

# FLOREAT

AUTUMN 2012

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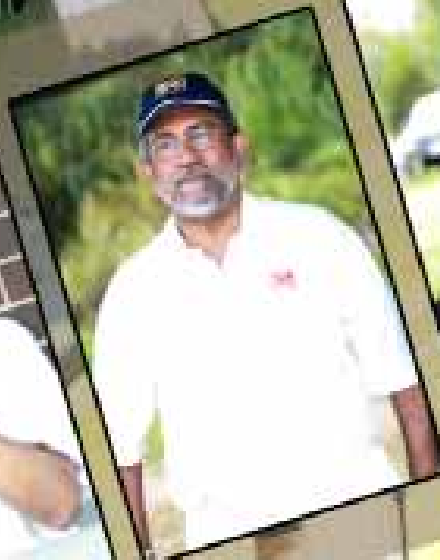
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Article by Vijay Malalasekera



Floreat Editor  
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Dimi Arachi

# St. Thomas' Triumph in Melbourne's Battle of the Blues

St. Thomas scored convincing victories over Royal in both the Open and Over 40 Cricket Matches played at Mulgrave Reserve on Sunday 4 March. Despite overnight rain, the matches got underway amidst the usual camaraderie that is the hallmark of these matches. A moment of silence was observed for two cricketers, Ranil Abeynaike (STC) and Harish Amarasekera (Royal), both of whom passed away during the past year. It was also a time for celebration with the Royal Over 40 Team singing "Happy Birthday" to 76 year old Claud Reid when he came in to bat. The day culminated with a sumptuous Roti Feast which was enjoyed by all. The Chief Guest for the occasion was HE Admiral Tissara Samarasinghe, the Sri Lankan High Commissioner to Australia and a big thank you to Dilip Somaratne for organizing a successful and enjoyable event.

The scores in brief:

## Over 40's Game

Royal 78 (Ruwan Jayaweera 21, Johann Samarasekera 3/16, Andrew Fernando 2/5)

STC 79/4 (Eraj Kapukotuwa 28, Dirk D'Silva 25\*, Sampath Elvitigala 3/12)

STC Won by 6 Wickets

### Awards

Best Batsman	Eraj Kapukotuwa (STC)
Best Bowler	Sampath Elvitigala (Royal)
Man of the Match	Dirk D'Silva

## Open Game

Royal 101 (Shamil Samarasinghe 31, Shanaka Perera 26, Naveen Perera 5/16, Denham Williams 3/10)

STC 102/3 (D. Panduwawela 43, Naveen Perera 31)

STC Won by 7 Wickets

### Awards

Best Batsman	D. Panduwawela
Best Bowler	Denham Williams
Man of the Match	Naveen Perera

Eddie Gray Memorial Challenge Shield for Best Performance by a Royalist – Shamil Samarasinghe

## EVENTS CALENDAR

### Park Trent Properties Seminar

27th April

Contact: Lilith on 0407 804 482

### BLUE n GOLD RHAPSODY

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> May

### Annual Dinner Dance

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July

## ROYAL THOMIAN MATCH PHOTO GALLERY



ROYAL COLLEGE OLD BOYS IN AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION Inc.

Proudly presents

# BLUE n GOLD RHAPSODY

with

## RAJIV SEBASTIAN

Music by

Cameron Colombege

Sumptuous Buffet by East West Caterers

Saturday 5th May 2012

7:00pm - 11:45pm

BYO Wines & Spirits

Glen Eira Town Hall  
Melway 68A2

Right of admission reserved

\$55.00 pp  
Smart Casual

### Golden Oldies Luncheon Photo Gallery



## Editorial

### Royalists Young and Royalists Old .....

(With Apologies to Thomians Young and Thomians Old!)

“The difference between youth and age: The young invent different futures for themselves. The old invent different pasts for themselves”.

I have taken the liberty of deliberately misquoting Julian Barnes from his book “A Sense of an Ending”, winner of the Man Booker prize for literature in 2011, to suit the needs of this editorial. What is it that that older Royalists can do to help younger Royalists achieve different futures and in doing so, rewrite their own past?

The RCOBAA has set up a sub-committee headed by Nihal De Run and Venura Welagedera to look at ways in which we can assist young Old Royalists who are new to Australia. The assistance can take many forms and one of the ways in which older Royalists can help is by playing the role of a mentor.

