

# Intensive cricket coaching needed

"LEARN to play with a straight bat. This is the ABC of cricket. A good eye and quick feet may accomplish a good deal, but until you play with a straight bat, you will never achieve very much."

This extract, taken from "Hints On Cricket" in the 1921 edition of "The Miltonian" may be adequately used as sound advice for any Milton cricketer, but if we are to survey the extract objectively, it may also prove sound advice to all Milton sportsmen whose duty is to play their respective games in the true spirit that they require. Milton, now in its seventy-fifth year, can feel proud that its cricketers have in the past, and still do uphold "that (which) is cricket".

On December 9, 1910 Milton on its newly completed pitch played its first game which was against Plumtree who became our traditional rivals. Since then there have been many exciting contests. The November 1939 game was a memorable one with Milton following on 701 runs behind and managing to win by dismissing Plumtree for 50. In the 1948 game W Sprague performed the rare feat of taking

four wickets in four balls.

Milton's two most outstanding cricketers were Percy Mansell and Colin Bland who both gained selection for the Springboks. Bland was one of the most outstanding outfielders.

As the number of boys increased it became necessary to have more ground available for cricket. In the late fifties, Milton acquired the Thompson Fields to the north of Selborne Avenue and these fields accommodate all the junior sides.

The 1980/81 season was the most successful for many years. No game was lost and in a low-scoring game we ended Prince Edward's long unbeaten run. One of the most exciting games ever played against Plumtree was our one-wicket win with Grobler coming in at last man scoring 48 not out.

Milton is fielding fewer sides this year than for many seasons and undoubtedly part of the problem is that there is little coaching in the primary schools. Unless the Zimbabwe Cricket Union indulges in more intensive and less haphazard coaching schemes, the game seems doomed.