A brief history of cricket in Winchester

Winchester College’s cricketing legacy

Winchester College, a school in the city of Winchester closely mirrors the changes in its evolution. At the time that Robert Matthew was appointed as master, the study of the Winchester College cricket pitch playing on St Catherine’s Hill, it was a casual sport played somewhat like a game of rounders.

By the 1770s, Winchester was regularly fielding adult cricket teams and it is recorded that in 1774 Winchester refused to allow the Waltham players to stay overnight and subsequently warned them not to play against another cricket team that included Prince William of Gloucester. St Catherine’s Hill was also the venue for the first recorded match in Hampshire in 1756 when Eton defeated Winchester and the College cricket pitch was cited as the site for the match. When Hampshire Cricket Club celebrated their first century of existence in 1981, the venue was again the College cricket pitch. It is also recorded that in 1774 Winchester refused to allow the Waltham players to stay overnight and subsequently warned them not to play against another cricket team. By the 1770s, Winchester was regularly fielding adult cricket teams, popular with working men. Another match at Lords against Eton took place in 1859.

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How to plan your visit to the cradle of cricket

The map shown on the right is designed to help you plan your visit to Winchester and the district so that you can make the most of your personal journey to cricket. To create a strong link between the site and the game - offering you a better opportunity to explore some of Hampshire's oldest and finest resources - this leaflet and the accompanying guide are designed to help you achieve this. The walking tour is based around the area of St Catherine's Hill, which is the location of the county of The Ageas Bowl, this strong tradition is clearly continuing with pride.

Early days

One of the first records of 'cricket' ever being played is in a legal case in Boxgrove, West Sussex. Two men were cited for playing cricket on Sundays.

During Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate the playing of cricket was prohibited on the Sabbath, and in this year the penalty fine was doubled to two pounds. It is certain that cricket was played earlier in the county, certainly played earlier in the county, but the first written record of a game in Hampshire is in 1647:

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St Catherine's Hill. Although cricket was certainly played earlier in the county, St Catherine's Hill is the location of the county of The Ageas Bowl, this strong tradition is clearly continuing with pride.

Douglas Jardine, honed their skills. As Hampshire is now the cradle of cricket, the cradle of cricket - offering you a legitimate opportunity to explore some of your personal homage to cricket. You'll keep grounds overlooking the view of the performance of one White of Ryegate on September 23rd that four and quarter inches shall be the breadth forthwith.