To give some historical background, the word “mentor” originated from Greek mythology. Mentor was the name of the wise and faithful advisor to Odysseus and when Odysseus left on his long voyage, he entrusted the direction and teaching of his son Telemachus to Mentor. According to mythology, through Mentor’s guidance, Telemachus became a loved and effective ruler. Today the word “mentor” is used to mean a friend, advisor or a person who lends support in many ways towards the pursuit of specific goals and objectives.

In recent times, there has been a huge surge in mentoring as organizations are beginning to realise the value of mentoring programmes. The mentees (those who receive mentoring) benefit from receiving advice from someone who has “been there, done that”. The mentors can serve to inspire, counsel, impart wisdom and also act as a sounding board for the young.

The relationship does not necessarily have to be one-sided. We are beginning to see the rise of “reverse mentoring” whereby younger Generation Y employees are helping older employees in coping with the rapid changes in technology as well as in understanding the mindsets of younger workers. The relationship can therefore be symbiotic where both parties benefit from each other.

There is no greater reward than when a mentor knows that he has made a positive difference in the life of his mentee. I can personally testify to that as I mentor several managers within my organization and seeing them succeed and move up the leadership ladder is an immensely satisfying experience. By helping shape a different future for his mentee, the mentor is

writing a different past for himself.

Would you like to help the young invent different futures for themselves?

As an Old Royalist, is this how we can “repay the debt we owe”?

## Floreat

### Networking and Support for Younger Royalists

The Member Services and Support Project will be officially launched in August 2012. (Date to be advised). We hope to provide information about the goals and operations of the project and get feedback from younger members about the viability of the project.

The mission, goals and a few possible services that the RCOBAA expects to provide are described below. The objective of the information event in August will be to identify the feasibility of this project.

#### Mission

To improve fellowship among Royalists in Australia and create a culture where members reciprocate their skills and abilities for mutual support.

#### Goals

- To recruit and retain more student members
- To foster student members who will hopefully go on to become full (ordinary) members, take office in RCOBAA and be the nucleus for our future growth and survival.
- To provide valuable networking opportunities to younger members to establish themselves in Australia.

#### Services

- Employment Support

RCOBAA will be updating the website with important resources that support student members to develop résumés and cover letters. Specific templates for different professions will be uploaded to the website.

Younger members will be given the opportunity of networking among members of the same profession. The project co-ordinator will be responsible to forward the résumés to senior members in the same profession. This will provide valuable networking opportunities to student members.

## □ Legal Support

A panel of lawyers will be set up for this function. Student members facing any legal issues within Australia have the opportunity to seek information from this panel. The panel of lawyers will not provide legal advice. They will provide information and guidance about finding help.

## □ Medical Support

A panel of medical practitioners will be set up for this function. Student members facing medical issues will be able to get general guidance from this panel.

## □ Other Services

General information and guidance in areas such as insurance, accommodation, and car repairs are also possible services.

A sub-committee has been set up for this project. The project is still in its testing stage. The general committee would appreciate if members could spread the word about the information event to be held in August 2012.

**Venura Welagedara**



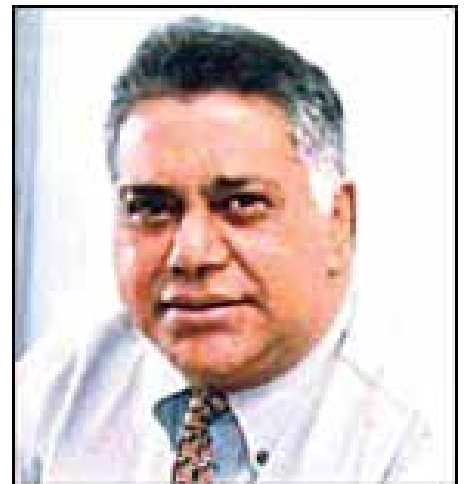
# Appreciation

## *Gabo Peiris*

### **Gabo Makes His Farewell ‘Breakaway’**

It was in the late sixties and seventies that Gabo dominated the music scene in Sri Lanka. The then stages were always packed with stellar performers, Jet liners, Sam, Spitfires, Los Caballeros, Moonstones, CT and Harold Seneviratne; but it was Gabo who led them all, by the charisma he carried as the leader of ‘The Breakaways’ playing fascinating music that took entertainment to its zenith and beyond.

