

Friday Afternoon 4th October 2019 in Malahide Cricket Club

Outside, Frank Donlon, Malahide's long term groundsman was busy doing some end of season work. Inside, in the Clubhouse we began our chat on Dougie Goodwin's cricket career focusing mainly on his playing days with Malahide Cricket Club. We sat by the bay window, behind the fireplace, looking out onto the ground. On the wall behind Dougie was the black and white action photo of him peeling away after delivering a ball with Malahide Castle in the background. In front of us on the table were our props, old team photographs, statistics compiled by Derek Scott, press cuttings, two glasses and a bottle of Wyndham Shiraz served by Jim, the bar manager. It was a fair early autumn afternoon and we were set!

DG It was the semi final of the Leinster Senior Cup against Trinity in College Park in 1959. Trinity were strong in those days. I took 8 for 65. That was my first big day and in a sense it was the day that I "arrived". AB Robertson was our captain. I took four wickets in my first spell and AB took me off. And then coming back I took a further four.

We went on to play Leinster CC in the Final in Park Avenue in that same year 1959. We bowled Leinster out for 83. I took 5 for 28. We knocked off the runs easily and won by 8 wickets. It was our first trophy since we became a Senior Club in 1953.

It was a memorable day and night! On our return our small convoy of cars were met by the Yellow Walls Pipe Band at the sharp bend into Malahide. Word had filtered through of our victory. Local man Eddie Parker organised the Band. We were marched along the Dublin Road, over the Railway Bridge and into the village. Then down New Street where club stalwart Louis Hughes stood on the bonnet of a car outside Gibney's Pub and celebrated the famous victory before a cheering crowd. And then we retired inside!

Gerry Carroll, brother of Clontarf's Fergus and Michael, wrote a cricket column in The Evening Herald. Reporting on our Cup success he referred to me as Dougie. Up until that point I was known only as Doug. Mother read the article and said I see they have changed your name!

MALAHIDE CAREER STATS 1956-1986

Matches	Wickets	Runs	Average
337	935	11446	12.24

DG I made my debut on the Senior team in 1956. It was the last game of the season. Rory Gilmore was captain.

My breakthrough was in 1957. I was 19. Sunday cricket was introduced for the first time in Leinster.

There were a couple of players who did not want to play on a Sunday. The committee decided to fill the vacancies with older players such as John Neville. Joe McCleery insisted that rather than returning to the past youth must have its day. And that's how I got my chance to play on the first team. Paddy Neville was captain. Ironically, Paddy who was a great player for Malahide had a poor year by his standard. He had to travel from Dundrum Central Mental Hospital where he was a psychiatric nurse for selection meetings and practices and the like and it didn't really suit the Big Man.

BG *[Producing a cricket ball]* Can you show me your grip.

Dougie took the ball in his right hand, manoeuvred it around until it was held by two long, slender fingers at the tips of the last joint and supported by the thumb. The two fingers crossed the seam directed towards an imaginary first slip, rough side on the outside.

I liked to get the ball in my hand from mid off or mid on before I completed my walk back so that I could turn and begin my run up without stopping. I bowled close to the stumps and looked to move the ball away from the right hand batsman, in the air and off the pitch. In Malahide my preferred end was the Castle End. The Road End had a slight step up onto the square which I found a little bit uncomfortable.

BG You bowled a lot of overs. Did you suffer injuries.

DG I have problems with my knees now. It causes me a few problems on the golf course.

BG You are 81!

DG I was very light on my feet. I glided through the crease at delivery and then peeled away *(as clearly demonstrated in the picture (taken by Sean O'Neill) above his head)*. So I wasn't somebody who pounded the crease and dug holes. I think this protected my body and allowed me to bowl long spells. *To this day Dougie retains his tall, slender six foot one physique.*

MALAHIDE CAREER STATS 1956-86

5 Wickets in an Innings: 71 times (including 6 in a row in 1964)

50 Wickets in a Season: 9 times (1959, 64, 65, 66, 68, 70, 71, 72, 75)

BG Although the stats do not record how many overs you bowled it is clear from the press cuttings, scorebooks etc that you probably bowled thousands of overs many of which were maidens. The phrase RELENTLESS ACCURACY comes to mind. Is that a fair description.

DG My approach was to keep it simple and bowl as accurately as I could with a degree of away movement and pressurise the batsman into making a mistake. Also, placing the right fielders in the right place was important such as Herbie Darlington who was a skilful gully fielder.

BG The three in a row Leinster Senior Cup Finals 1964, 65, 66 all against Old Belvedere and all lost! How did that happen?

DG The '65 game was in Malahide. For some reason we changed the aspect of the wicket around for the Final. The Final wicket ran from the Clubhouse to the Avenue leading up to the Castle, in other

words at right angles to its normal position. I think it was a mistake as we conceded much of our home advantage by making this change.

