

= Central Recreation Ground =

The Central Recreation Ground was a cricket ground in Hastings , East Sussex , used for first @-@ class and List A cricket between 1864 and 1996 . The ground was frequently used by Sussex County Cricket Club as one of their outgrounds from 1865 ; in total , Sussex played 143 first @-@ class and 17 List A matches at the ground . Between 1887 and the 1960s , the Central Recreation Ground also played host to the Hastings & St Leonards cricket festival , which attracted many other teams and notable players . In the early twentieth century , the ground hosted seven Gentlemen v Players matches , and notable players to have played at the ground include W.G. Grace , Don Bradman , Jack Hobbs and Denis Compton . Grace made over 40 appearances at the ground , whilst both Hobbs and Compton broke the record for most first @-@ class centuries in a season at the Central Recreation Ground . The ground also hosted a women 's one @-@ day international between England and New Zealand in 1984 . In the 1980s , planning permission was given for the ground be demolished , and the land used to build a shopping centre . After the demolition of the ground in 1996 , the Priory Meadow Shopping Centre was built on the site .

= = Cricket history = =

In total , the Central Recreation Ground hosted 228 first @-@ class matches , and 14 List A matches . The ground was initially leased from the Cornwallis family (the descendants of Charles Cornwallis , 1st Marquess Cornwallis) , until 1869 when the ground was purchased by the cricketing trust . Between 1887 and the 1960s , the ground hosted the Hastings & St. Leonards Festival in September , which was the southern equivalent of the Scarborough Festival . During these festivals , seven Gentlemen v Players matches were played on the ground between 1889 and 1903 , and in 1907 & 1909 , matches took place between Gentlemen of the South and Players of the South . The 1909 match was the only first @-@ class match played by British Army officer Leonard Slater , and was a victory for the Players of the South by 228 runs .

W. G. Grace played at the ground over forty times , and during the 1894 Hastings Festival , he scored his 98th first @-@ class century for the Gentleman against the Players . Grace had captained a South of England team against an 18 of Hastings team in 1877 , a match which was described as " a great success , and revived the game in Hastings " . In 1900 , a match took place between a combined Sussex and Surrey team against a Rest of England team containing Grace ; the Rest of England team scored 355 in 3 hours 50 minutes . In 1902 , a joint Sussex and Kent team played a Rest of England team , this time captained by Grace . In the 1902 Gentlemen v. Players match , Grace and Walter Reed made a partnership of 99 as the Gentleman scored 211 ; Reed top @-@ scored with 56 , whilst Grace 's score of 53 was the only other score above 30 .

During the 1925 Hastings Festival , Jack Hobbs scored 266 , in a Gents v Players match ; this was his record first @-@ class score , and was also his 15th first @-@ class century in the season , a new record . At the 1947 Hastings Festival , Denis Compton broke Hobbs ' record by scoring a 17th first @-@ class century of the season , in a match against South Africa . Compton was eventually dismissed for 101 , although South Africa won the match by 9 wickets . In 1948 , Don Bradman scored his 115th first @-@ class century in a Hastings Festival match against a South of England team ; his innings lasted 133 minutes .

The Central Recreation Ground also hosted many games aside from Hastings Festival matches . Australian teams played at the ground 18 times , with one match in 1878 involving a side with eighteen Hastings players , of whom six played for Kent , three played for Sussex and three played for Surrey . In a 1902 match between Sussex and Surrey at the ground , C.B. Fry and Joe Vine scored an opening partnership of 238 runs , and KS Ranjitsinhji scored the first double @-@ century at the ground , as Sussex scored 705 ? 8d , the highest total in a first @-@ class match at the ground . The match also saw Surrey batsmen Bobby Abel and Thomas Hayward score an opening partnership of 246 , the highest partnership ever for the first wicket in a match at the Central Recreation Ground . In 1908 , a match took place at the ground between an English 11 and the Melbourne Cricket Club . A first @-@ class match between Sussex and Kent in 1984 ended in a tie .

In the same year , the England women 's cricket team played a 55 overs a side One Day International match against New Zealand . Jan Brittin scored 101 , as England scored 194 ? 8 , and in reply New Zealand made 148 ? 7 . The last Sussex first @-@ class match at the ground took place in 1996 .

In 1954 , The Cricketer magazine noted that Sussex and Kent used to frequently play their matches at Nevill Ground , Tunbridge Wells and the Central Recreation Ground in Hastings ; the article saying " amongst typical considerations which affect the issue are county weeks and festivals " . The players ' tea @-@ room at the Ground had graffito saying " Victoria 1066 " ; Guardian cricket correspondent Matthew Engel joked that " Since the cricket ground is the only place in town not full of French students , this must have been put there by one of William 's soldiers and could well constitute the longest @-@ running gloat in history " .

= = Other history = =

In 1869 , the ground hosted an archery meeting for the Royal St. Leonards Archers . During the 1890s , the ground hosted local football matches for Rock @-@ a @-@ Nores (now Hastings United) ; in 1895 , it hosted Rock @-@ a @-@ Nores ' matches in the Hastings Carlisle Cup Competition . In 1896 , the ground hosted a charity match between Hastings and Eastbourne , to raise money for Hastings Rowing Club ; Hastings won the match 3 ? 1 , and the match raised almost £ 10 , which was most of the money needed for the rowing club 's new galley . Later in the year , it hosted another match between Hastings and Eastbourne , which Eastbourne won 7 ? 2 .

In 1905 , the ground hosted a circus , in which American tight rope champion Hermann Davidson fell 60 feet (18 m) to his death after falling off the balancing pole during a performance . Davidson was 45 years old , and had begun training to be a tight @-@ rope walker at the age of 10 .

In September 1922 , the ground held a Grand Fete , to raise money to repair the tower of Blacklands Church . In 1948 , the ground was flooded , and the Public Health Committee report into the storm floods had to be withdrawn after a magistrate appeared to provide misinformation in his statutory declaration . In his declaration , he had claimed to have been at the Central Recreation Ground for two 15 minute time periods during the flooding period and claimed to have seen the flooding , but at those times , the ground had not yet been flooded . The ground had previously flooded in 1866 , when one resident noted that it had been underwater many times within their memory .

= = Demolition = =

In 1982 , Hastings Council voted to relocate the Central Recreation Ground to Summerfields , and use the ground 's current location for a shopping centre . However , this proposal was rejected by the Government in 1984 , before the Central Cricket Ground Committee decided to move in 1986 . Planning permission for the shopping centre was granted in 1988 , and the ground was eventually demolished between 1996 and 1997 , being replaced by Priory Meadow Shopping Centre . The shopping centre has a 10 @-@ foot sculpture entitled " The Spirit of Cricket " , with an inscription about the location of the ground there for 130 years .

= = Ground records in first @-@ class matches = =

Highest total : 705 ? 8d Sussex v Surrey , 1902

Lowest total : 53 England XI v Australians , 1888

Highest individual score : 246 KS Duleepsinhji , Sussex v Kent , 1929

Best bowling figures : 9 ? 28 DL Underwood , Kent v Sussex , 1964

Best match figures : 17 ? 50 CTB Turner , Australians v England XI , 1888