Anyone young strumming a guitar or scratching the keyboards or blowing horns and drumming or having voices searching for recognition wanted to be with Gabo. That is a statement I make without any hesitation as it was simply the accepted truth when Gabo ruled the band music. No, it wasn’t the Breakaways, it was Gabo, finding talent and doing the arrangements and creating his own brand of music in his childhood home down School Lane in Bambalapitiya. He and his ‘chuda manikke’ resonated to be remembered for life. The man had the magic and the looks to match and the personality was spell-binding. That is to say a lot about somebody and my sentiment is sincere. Those who clapped hands and shouted ‘encore’ and jingled and jived on Gabo music would know what I am talking about. The memories may have faded, but recollections would be instant, not just simple remembrances, but with a glint in the eye.



That was Gabo the Band Leader at his mercurial best.

Then came the airline part; that's when I met him and his lovable wife Savi and forged a friendship that lasted a lifetime. They were young years and our days sure were wild and winsome resulting in many a little fairytale in memory circuits. Such is always recalled when the bell tolls and someone has to go, like now.

From flying, Gabo went to the travel trade. He did have a Midas touch, not by luck, but by constructive imagination and a personality that made him the 'total people's man.' He took 'Gabo Travels' way beyond anyone's imagination. Gabo had the 'Band Leader' name, and the vision and the drive to lift his infant travel company to its present success, right up to the top shelf. Of course the guardian angel was always there, Savi, the one who stood by him for all flavours and all seasons and gave the anchor to the man and trimmed the sails when the winds howled and the seas got rough.

Gabo's beginnings were humble, his father was a well respected teacher, his mother a housewife and a loving sister completed the family, the norms of the multitude. He would have ridden his bicycle and eaten his celebrations at Sarasvathi and watched movies in the first front rows of the Majestic Theatre. Somewhere in that 'run of the mill' life Gabo picked a pair of drum sticks and that changed it all. His was certainly a self made story, an architect of his own fate who took the blows as 'Old Blue Eyes' sang and made his life a script of strictly 'my way'.

No one can go from where he began to where he ended without having a fall or two, we all do that. Gabo conquered himself and along with Savi raised three lovely children, Sasha, Natasha and Dania, who in turn added their own offsprings to the 'Gabo Band Wagon.'

We always kept in touch, sometime back met and shared a meal and had a great time speaking of bygones and laughed loud like fools, in the warmth and happiness of ancient camaraderie. That was great.

Then came the health problems, sad and unfortunate and demanding in every way. Savi's strength held and she combined multi-roles and kept the ship afloat. The last I saw Gabo was a few months ago. The warmth was all there, the voice was soft and the words were chosen and scrimp, mostly a 'yes' or a 'no' from a face dressed with a ghost of a smile. It seemed that he was having a silent last laugh to 'what it was all about' in his carnival of a life. I was in many ways happy for him.

Gabo had found peace. That much I was certain.

I said 'so long' and took my leave. Sadly his final words are haunting me now. "Come and see me," that's what he said, waving a feeble hand that had once ruled music with a drum stick. And as in all things in life, I postponed. I am sorry Kenneth Gamini Nirmala Peiris, I should have known better and not counted for time to stand still. But such is life, just late for everything that really matters. Like sitting with you and see you nod and smile and share things we could remember. So here I am, holed up in a faraway hotel room, doing my best to pour out something that would make someone read and recall or remember, the one and only Gabo.

Yes, the drum beat is no more, the man has found his peace and left behind family and friends to whom he would always be more than a memory. To live in the hearts you leave behind is but surely not to die.

So long Old Friend, I wonder whether you were ever aware how widely you were known and how sadly people spoke when they heard you have made the farewell 'Breakaway'.

**Capt Elmo Jayawardena**

## Dearth of new rifle shooter in Sri Lanka bewilders Rohana

### Text and Pic by Rangji Akbar

“There is a dearth of new talent in rifle shooting. We should identify fresh talent. Along with that, we should have coaches who are knowledgeable, capable and dedicated. Supremely important, also, are really dedicated shooters with a burning desire to improve and win at the highest levels. Additionally, they should get the fullest support of the relevant authorities to reach their goals. These are the basic and essential ingredients, coupled with a rational training programme that will bring success to Sri Lanka. Schools are the ‘nurseries’ it is the duty of schools associations to spot talent and nurture them,” said Rohana Nanayakkara, the former Royal and Sri Lanka crack shot in an interview with the Sunday Times.