Although the focus of our chat was on Malahide, Dougie interspersed reminiscences from his distinguished international career. He referred to his international debut for Ireland in 1965 v MCC at Lords. Dermot Monteith made his debut in the same match, as a batsman! In 1969 when batting with Gerry Duffy in Rathmines v Mr Wilfred Isaac's XI, Gerry says to Dougie in between overs "Have you seen the scoreboard?", "Yes" says Dougie, "Well" says Gerry "Now is your chance to get your first 50 for Ireland." Dougie was on 41 at the time. Next ball, Dougie not wearing his batsman's thinking cap, looked to cow corner and holed out. Batter G Duffy sighed!

1971 saw Malahide win the Leinster Senior League and Cup double for the first and only time. In the Cup Final v. Clontarf CC in their home ground at Castle Avenue, Clontarf rolled Malahide out for a paltry 102. But in reply Malahide skittled their closest rivals for 73 with Dougie in typically mean form taking 4 for 26 off 26 overs including 16 maidens. The following year the Final was another low scoring epic v Pembroke CC in their home ground in Sydney Parade. Malahide were bowled out for 79. Incredibly, Pembroke were reduced to 27 for 7 but scraped home by 1 wicket. Dougie's analysis was a brilliant 12 overs, 8 maidens, 6 wickets for 9 runs. This was the first year that bowlers were limited to 12 overs in the Cup.

MALAHIDE CAREER STATS 1956-86

Best Bowling Figures:

9/37 v Phoenix CC, 1971 in Phoenix Park - Cup

9/27 v Phoenix CC, 1975 in Phoenix Park - Cup

8 wickets in a match: 8 times - Best = 8/11 v Merrion CC which included his only hat trick

DG In the Final against Pembroke I came off after 10 overs with 2 overs held back. Maybe in hindsight it might have been better to have bowled my 12 straight through as the momentum shifted in a delicately balanced game. We shall never know!

BG Names from Malahide CC's past such as Louis Hughes, AB Robertson, Joe McCleery

DG Louis did a huge amount for the Club including recruiting groundsman Frank Donlon over 50 years ago from Malahide Golf Club. In addition to Louis, AB and Joe McCleery were very positive influences on me during my cricket career.

BG The Honourable Rose Talbot and Lord Milo Talbot

DG Milo was never really around and I never met him. On the other hand we played an annual fixture against a Rose Talbot Castle XI in the early years. Players like Charles Lysaght played for the Honourable Rose's XI. After the game we were brought up to the Castle and wined and dined. For a young fella like myself it was memorable. I think the Castle and the Talbots are a very important part of our history.

MALAHIDE CAREER STATS 1956-86

O'Grady Cup (Leading Bowler in Leinster)

Winner on 3 occasions: 1968, 71, 72

BG Best Bowling, Batting, Fielding?

DG Best bowling

Probably against Phoenix when they were in their pomp. I took 9 wickets. *The stats reveal 9 for 27 v Phoenix CC in the Phoenix Park in 1975.*

Best batting

One that sticks in the memory was the year that Paddy Neville was captain in 1957. Paddy's batting suffered during his year as captain but he did score one century that season and I batted with him for a long time as he reached his ton. I scored 20 odd. (*Stats: v. Phoenix CC - P Neville 122*, DG 23**)

Best fielding

Again in the early days I was fielding on the boundary on the opposite side to the Clubhouse along side the Tennis Courts.

BG Tennis Courts?

DG Yes, there were four Courts run by Mrs Hodges. The first Court was by the Gate Lodge and ran parallel to the Avenue up to the Castle. Anyway Freddy Brady of YMCA hit an enormous skier. Brady went on to be an Irish selector. I steadied myself and managed to hold onto the ball. My father was on hand to witness which made it all the more memorable.

BG Best Batter

DG Stanley Bergin, Clontarf and Ireland was one player who sticks out. He was an accumulator but more importantly he was brave particularly when the quicks got going.

BG Was there a bowler that you enjoyed bowling with.

DG Les O'Shea was an awkward bowler. He bowled with a low round arm action. Many batsmen found him to difficult to play including top players such as Alec O'Riodan and Gerry Duffy. He used to get them out regularly. And then I used to pick up wickets at the other end having negotiated a difficult, skiddy over from Les.

IRELAND STATS 1965-1975

43 Matches, 115 wickets @ 22.18

GUINNESS CUP (North Leinster) 1966-1976

43 Matches, 92 wickets @ 12.66

It was 7 o'clock. We had been chatting for over two hours. The Shiraz was empty. Dougie's pals Donal Byrne and Kevin Jennings had just come in and joined him for a pint.

BG Thats it Dougie

DG Thanks Brian. I really enjoyed that. Brought back memories. And you know [pause] it was a love story. I loved playing and of course I loved bowling.

Brian Gilmore, Malahide Cricket Club