

## Maltese Campaign hampered by Etna emissions - 2002

A Forty Club squad including seventeen players and twenty-five back up support encountered unusual climatic conditions in Malta on their six-match tour between October 24-November 5. Gerry Morgan, the spin bowler, reported "Mount Etna's untimely eruption in nearby Sicily affected the health of some of us after we unwittingly inhaled tiny particles of black soot and developed sore throats."

Well, that was their excuse but Gerry admitted that the age of some Maltese Australians who will represent Malta in the ICC Trophy next August was a big factor. They were in their twenties and the XI lost four matches to the younger brigade. Against more elderly opponents, Ron Hart's side won twice, a creditable outcome.

Gerry reported "All the matches were played at the Marsa Club, once a sports club for British personnel. The pitch was concrete base covered by a thin layer of matting and it was ideal for crossbat slogging and hard for bowlers. After a long, hot summer, the outfield was largely scrub and loose earth, with occasional tufts of grass, making fielding something of a lottery. It will be interesting to see how Angelo Spiteri, the main run-getter, fares when playing on grass for Weybridge this summer.

"Most of our batsmen made scores with Robbie Barker, twice, Ron Helyar, Martin Abbott and Keith Crabtree scoring fifties. Despite taking a terrible battering in his first two overs, Simon Klimke had the best bowling figures, 4-41, with Mike Wicks and myself the joint leading wicket takers. Two of the Maltese players were of particular interest - Wally Glynn, who has an entry in the Guinness Book of Records for being the oldest player in an international match, Malta v Greece at the age of 65, and Gerry Harris, who was one of "The Comedians" in the 1V Series in the 1970s along with Bernard Manning, Frank Carson and Charlie Williams.

"The Maltese were excellent hosts and Pierre Naudi, John Grima and Wally Glynn worked very hard in their different capacities. We stayed at the Jerma Palace Hotel, 5 kms from the ground, although the journey took half an hour because of heavy traffic. The highlights off the field were eating out in the varied restaurants and the mixed golf with the ladies playing a prominent part in a victory. Our thanks to the efficient management, also to scorers Alan Perkins and Jill Bracken, umpires Fred Imms, Ken Medlock, Philip Clark and David Spyers and not forgetting the amazing "electronic scoreboard" Richard Merricks.



Marsa Sports Club, Malta 2002



Peter Robinson in action backed with no fielders in view.