Rohana who has competed and trained with some of Sri Lanka’s top marksmen such as Ravi Jayawardene, Zal Chitty, Sri Kumaranayagam, Kumar Chitty and a host of others has represented Sri Lanka at the highest level and in its wake has brought a great deal of honour to the motherland.

This won him the coveted “National Colours” in Rifle Shooting at the ‘Sri Lanka Proud’ ceremony in 2008 awarded to sportsmen and women who have brought honour to the country since independence, graced by the President of Sri Lanka as the chief guest. Rohana is one of the very few Sri Lankans to receive this award for Shooting.

I was fortunate to catch up with Rohana Nanayakkara at his residence in PitaKotte. Fittingly he had taken down his trusty rifle and was giving it a thorough clean up when I dopped in. “It is years since I had taken the weapon down. Do you know that Late Mr. Ranapala Bodinagoda, the former Chairman of the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. (ANCL) and Mr Lanka De Silva, Executive Director of ANCL who presented it to me to continue my Rifle Shooting?,” said Rohana with a faraway look in his eyes.

On leaving Royal College, Rohana was for a time the Deputy Manager of the Ceylon Daily News. Later he joined Airlanka, now Sri Lankan Airlines, and was posted as its Manager in London and had been instrumental in establishing its operations at Heathrow Airport, which task had distanced him from rifle shooting. His continuing stints in Kuwait, Maldives, etc, did not provide conditions or the time for competition shooting.

Well, rifle shooting has certainly taken Rohana round the globe. He has represented Sri Lanka in a host of World Championships, selected for Olympics, Asian Games and the World Cup in Russia (1987) and South Korea. In the process he won diploma awards for being in the top six at three successive Asian Games.

He unlocked his well stocked study to show me his trophies which included medals, certificates, plaques, shields, trophies and replicas, won at various events. In addition to the “Sri Lanka National Colours” one particular award he held equally close to his heart, saying, “This one was presented to me by President J. R Jayewardene when I conducted the Police and Armed Forces Practical Shooting Championships for the tenth successive year.”



The National Rifle Association (NRA) was originally known as the Ceylon Rifle Association, and it was Ravi Jayawardene, son of former Sri Lanka President J.R. Jayawardene, who had introduced Sri Lanka to rifle shooting at Olympics. Ravi who captained Sri Lanka's contingent to the Tokyo Olympics and Kumar Chitty who bagged a 'World Master Bronze' at the World Championships in Germany (1966) were Rohana's coaches at Royal College, which produced top shooters like, Michael Pereira, Aslam Kaleel, Ajit Chitty, Sam Kadirgamar, Olympian Zal Chitty, Rohan Abayasekera, Dilipan Tygarajah, in addition to Ravi and Kumar, just to name a few of the illustrious band.

Rohana captained Royal at rifle shooting in 1967 winning the 'Silver medal' at the very first National Championships, against many veterans from the Armed Services and Police. "Ravi won the Gold, exceeding the then Asian Record with 586 points while I equaled it with 585 points out of 600" recalls Rohana. Commander Roger Christoffelsz of the Navy was third.

"We had superb a rifle range at Royal, the first school to have a shooting range. We also had an array of target weapons such as the Point 22, Vickers and the BSA Marks I and II versions. Ravi Jayawardene, my coach, who considered me as his 'Prime Pupil', guided me to acquire Anschutz Olympic Target Rifles for Royal, which really gave us a competitive chance against the veteran Servicemen on equal terms. Rohana was National Coach from 2004 to 2006 leading to the SAF Games where two Gold Medals with two International records were produced, in addition to many Silver and Bronze medals. "This was very satisfying since we got the better of the Indians who are a World Power in Shooting" says Rohana. A qualified International Judge in Shooting, he was also a successful Coach/Manager at several International Meets.

Many times Sri Lanka National Champion in Shooting, he held many Sri Lanka records, in his career, which included coaching many Service personnel, he himself having undergone training in Russia and the United Kingdom among other Countries.

