the games were one-sided, but our deficiency lay in the placing and not the actual hitting of the shots, and it is in the former that we should have gained some experience from the match; though we were nearly always out-generalled, yet some of the play was of quite a high standard, and that of our opponents was at once enlightening and perplexing to our IV.'

Little did they know that Kenneth Gandar Dower was one of the most talented sportsmen of his generation and was National Singles champion that year; that John Armitage was captain of the victorious 1932 Cambridge University team and also a future National champion; and that Jock Burnet, the co-founder of the Jesters, was also in that Cambridge side. The fourth member of the Jesters side was to become a highly influential business leader, the first son of a life peer to be awarded a peerage in his own right. So the Felsted boys actually acquitted themselves well that day, and the report hints that they knew they were up against something special!

Scores: Cond & Edwards lost Armitage & Sieff 6-15, 0-15, 5-15; lost to Gandar Dower & Burnet 5-15, 1-15, 5-15. Cooper & Matthews lost to Armitage & Sieff 8-15, 1-15, 4-15; lost to Gandar Dower & Burnet 5-15, 7-15, 6-15.

House matches. Semis: Cuttle's (C) bt Elwyn's (E); Cooper's (B) bt Montgomery's (D). Final: Cuttle's bt Cooper's. U16s: B bt G; E bt C. Semis: B bt E; D bt A. Final: B bt D.

1933 Match v RFA, lost 65-105. Matthews & Hast lost to WJ Rees & BC Feiller; lost to RL Edwards & B Arthure 15-12, 5-15. RM Cooper & AF Street lost to Rees & Feiller 4-15, 2-

15; bt Edwards & Arthure 15-9, 15-9. 'Unfortunately our first pair somewhat unaccountably failed against their second pair.'

1934 Match v Bedford Modern School. The 'first away match in the history of the School' (*untrue, the first was v Haileybury in 1903*), was won 171-91. 'The structure of the courts ... differed considerably from our own, having a four-foot back wall with doors on either side wall, at the back.' **Singles were played – one game against one's opposite number.** Scores: DM Matthews bt DV Emmerton 16-15; RM Cooper bt DRF Allen 15-11; JC Collis bt PG Grey 15-5; ECP Glaisher bt K Hartock 15-0. Matthews & Collis bt Emmerton & Allen 15-6, 15-7; bt Grey & Hartock 15-7, 15-0. Cooper & Glaisher lost to Emmerton & Allen 15-11, 5-15; bt Grey & Hartock 15-5, 15-8.

Match v Masters, lost 78-111. 'It was intended to be a practice for the School matches this Term, but the team was very much off form, and the match was confined to doubles.'

Scores: (Masters first) HE Reekie & GE Ingle bt RM Cooper & WCA Church 15-6, 15-4; lost to JC Collis & DM Matthews 13-15, 8-15. HH Cuttle & AU Payne bt Matthews & Collis 15-13, 15-8; bt Cooper & Church 15-9, 15-8.

House Matches: E bt C 67-64; B bt G 76-71. Final: Elwyn's (E) bt Cooper's (B) 90-49. All six Elwyn's players were of much the same standard. (Three pairs, two games against the opposing pair.) U16s: B bt G 88-44; D bt A 90-17. S/Fs: E bt C 90-31; B bt D 79-54.

Losers' Final: C bt D 82-55. Final: E bt B 80-74.

Match v Forest School (away). Won 119-107. **'The courts differed considerably from our own, being very long and having two buttresses on the left wall, a door at the back on either side and no roof, not to mention a board two feet higher than our own!'** *In the circumstances, Felsted did rather well to win.*

Scores: RM Cooper lost to RM Knapman 7-15; DM Matthews beat KF Taster 15-10. (Only two singles played due to late arrival.) Matthews & SH Bullough bt Knapman & PC Hill 15-10, 12-15; bt DS Norman & Taster 15-4, 15-3. Cooper & J Powell lost to Knapman & Hill 13-15, 1-15; bt Norman & Taster 15-5, 11-15.

