

WARING IS WISDEN STAR

Felsted School's Ben Waring has been named the Young Wisden Cricketer of the Year. Last year the slow left-armed Derek Pringle's school record by taking taking 68 wickets at 7.78. The 18-year-old from Hertfordshire received his award from Jonny Bairstow, a previous winner, at Lord's. He plays for Saffron Walden CC and is with Essex's academy. Felsted's director of cricket, Jason Gallian, said: "The future looks very bright for Ben."



A CLASS ACT

SEVENOAKS IN SAFE HANDS WITH TAVARE

Former England batsman Chris tells Huw Turbervill how he loves life at the Kent school where he was a pupil and is now a teacher

IT IS ONE thing for your teacher to be a former England cricketer. It is quite another for his surname to represent a paradigm of the game itself.

One man's meat is another man's poison, as the saying goes. So to "do a Tavaré", to some, symbolises obduracy and defiance at the crease. Prizing your wicket as if life depends upon it. Others recall innings like the one in Perth on the 1982/83 Ashes tour, when he made 89 in 466 minutes, with two scoreless hours.

The 61-year-old's abilities have been much maligned, and he made two Test centuries, in India and at home to New Zealand, scoring 1,755 runs at 32.50. He is a thoroughly likeable and decent fellow, too, and clearly commands affection and respect among pupils at Sevenoaks School in Kent.

When asking about his reputation for dour batting, he admitted: "I do find that rather boring, that's why I don't do interviews these days, so this is unusual! I find it frustrating. Some people hated my approach. On the other hand cricket was different then. The draw was a possibility. Cricket was played as a much longer game."

Tavaré loves the school where he attended as a pupil himself, before returning 22 years ago. About 80 per cent of his time is now spent in the classroom teaching biology (he studied zoology at Oxford), but he is still master in charge of cricket and now coaches the under-14s. "I like to



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get them going so they are ready for when they arrive in the first team." That is run by Phil Hulston and James Emmitt.

Tavaré proudly shows me the Sennocke Centre, an indoor facility containing eight nets. At 7.30am each schoolday pupils receive one-to-one coaching from former Oxfordshire allrounder David Smith and his team of coaches, and it is academy nights there on Fridays, when the school's best cricketers team up with talent from local schools under the tutelage of former Kent allrounder Rob Ferley.

We go past the lecture theatre that recently hosted Mike Atherton for a screening of *Death of a Gentleman*, with Tavaré quizzing him and the

film's director, Sam Collins, in a Q&A.

Then we walk – comically, in sleet! – to the school's Solefields Cricket Ground, home of three pitches. Tavaré explains that he replaced the long-serving Ian Walker at Sevenoaks. And before him it was former Essex off-spinner Alan Hurd, who taught Tavaré and Paul Downton. Hurd passed away recently. Tavaré calls him "inspirational – we didn't lose to another school for seven years."

Sevenoaks' circuit includes King's School of Canterbury, Eltham College, Reigate Grammar, Sutton Valence and Judd Grammar.

We arrive at nets and I meet the first team. The skipper is Cyrus White, a wicketkeeper/batsman

WINES IN THE WICKETS

Henry Wines produced a vintage display on his debut for Haileybury School 1st XI. The leg-spinner took a hat-trick, amid a spell of 8 for 15, in a T20 match against Aldenham School. To confound Henry's jubilation, former Haileybury pupil Sam Billings, of Kent and England, tweeted his congratulations.



who struck two tons and a 97 in successive innings last year. Then there is Rhys Joseph, 16, who is on the Kent CCC fast-bowling programme.

Seamer Tristan Flint has also started the season impressively, while allrounder Nick Bett plays for Netherlands Under-17s.

Among the alumna is England's Natasha 'Tash' Farrant.

The school has 1sts, 2nds and 3rds, and A, B and C sides at under-13, 14 and 15 levels. They play fewer declaration games these days, with 35 or 40-overs-per-side and T20s in the mix. They have toured Sri Lanka, South Africa, Barbados and St Lucia, and next year travel to Grenada.

Tavaré stopped playing at 48, and now enjoys listening to greats like Michael Holding, rather than watching for hours at a time. He also enjoys Atherton's articles.

"I look back at my cricket career in a funny way," he says. "I have been teaching longer now than I played. It's a life that I sometimes wonder if I was ever part of. I have had a really good time teaching."

"I find it funny when I watch Sky, and they have a programme about how great David Gower was, and I am in the odd clip, the batsman at the non-striker's end."

"My most memorable experience was being at the other end when

Ian Botham got his hundred at Old Trafford in 1981. I had the best seat in the house."

Tavaré made his maiden Test ton in Delhi in 1981/82. "They went 1-0 up in the first Test, and after that the pitches were just flat. It was boring cricket. They batted two days, we batted two days, then it was a draw." The six-Test series ended 1-0.

He had a memorable 1982/83 Ashes tour. After that dogged 89 at the Waca, he made the same score at the MCG, and (sort of) took the catch that won the Test by just three runs. Well, he popped the ball up and Geoff Miller finished the job. "It was fantastic to play in front of 64,000 on Boxing Day. It was a relief, but I can't say I recall it particularly well!"

"I found touring hard. All the tours I went on, we went 1-0 down. It's not often sides come back from that."

Tavaré lost his place and the Kent captaincy in 1984, so he moved to Somerset, where he reinvented himself as a surprisingly dashing one-day batsman. "The England experience took me a year to recover from. Test cricket took a lot out of me. I admire people like Gower who played 10, 12 years... I don't know how they did it. I found it absolutely draining. They always said Botham and Bob Willis liked to have a long rest between bowling spells, anyhow, so they loved it when I batted!"

Course of action

Whether it is an Ashes win or the street cricket projects that provide safe havens for young people, cricket has the power to unite communities beyond the boundary ropes. On the University of Worcester's Cricket Coaching and Management BSc (Hons) course, one can develop the practical skills, academic knowledge and coaching expertise needed to make a real contribution, whether in a community setting, at the performance end of the scale or in the wider sports industry. Jeska Ward, third-year student at Worcester, explains why she enjoys her course so much: "Studying on the Cricket Coaching and Management BSc (Hons) course at Worcester has enabled me to broaden my horizon from the coaching environment and to see what happens behind the scenes from a management perspective. The course has provided the opportunity to study a range of different modules, which has really widened my knowledge. It will enable me to go into many areas of work, for example, cricket coaching, coaching people with disabilities, event management and/or performance analysis."

Find out more at the website – worcester.ac.uk