The names of Ravi Jayewardene, Lt Col Daya Rajasinghe, General Hamilton Wanasinghe, Group Captain Dick Sallay, Sri Kumaranayagam, Hemasiri Fernando (President of NOC), Vice Admiral Thisara Samarasinghe, DIG Sumith Liyanage, Rear Admiral Shemal Fernando, Air Vice Marshal Elmo Perera and Lt. Cmdr Navy Roger Christoffelsz kept on cropping up during the interview. They were some of those who did a selfless service for the cause of the Shooting Sport in the Country, some being crack shots of World class in their own right.

With the Association being currently headed by Rear Admiral Shemal Fernando, supported by 'Top Shots' such as Hemasiri Fernando and Olympian Zal Chitty, there certainly will be a lot of improvement, concluded Rohana, who is classed as the 'most technically perfect' shooter produced by Sri Lanka, by such knowledgeable greats of the shooting World as Ravi Jayewardene, multiple Olympic Gold Medalist Lanny Basham of the USA and Sergei Dougal of USSR/Russia who went on to coach many Countries to success in World competitions.

(Sunday Times, 11 December 2011)



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## Royal Reminiscences

### **The Royal College Film Society**

by Upatissa Attygalle

The above named institution had its origin in the Amateur Cinematic Society which was inaugurated in 1945. One of the principal persons who was for it having been mooted was the revolutionary, the wittiest, the most discerning, the most integrated and now legendary teacher of English, Ceylon ever had - the late R. C. L. Attygalle popularly known as 'Dickie'. He persuaded the then Principal of Royal, the late J. C. A Corea to allocate funds for the purchase of a 33mm film projector and a copy of the film Henry the V for the Film Society. Dickie Attygalle had hoped to build up a library of films for the Society, regrettably Royal being a government school he was unable to obtain funds to buy more films.

Dickie had the extraordinary ability to make the classics of English Literature come alive and kindle the interest of all his students. Therefore the Technicolor 1944 version of William Shakespeare's Henry the V produced directed and starred by Sir Laurence Olivier was a big hit with the students. Dickie Attygalle had many

students in his class who acquired a love for the humanities thanks to his skill not just as a teacher but as an educator. Most of his students in later life excelled in their respective fields. One such student who distinguished himself as a politician was the late - Felix Dias Bandaranaike then known as Felix Dias.

Just after a year since the commencing of the Film Society, Dickie Attygalle left Royal for Paris as he was appointed as the chief of the division managing all UNESCO's adult education programmes. The mantle of continuing the Film Society then fell on the able broad shoulders of another brilliant teacher and multi-talented master Mr. Bevil St Elmo de Bruin, who passed away on his 80th birthday on the 28th of August this year in Montego Bay, Jamaica. Mr. Bruin who was fondly referred to as 'Bruno' by students was a teacher of Mathematics English and English Literature, Cricket and Athletics during his tenure at Royal College. He, too, like Dickie Attygalle had the unique ability to make students who never read anything but comic

## 1962 AND ALL THAT— 50 YEARS ON

**BY VIJAYA MALALASEKERA**

books to take anything but comic books evince an interest in English and English Literature. Many students, who did science as I did, took up English Literature as a subject thanks to Mr. Bruin showing us the beauty, the might and the grandeur of the English Language.

Mr. Bruin arranged with the British Council to hire films from their library to be screened at our Society's film shows. During my stay at Royal Mr. Bruin screened a number of top grade films on a variety of subjects and themes. Some of them I remember are Nanook of the North, a documentary on the life of an Eskimo and his family made by the very influential American documentary pioneer Robert Flaherty, Scott of the Antarctic, the Technicolor film about the ill fated 1912 expedition to the South Pole starring Sir John, Mills as Captain Scott, and Kind Hearts and Coronets, a first class British Ealing comedy. Sir Alec Guineas who was one member of the admirable cast played eight roles in the film. Out of all the films I saw at Royal, there is one particular film that I shall never forget and that film was Arsenic and Old Lace. It was the screen version of the immensely popular comedy written by Joseph Kesserling for the stage. The film version was directed by the legendary Frank Capra and starred the inimitable Hollywood star Cary Grant supported by a distinguished cast who played their parts brilliantly to make the film one of the funniest rib—tickling comedies ever made up-to-date. I recall the film was screened in one of the Science lecture rooms which had pews of tiered seats and, we were all rolling in the aisles clutching our stomachs in uncontrollable laughter. Many of us had to walk slightly crouched the next morning due to the pain in our over strained abdominal muscles. I have seen the film over a dozen times since then and even today have the same reaction to it.

