

# Unusual start in hockey

HOCKEY at Milton had an unusual history, commencing with a series of inter-house matches in 1940. The boys were coached by F. G. (Pult) Jackson who remained coach for many years. The season ended with a match against the staff who won 2-0.

In 1941 the school played their first match against Plumtree and went down 3-4. The team entered in the Town League losing most of their games. The early teams suffered from lack of practice as many players were committed to rugby and, as Milton had no field, the boys practised on the Board grounds which were some distance away.

The 1944 *Miltonian* suggested that if the school team was to improve, more practices were necessary which meant the elimination of rugby players from the team.

The school played their first match on their own field in 1945 beating Induna 2-1. In 1947 hockey colours and caps were awarded for the first time. The school continued to play in the Matabeleland Hockey League until there were sufficient inter-school fixtures.

With greater competition the standard of school hockey improved and in 1960 the first Rhodesian Schools team was selected to tour South Africa.

M. Botya, D. Beets, J. Davies, P. McVey, J. Phillips and A. Tabbitt were selected. The 1960 side was unbeaten and Beets played particularly well and was selected for Matabeleland against Kenya.

No side since has equalled the 1960 side's unbeaten record although the school has

produced some outstanding players. The Hardman brothers, Gary and Craig, both represented the side for four years and went on the Zimbabwe Schools overseas tour. Gary was selected for the Zimbabwe men's side while at school.

The present hockey side has some talented individuals and has nine players in the Matabeleland A and B sides, although the forwards have proved unable to find the goal as often as they should!