Match v St Paul's (home), lost 141-156. The match was arranged to replace a boxing match, as many of the Felsted boxers were down with 'flu. 'St Paul's brought down a strong team, which had had close matches with a number of the big fives schools; it must have been rather a shock to them to find us up to their standard, for they confessed to not having known that we played the game until two days previously.' Details: (St Paul's names first) AR Colville bt DM Matthews 15-6; EN Tiratsoo bt RM Cooper 15-9; WH Plummer bt JC Collis 15-10; NF Crofts lost to JS Wyatt 11-15. Colville & Plummer lost to Matthews & Collis 11-15, 15-14; bt Cooper & Wyatt 15-13, 15-5. Tiratsoo & Crofts bt Cooper & Wyatt 15-9, 15-15 (sic); lost to Matthews & Collis 9-15, 5-15. 'The School thus lost by 15 points though they won the doubles by a point.'

Match v The Masters, lost 143-154. Matthews was badly bruised, so Powell stood in to good effect. 'It was a very enjoyable match indeed. It was hoped that the School might win for the first time since **1925, when the new courts were opened.**' Details: (Masters' names first) HE Reekie bt RM Cooper 15-9; AU Payne bt JC Collis 15-11; TEH Hodgson lost to JS Wyatt 6-15; HL Harris lost to J Powell 2-15. Reekie & Harris bt Cooper & Powell 15-13, 15-9; bt Wyatt & Collis 15-7, 15-11. Payen & Hodgson bt Wyatt & Collis 15-10, 13-15; drew with Cooper & Powell 15-13, 13-15.

Match v Alleyn Old Boys, won 146-141. Details: (Felsted names first) DM Matthews bt Salter 15-3; RM Cooper lost to Poyner 4-15; JC Collis bt Hood 15-14; JS Wyatt lost to Davies 10-15. Matthew & Collis bt Hood & Salter 15-9, 15-10; bt Poyner & Davies 15-13, 15-11. Cooper & Wyatt bt Poyner & Davies 15-10, 15-11; lost to Salter & Hood 7-15, 5-15. **'A very successful season** was thus concluded, and many thanks are due to **Mr Reekie**

for the time and trouble he has taken in the coaching. It is to be hoped that the present keenness throughout the whole School will continue for a long time.'

At this stage, time was running short, so I limited myself to taking samples from various years. The following notes include these samples, plus material gleaned from the Felsted online archive and from Craze's History.

1935 No Fives matches on calendar. DM Matthews was Captain of Fives, as well as being Senior Prefect and Captain of Cricket.

1936 Craze, page 306: '**DM Matthews played Fives for Oxford in 1936**'. No Fives matches on calendar. PR Cavalier was Captain of Fives.

1937 Oct. Valetes show how many leavers had played Fives, either for School or House. Answer: not that many. BJ Palmer Captain of Fives.

1938 MG Harker Captain of Fives.

1930s (From the RFA Archives.) In the period **1930** (first Public Schools' Championships) to **1939**, Felsted entered 5 times.

1941 Mar. *Two of the Obits mention Fives. I was moved by RA Chanin's.* 'Richard Chanin will be remembered as the small person who was always to be found in the Fives Courts whenever there was the opportunity for a game, and he realised his ambition by gaining his House fives colours in 1936.' More Valetes follow.

1945 Craze, page 327: 'The Fives and Squash Courts had been paint stores during the 2nd World War.' Craze, page 330: 'In 1945 huge dumps of unevacuated furniture had to be removed from Chapel, Laboratories, Gymnasium, Fives Courts and Sanatorium.' Craze, page 331: In the summer of 1945, there was 'some tennis on the very rough Sanatorium courts and a few clumsy attempts to play Fives'.

1947 'In September less than twenty boys in the School had played fives. At the present time well over a hundred play, the courts are seldom empty and the standard, although it does not compare with that of the years before the war, is rapidly becoming higher. Next season we should be able to renew with confidence some of our previous fixtures. At the moment the fives authorities are seriously handicapped in obtaining balls. However, old stock has been just sufficient for us to be able to play the House matches and the Under 16 House matches.' Results: Gepp's bt Ingle's; Windsor's bt Stocks'. S/Fs: Gepp's bt MONT's; Windsor's bt Elwyn's. Final: Windsor's bt Gepp's. Under 16s: Gepp's bt Mont's; Ingle's bt Stocks'. S/Fs: Windsor's bt Gepp's; Ingle's bt Elwyn's. Final: Ingle's bt Windsor's.

1948 JN Wordsworth Captain of Fives.

1949 Spring. G Troncin is Captain of Fives. More Valetes. Same edition. **Match v Bedford Modern**. Played at home on Sat Jan 22nd. Lost by 118-178. Troncin lost to Taylor 10-15; McGowan lost to Bristow 11-15; Wallace lost to Arnold 12-15; Green lost to Hayward 6-15. All doubles lost (19-30, 12-30, 21-30) except one (28-27).