I am not sure whether there is a film Society in Royal College today but in our time at College we enjoyed the film shows and had a lot of fun during the breakdowns of the rather old film projector. I am sure all old Royalists who attended these film shows must-be fondly remembering those wonderful hours spent in the darkened lecture room watching the silver screen unfolding great films.

The year 1962 was significant in that it was a year where the son following in the footsteps of the father captained Royal. Royal was led by that great athlete and pace bowler Darrel Lieversz, who went on to represent Sri Lanka in both athletics and cricket. I was a member of the team which comprised S. Thiagarajah, P. Withana, S. S. Kumar, R. C. de Silva, S. D. Jayaratne, J. D. "Shaw" Wilson, S. Rajaratnam, V. Gowrishankaran and T. R. Jansen. It was not a team of giants but in my view it had perhaps the finest spirit a team could have.

On 9th and 10th March 1962, all roads led to the Oval. The captains tossed and Darrel called wrongly. The Thomians started by losing Morrell at 12 then L. S. Perera at 36. Fortunately Ananda Medonza and R. M. Fernando took the score up to 75 before R. M. left- 3 for 75, 4 for 81, 5 for 86, 6 for 86. Then came the best stand of the innings between P. N. Selvadurai and Anura Tennekoon the 15 year old baby of the side. They took the score from 6 for 86 to 174 when Tennekoon departed with his individual tally at 28. The Thomians finally folded up at 197.

Royal started disastrously going in to bat at 4.34. Shaw Wilson and Gowrishankaran were both out with the score at 6. Then came the best batting for the day between Kumar and Jayaratne who smothered the bowling blue, black and yellow. At the end of the day Royal were 77 for 2 with Kumar on 37 and Jayaratne on 35.

Next morning Jayaratne departed without adding to his overnight score, 77 for 3. Withana left after having scored 2—4 for 83. Then Kumar and I took the score to 103 when I departed—5 for 103. Skipper Darrel left at the same score 6 for 103. Whilst Kumar stood there like the Rock of Gibraltar, wickets fell and finally Darrel called the boys in at 8 for 138, 59 runs behind.

The Thomians after lunch were in a bad way against the Lieversz-de Silva combination and were 83 for 8 at tea. A sporting declaration by Keith Labrooy left Royal 143 to win in 120 minutes.

In those two hours the game of cricket won and lost. Wilson was first to go at 18, then Gowrishankaran, our opener played an innings, perhaps one of the greatest short innings seen in a Royal-Thomian since Nirmal-ingam's 69 in 1954. He played with gay abandon, it was sheer poetry in motion. His cover driving was beautiful, nay it was exquisite. He raced to 50 in 68 minutes and he and Kumar put Royal ahead of the clock. When Kumar departed after a delightful 31 the scoreboard read 2 for 76. Then Jayaratne was cruelly run out for 5; 94 for 3. Withana after having fortified himself with, you know what, played four glorious shots to score 16-4 for 116. I was the next to go at the same score, 5 for 116. Fate was really cruel to Royal and more so to our left handed bomb Gowrishankaran who was struck down with cramps. As recorded he scored 50 in 68 minutes and took 52 minutes to add 11 more runs. However, back to the game-R. C. de Silva left when the score was 121, Darrel left at 125. In the last over we needed 12 runs to win and we managed only 2.

The press reporting on the match the next day stated that never in years had there been such an exciting finish to this match and never have fortunes fluctuated so much with the result in the balance throughout the two days.

It was another draw. Kumar's 68 not out in the first innings and 31 in the second were great knocks played in the best of traditions. Jayaratne created a new wicket-keeping record - he had a match bag of 8 dismissals. Darrel and R. C. de Silva showed that they were way ahead in bowling. Gowrishankaran our opener justified his selection in more than ample measure. I have yet to see a short innings of that calibre. Last but not least the man who guided this team was Mahes Rodrigo alias "Saha" to the team. He instilled something to the team which no team had before or after.

That was '62. Many moons have passed, but those who played will never forget and will give anything to re-live those two hours on the second day.

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## Annual General Meeting

21st Friday September 2011

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### RCOBBA COMMITTEE

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Chris Weeramantry

Vice Patrons

Clarence Muthiah

Fred Kreltshheim

**Lilith De Silva** President

**Athula Ratnayake** Vice President

**Tissa Galagedera** Vice President

**Sunil De Silva** Treasurer

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