

Andrew Cowie 1950-2018



Andrew Cowie and Mike Cleaver 1968

CURFC is sad to report the death last month of former Amateur Singles champion Andrew Cowie (Rugby & Magdalene) after an extended period of ill health.

Andrew learned his Fives at Rugby School and won the Public Schools Doubles in 1968 with his partner Mike Cleaver. Just two years later the same pair were runners-up to Gardner & Reid in the National Doubles. In 1973 Andrew won the Cyriax Trophy with John East, beating Stan Holt & John Howe in the final.

In this period of 5 years Andrew enjoyed great success in Rugby Fives, before dedicating his efforts from the age of 23, post-university, to county-level squash and subsequently to his career in business.

A left-hander with a subtle wrist action that left many an opponent wrong-footed, Andrew enjoyed success in senior Fives in both Doubles and Singles. He won the Amateur Singles as it was then

known in 1971 and 1972, beating John East on both occasions, before losing in the final in 1973 to Wayne Enstone, who would then go on to achieve his extraordinary run of victories in that event.

Andrew was Universities Singles champion in 1970 and runner-up in 1971; he won the North of England Singles title in 1971; and he was Scottish Singles champion in 1971 and 1972. He won the Universities Doubles with Tony Dixon in 1970; and the North West Open Doubles with Dave Hebden in the same year.

Andrew was at Cambridge University for four years and has one of the very best records in the Varsity Match, where he was on the winning side each time. Captain in his third year, he played Singles in three of the matches and Doubles — with David Storey, Tony Dixon, Robin Skinner and Nick Mount — in all. He never lost a match and his aggregate points score was 285-136.

Andrew was an undergraduate at Magdalene College when he won the National Singles title — a very rare achievement indeed, — but the Cambridge University Rugby Fives Club decided not to recommend him for the Full Blue that his achievement so obviously warranted as there was talk at the time of downgrading Rugby Fives from its Half Blue status. Instead, in Andrew's honour, Jock Burnet, the President of the Club, gave a dinner in the College at which there were no speeches, simply a toast: "Gentlemen: The Amateur Champion".

Andrew came to the 50th Past versus Present in 1999 where he was reunited with his old friend and partner Robin Skinner, who is shown in the photo below.



Cambridge University 1972

Back Row: Messrs Mount, Whiting, Palmer and Skinner
Front Row: Messrs Arnold, Cowie, Burnet, Harland and Berry

RUGBY SCHOOL

19



FIVES IV

65



J. M. Hartland, R. C. O. Skinner
M. J. Cleaver, T. A. Cowie

RUGBY SCHOOL FIVES TEAM
1967



G. A. J. Sparling (Sh) T. A. Cowie (M) R. C. O. Skinner (K)

M. J. Cleaver (St) (Capt) A. F. Colver (St)

Played 8 Won 8 Lost 0