1949 Summer. Lots of Valetes. Inspection Report, May 1949. "Swimming, Athletics, Boxing, Squash, Fives and Cross-Country Running are called 'Minor Sports' and have to

find their places, in the main, in free times on the other days (i.e. not half-holidays), or, sometimes, after 'Major Sports'."

1949 Autumn. Mention of evacuation 'to the Wye Valley' during the war. More Valetes. Same edition. House Fives Match s/f (Windsor's v Follyfield) in detail, very close. Final another excellent match (Windsor's v Montgomery's). One rally contained over 60 shots! Teams. Windsor's: CJ Burton & CJ New; MR Wright & PE Rawson. Singles: CJ Burton. Montgomery's: G Troncin & AH Bradbury; WW Ashton & DM McLean. Singles: G Troncin. 'The Fives was easily the best seen in the School since the war.'

1950 Match v Bedford Modern, lost by 72 points (98-170). Details: CJ Burton lost to Taylor 0-15; G Troncin lost to Bristowe 7-15; FCD Green lost to Cooper 5-15; AH Bradbury bt Gale 16-14. Troncin & Bradbury lost to Taylor & Bristowe 3-15, 4-15; lost to Cooper & Gale 14-16, 11-15. Burton & Green bt Cooper & Gale 15-13, 15-7; lost to Taylor & Bristowe 2-15, 6-15.

Match v Haileybury & ISC, lost by 111 points (70-181). Details: G Troncin lost to Kilbourn 2-15; FCD Green lost to Bicknell 7-15; PN Marsden lost to Mitton 3-15; AH Bradbury lost to Campbell 9-15. Green & Bradbury lost to Kilbourn & Bicknell 3-15, 4-15; lost to Mitton & Campbell 12-15, 14-16. Troncin & Marsden lost to Mitton & Campbell 4-15, 3-15; lost to Kilbourn & Bicknell 4-15, 5-15.

1951 Match v Bedford Modern, lost 90-157. Details: FCD Green lost to Bristowe 6-15; CJ New lost to Gale 4-15; WW Ashton lost to Cooper 6-15; AN Pearson lost to Hebblethwaite 4-15. Green & New lost to Bedford I (no names given) 15-8, 5-15; bt Bedford II 15-7, 15-7. Ashton & Pearson lost to Bedford II 4-15, 6-15; lost to Bedford I 6-15, 4-15.

Match v Haileybury & ISC, lost 103-167. FCD Green lost to Mitton 4-15; CJ New lost to Campbell 14-16; WW Ashton lost to Bolton 5-15; AN Pearson lost to Attenborough 5-15. Green & New lost to Haileybury I 9-15, 9-15; bt H II 15-8, 15-8. Ashton & Pearson lost to HII 11-15, 2-15; lost to HI 6-15, 8-15.

Match v Forest School (away), won 110-76. No singles. Green & New bt Forest I 15-8, 15-4; bt Forest II 15-4, 15-4. Pearson & Ashton lost to FI 12-15, 8-15; bt FII 15-9, 15-9.

House Fives Competitions. Senior: Mont's bt Follyfield; Windsor's bt Elwyn's. S/Fs: Stocks' bt Mont's; Windsor's bt Gepp's. Final: Windsor's bt Stocks'. Junior: Stocks' bt Follyfield; Elwyn's bt Gepp's. S/Fs: Mont's bt Stocks'; Windsor's bt Elwyn's. Final: Windsor's bt Mont's.

1952 'There were no old colours available for this year's team, and the only member left from last year's VI was AN Pearson.' 'The first match had to be cancelled as it came too early in the term and the team were completely unprepared.'

Team: AN Pearson, PJ Beale, AW Grace, CG Hanson. Match v Haileybury, lost 58-180.

Match v Forest, won 173-72. Colours to PJ Beale.

House matches: Windsor's bt Elwyn's; Stocks' bt Gepp's. S/Fs: Windsor's bt Mont's; Stocks' bt Follyfield. Final: Windsor's bt Stocks'.

(From the RFA Archives) In the period **1953** (the first post-war year for which we have complete records) **to 1969**, Felsted entered the Public Schools' Championships 7 times.

