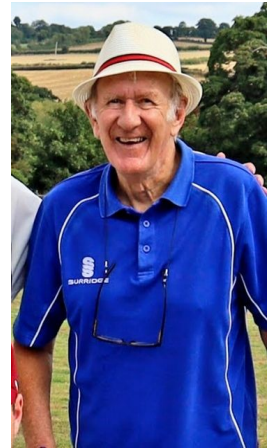


TRIBUTE TO OUR LATE PRESIDENT MIKE WARREN RIP

Priston Cricket Club is mourning the death of its much-loved President, Mike/Wilfy Warren aka The Wilfmeister, who died recently after battling with a long illness. Mike was the most gentle and engaging of men, who always ensured he did things 'the right way'. He was a much respected and popular member of the Club, and had been our President for a number of years.

By his own exacting standards, Mike always said that he should never have been allowed to play for Priston. In its early days, eligibility was strictly based on residence in the parish. Mike used to travel from Bath to watch brother in law Jon Fowle playing, but gradually did more and more to help the Club- umpiring, cutting the pitch (then at the Mill) and occasionally turning out to play if we were short. At the next AGM it was our unanimous decision to widen membership to include those who had shown commitment by action to the Club. Fortunately Mike agreed to join us. The amendment became known as the Mike Warren clause.



Mike's leg break bowling was idiosyncratic and probably unique in the modern game. He would take a couple of steps up to the wicket and release the ball in a high parabolic arc reminiscent of the lob bowlers of old. The batsman often did not know whether to rush out to clobber the ball before it pitched, or wait suspiciously in the crease for the ball to come down, bounce and spin. Mike's method over many years was very successful, particularly if he got the length spot- on. He and all the team took great delight in the batsman's discomfort.

Perhaps the high point of Mike's batting came on a tour of Alderney, where he put on 200 or so with Robbie Moore, on an artificial wicket on the edge of the cliff overlooking the sea. Mike's contribution was 75, and he was only out because he was dehydrated and exhausted. He spoke to no-one when he walked off to wild applause from the pavilion balcony, but went straight to the dressing room. The team thought he was 'having a little turn', but Mike soon recovered to take the well-deserved plaudits.

Mike's kindness and sense of fair play were all too evident, when on another Alderney tour he gave Bob Copperman out lbw on the last ball of the innings, which was bowled by a youngster. Bob had scored 168 (a Club record) and Mike reckoned he had been there long enough, and the lad deserved a wicket.

Mike's sense of fun was never better seen than in his starring roles in our Club pantomimes. With the minimum of lines to learn, Mike carried off his parts to perfection. Who can forget his (talking) mirror in Snow White, or his clock in Cinderella, or the tree in Robin Hood? 'Absolute classics', to borrow a phrase.

In recent years, as ill health prevented him playing, Mike still came to watch our matches whenever he could, insisting on walking to the ground. If Amy turned her back, Mike would be out in the middle in an umpire's coat. He never missed a social event, regaling us with his many happy cricketing memories.

We will all miss Mike greatly. Sam gave a speech of tribute before our first game of the season. Club members are planning to wear cricket sweaters to Mike's funeral, where he will be laid to rest in cricket whites. Mike loved the Club just as much as we loved him.

We know how much Carol, Matty, Sarah and Amy and their families will miss Mike. But he will live long in all our memories. As the song goes: 'When an old cricketer leaves the crease, you never know whether he's gone...'

Paul Barclay