

Sydney Howard Stock (Syd)

1908-1989



Syd Stock was born in Lydney on 19 July 1908. He was educated at Lydney Grammar School, though left school at 14 years to work in the tinsplate works at Lydney. His work took him to Llanelli during the 1930's and he came to Abergavenny in 1938 in order to work during the war in the tinsplate division of the Ebbw Vale Steelworks. He was not permitted to join up and fight during the war, since the production of tinsplate was deemed too important.

Syd had learned cricket and hockey at Lydney Grammar School and was to continue playing both sports as an adult.

After coming to Abergavenny in 1938, Syd joined and played for Abergavenny during the 1939 season. He had an immediate impact, taking regular wickets, particularly with the new ball at a very economic rate.

In only his second game for Abergavenny he took six wickets for only two runs against Whiteheads. Later on, in Abergavenny, he took nine wickets for eleven runs against Monmouthshire Police.

Prior to the 2nd World War in Llanelli, Syd captained Morewoods Cricket Club for 3 years, a period during which the side won the South Wales and Monmouthshire Cricket League in 1937. This was a considerable accomplishment because it was only the third year after Morewood's promotion from the Second Division of the League. The local press praised Syd Stock - "a great deal of Morewood's success is due to their skipper, S H Stock, himself a useful bowler, whose inspiring captaincy has built up a wave of optimism around the team". They sensationally dismissed Maesteg for 10 runs, providing Syd with his best league performance. He had 5 wickets for 4 runs and Gwyn Davies, brother of Emrys took 5 wickets for 6 runs.

During the war, the cricket ground at Avenue Road, Abergavenny, was used by the army, who had quite a strong side, captained by General Halstead, and Syd was invited to play for them.

In 1946 Abergavenny secured the release of Syd Stock from Ebbw Vale to rejoin Abergavenny, this saw the re birth of a very good post war career as a bowler and batsman for the Club.

He became captain that year and this coincided with a revival of interest in cricket in Abergavenny, the introduction of Sunday cricket at that time proved to be very popular and hundreds of spectators attended games at the beautifully situated ground at Avenue Road. Syd was keenly involved in the regeneration and revitalisation of the Abergavenny Club. He played a major role in introducing matches on Sundays, in addition to Saturdays, and supervised the hard

work which resulted in the square producing wickets of high quality, which helped to encourage strong sides to visit Abergavenny on Sundays, such as Mitchell & Butlers (from the Birmingham League) Innswingers (from Cardiff), South Wales Hunt, and, of course, benefit matches for the Glamorgan players. The work on the square set an example which the club has followed ever since, much to the delight of county batsmen who have played in Abergavenny.

Syd also was closely involved in the building of new changing rooms, as an annex to the pavilion. Much of the work was done by volunteered labour by members of the club and friends.

Syd was primarily a fast/medium bowler, bowling innsingers, which swung very late.

Syd was captain of Abergavenny first eleven from 1946 to 1951.

Syd did not pride himself as a batsman, indeed he was inclined to underestimate his own ability and usually batted toward the tail. However, he had a good eye and enjoyed going for quick runs, particularly hitting the ball over the bowler's head for six. Nevertheless, he could bat seriously and responsibly when required. In a match against local rivals, Usk, at Usk, Abergavenny struggled against the fast bowling of Marsh and Syd struggled to survive until Marsh was taken off. Syd then hit out, to the delight of the Abergavenny supporters, and in one single over hit five fours and a six.

, as he occasionally delighted the crowd with exhilarating performances with the bat. This included hitting 5 fours and a six from a single over in a match against local rivals Usk.

He was responsible for bringing Lew White to the club from Ebbw Vale. Lew came as a part time professional, helping to coach the young players and himself had a very distinguished cricketing career with Abergavenny.

Syd was an inspirational captain and, although he could be firm with the younger players, he was well respected and liked by his own players and opponents alike. He was an ideal Club Captain, he was totally unselfish, and was essentially a 'clubman'

Syd was invited to play for Glamorgan first eleven on several occasions, but unfortunately, his work commitments did not permit him sufficient time off. He played for and captained The Glamorgan Nomads for some years and also played for the Gloucestershire Gypsies.

Syd also had a distinguished hockey career, and played centre forward for Wales. When he retired from cricket, he became a keen golfer.

In 1955 Syd left Abergavenny and resigned from the committee, on his appointment as General Manager of the Velindre Tinplate Works. He also became a keen follower of National Hunt Racing.

He was President from 1961-64 inclusive. He has played a great part in the success enjoyed by Abergavenny Cricket Club.

Following his retirement, he and Molly, his wife, lived in Whitchurch near Monmouth, where they could be near their son and grandchildren. Syd died in 1989.

Syd had been appointed a Justice of the Peace and a General Commissioner of Taxes