1956 Pelham Clark Captain of Fives.

1957, 1958, 1959 GC Willsher represented Cambridge in the Varsity Match.

1958 No Fives scheduled on calendar.

1959 Matches v Clove Club, Bedford Modern (A), Jesters.

1960 Matches v Haileybury (A), Jesters, London University, Bedford Modern (H). Fives and Squash were part of the U16 House Competition, involving Rugger, Hockey, Swimming etc. Montgomery's won, Stock's were second, both Houses good at Fives.

1960 Autumn. Valetes – only one mention of Fives.

1961 Fives matches v Clove Club, Bedford Modern, Jesters, London University, RFA and Old Felstedians.

1962 No Fives matches scheduled on calendar. Valetes. One or two Fives mentions.

1963 Matches v Haileybury (H), Jesters, Bedford School (A) and Clove Club.

Old Felstedian Number 1965. 'The fives team also responded well to enthusiastic direction.'

Old Felstedian Number 1969. 'AR Morley captained the Fives.' **Morley was to play for Oxford in 1970 and 1971.**

OF Number 1969. Tribute to Henry Reekie, HM 1951-68, and a very good fives player: '... the **old fives courts** were reshaped as a store.' (Mid 1950s.)

Obit for Robert P Medley, Housemaster for 26 years. 'Although he wore rather thick glasses he had amazingly quick eyes and this showed up especially in the Fives court. With his remarkable reach, clean, hard hitting and astonishing speed he was a formidable opponent. With his partner JH Owen (who **never wore gloves** 'because I can feel the ball better without them') the Masters' First Pair rarely met their match.' He retired in 1936 and went to live with his sister in Gerrards Cross. A pillar of the Church and an ARP Warden during the war. Died Jan 31st 1969 aged 86. He was a Rossallian who was very attached to Frank Stephenson, then Rossall Sixth Form Master, who was appointed HM of Felsted in 1906. Stephenson retired from Felsted in 1933, Medley felt himself to be very much out on a limb but stayed on for three more years from a sense of duty.

(From the RFA Archives) In the period **1970 to 1985**, Felsted entered the National Schools' Championships 3 times.

1971 Summer. From 'The Felstedian'. Fives report by **EC Dowdeswell**. **First naming of a master-in-charge**. Disastrous season last year (won one out of seven matches), but this year has been better. Three of last year's team back, Stimpson as captain, Bullouch and Menzies. Prebble, last year's Colts winner, made up the IV. Illness and unavailability meant we only fielded this side twice. Cain, Hashim and Utudjian filled in. Standard rose during term. Results: beat **Old Strandians** 143-132, **Ravens** 122-76, **Haileybury** (a) 113-80. Lost to **Bedford Modern** 104-179, **MTs** 84-172, **Jesters** 80-174, **Bedford 'A'** 127-156, **Clove Club** 55-140. Colts beat **Haileybury** 113-80. Bullouch, Menzies & Prebble were awarded colours. Colts team: Rees, Bailey, Guess, Roach. House comps: Elwyn's beat Mont's by 5 points, Stocks' won Junior comp by beating Mont's by seven points. OS:

Stimpson beat Menzies 15-13, 15-6. Prebble ill, otherwise things could have been different. Grimley won Junior Singles. Next year promises well.

Clubs and schools played in the 1970s included: Old Strandians, Clove Club (Old Hackney Downs), London University Ravens, Bedford, Bedford Modern, Haileybury, Merchant Taylors.

1977 A moderately successful season, more playing members than for a number of years. Lots of Colts. In spite of rain, no matches were cancelled due to weather. Jeremy Bright, Edward Fairhead and Guy Stephenson were all good but also hockey players. Simon Wilson earned a regular place in the IV. A Rees especially good as a Colt. Results: bt DRE's IV 177-73; RFA Club 131-119; OFs 162-123. Lost to Whitgift 45-180; Jesters 68-181; Haileybury 139-152. Played: JW Bright, CSM Pugh, NBS Fresson, EJ Fairhead, GC Stephenson, LSJ Wilson, SJ Jones, MJW Thorp. Colts results: bt Hailybury (A) 159-118. Lost to Whitgift 7-180 (??); Haileybury (H) 88-169. Played: AD Banks, TM Berry, RT Hancock, JD Hartnell-Beavis, AWG Rees, RI Smith, MW Tinknell.

1978 Little success in School matches but a strong membership of the club. Results: bt Haileybury 156-115; OFs 112-69. Lost to: Jesters 81-179; UCSOBs 111-180; RFA Club 119-135; Haileybury 140-144. Players: Guy Stephenson, Jeremy Bright, Ted Fairhead, Simon Wilson, Andrew Banks. Gepp's won both House comps, the Senior by ONE point over Mont's.

1980 HH Bohling played for Cambridge in the Varsity Match.

1984 'The Fives Club has had one of its most successful seasons for many a year.' Steven Vogel was captain and gave much time to coaching others. Guy Paterson lacked commitment although he played in 5 matches. Robert Brown, Stuart Pearson and Howard Newson also played for the School. Lower VIth players: Edward Lainchbury, Nigel Knight, Mohammed Al-Jeda. All Senior were won except v Old Bedfordians! Vogel, Lainchbury, Brown and Pearson played in the Greater Manchester Youth Championships, but without success on court. Fives VI v The USA was THE fixture of the season. It turned out to be 7 a side doubles. DRE's computer worked out a way of each player getting four games, each with a different partner. We won by 33 points!

Strong Colts (Norris, Curtis, Stuart Martin and Nicholas Leach) emerged to play the Common Room and Bloxham. Steven Vogel won the Senior singles, Tony Norris the Junior. Vogel & Brown won the Senior doubles, Norris & Warren Curtis the Junior. Gepp's bt Mont's in the Senior House comp.

Results: bt Jesters 126-115; OFs 162-114; Haileybury 174-84; Bloxham 68-38; USA 181-148; RFAC 159-125. lost to Old Beds twice 89-159, 45-180.

1984 The Old Felstedians played several fixtures, losing to RFAC, Jesters, the School, Old Beds and UCSOBs. Don't throw your fives gloves away when you leave school! Players: Richard Banks, Hugh Bohling, Jeremy Bright, Robert Brooker, Richard Carr, Andrew Craven, David Everett, Mark Eyes, Richard Hart, Richard Molton, Andrew Peal, Andrew Rees.

1992 'In preparation for the West of England tournament at Clifton over the Christmas holidays, Christopher Blunt and Rory Kilmartin played with Julian Scofield and Anton Homer against Eastbourne College on the day of the Eastbourne Rugby fixture. Defeat there almost turned to despair when the draw for the tournament was announced: 'Felsted v Eastbourne'. Blunt kept his singles opponent on court for 90 minutes (before losing)!

Mont's won the House Cup later in the term. Results: bt UCS 92-84; RFA Club 159-64; Bloxham 118-72. Lost to Eastbourne 57-87; SJV's IV 91-158; Jesters 61-150; Sutton Valence 108-160; Tonbridge 78-121; Oundle 110-140; OFs 129-157. Iain Murray also played for the 1st IV. House and individual competitions not so well supported this year: Mont's and Elwyn's dominated. Giles Goodwin won the Junior singles, Blunt the Senior. Elwyn's won the Junior House comp. Steve Vogel, Guy Paterson, James Kerr and Jeremy Bright played for the OFs. Blunt and Kilmartin entered the Nationals.

1993 (Last report from David Everett) Hardly a vintage season, despite seasoned players (Anton Homer, Julian Scofield). Ram Jenner & Iain Murray 'added some body to the blend'. Early season defeats by club sides, plus damp courts. The players turned out regularly, but 'the small number of players now in the School restricts experience'. Victory was achieved on the indoor courts at Hampstead (UCS). 'The cornerstone of Fives and the prospect of its continuing place in the sporting calendar lies in the Inter-House competitions. The results this year again show that the available talent is concentrated in two or three Houses. The results show only one change from last year! Anton Homer became the overall champion, keeping the cup in Mont's which was also Chris Blunt's House. It is to be hoped that the gloves will be handed on with enthusiasm for this esoteric but fascinating game.'

Results: beat UCS 118-84. Lost to Eastbourne 26-54; Loretto 79-99; Jesters 48-153; RFA Club 72-136; Bloxham 74-139; Sutton Valence 91-142; Tonbridge 54-176; OFs 61-164. Senior Championship: Anton Homer. Junior Championship: Giles Goodwin. Senior House Championship: Mont's. Junior House Championship: Elwyn's. Signed DRE.

1994 & 1995 **CJS Blunt represented Cambridge in the Varsity Match.**

The Felstedian has no Fives reports after this date.