



**Letter of recommendation &  
press coverage (Selection)**

# CRICKET<sup>ON</sup> ICE



Herrn  
Daniel A. Häring  
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St. Moritz, 3. Juli 1998

## To whom it may concern

Seit 1993 organisiert Herr Häring den jährlichen Anlass „Cricket on Ice“ in St. Moritz. In seiner Funktion als Gründer und Präsident der Trägerschaft des Events, des St. Moritz Cricket Clubs, hat er es in den vergangenen Jahren mit grosser Beharrlichkeit geschafft, eine bemerkenswerte Veranstaltung aufzubauen.

Herr Häring hat mit seinem enormen Leistungswillen und einem ausserordentlichen Organisationstalent eine Veranstaltung selbständig entwickelt, welche nur bewundert werden kann. Mit seiner kommunikativen Art kann er Menschen für seine Ideen begeistern und ist mit diesen dann auch in der Lage, seine Visionen zu verwirklichen. Besonders hervorheben möchten wir die Selbständigkeit von Herrn Häring, mit welcher er den Anlass, gepaart mit einer professionellen Sponsorenpflege und grossem Enthusiasmus jährlich organisiert.

Der Kur- und Verkehrsverein St. Moritz unterstützt Herrn Häring und den St. Moritz Cricket Club aktiv in der Organisation von „Cricket on Ice“. Die Veranstaltung ist finanziell jedoch vollständig unabhängig von uns.

„Cricket on Ice“ trägt hinsichtlich der internationalen Medienpräsenz jährlich einen willkommenen Beitrag zum Image von St. Moritz bei.

Wir möchten uns an dieser Stelle für die angenehme Zusammenarbeit bedanken und hoffen, auch in der Zukunft mit Herrn Häring in der beschriebenen Art verbunden zu bleiben.

Kur- und Verkehrsverein St. Moritz

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16 July 1998

Since 1996, the St. Moritz Cricket Club in general and in particular Mr. Daniel Häring, as its president, have been organising the event "Cricket on Ice" for our bank. Mr. Häring has the overall responsibility for this project, i.e. budgeting, planning and execution.

Mr. Häring has the necessary empathy to put himself in our shoes as sponsors, and mutual co-operation has proved to be very constructive, successful and fair. Mr. Häring is dedicated to putting the many different part-projects of "Cricket on Ice" into action. Due to his untiring efforts, "Cricket on Ice" has become an important event for us. The confidence we place in Mr. Häring has always resulted in positive outcomes. He constantly brings forward new ideas and realises them after only a very short planning period, thus making "Cricket on Ice" constantly more interesting for all parties involved.

We very much appreciate working with Mr. Häring and are looking forward to many more occasions of optimal co-operation.

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## Neue Zürcher Zeitung

8. Februar 1993 - Autor: Heinz Stalder

### **Cricket on Ice - alles ein bisschen anders Eine urenglische Sommer- und Schoenwettersportart wird in St. Moritz winterfest**

Waehrend das englische Cricket-Nationalteam auf seiner Indien-Tournee in Vishakhapatnam in einem Dreitagematch gegen den Rest of India spielt und sich die Kommentatoren erinnern, wie im Oktober 1991 in Bombay, kurz vor einem Testmatch zwischen Indien und Pakistan, das sakrosankte innere Spielfeld von blindwuetigen Nationalisten umgegraben, mit Rohoel unbespielbar gemacht und das faire Cricket erstmals in die haessliche Politik hineingezogen wurde, wird das englische Rasenspiel auf dem gefrorenen St. Moritzer See zelebriert. Und zwar ebenso stilvoll wie auf einem der unzaehligen wunderschoenen Greens irgendwo auf der Insel oder gar at Lord's in London, dem Mekka der immer noch englischen Cricket- Welt, zu der, seit am 5. Februar 1993 der St. Moritz Cricket Club feierlich gegrundet wurde, nun auch das Engadin gehoert.

Zwar wird am Lyceum Alpinum in Zuoz schon seit 70 Jahren Cricket gespielt, doch geht es Daniel Haering, dem ersten Klubpraesidenten, darum, Cricket "aus der Schulstube" herauszuholen, das sportliche, gesellschaftliche und kulturelle Leben von St. Moritz durch einen Sport zu bereichern, in dem es, zumindest hierzulande, nicht in erster Linie rein ums Siegen geht.

Wie Schach oder einer allein gegen elf

Cricket ist ein Lebensgefuehl, ein Spiel, bei dem wie nirgends sonst einer, der Batsman oder Schlaeger, ganz allein gegen elf Gegner antritt. Und auch der Werfer weiss, wenn er ebenso allein vor dem Mann mit Beinschonern und Holzschlaeger steht, wie sehr sein Wurf zu Erfolg oder Misserfolg seiner Mannschaft beitragen kann. Sein Captain hat ihn nicht zu Unrecht genau gegen den Mann eingesetzt, der da vor ihm steht, ihn fixiert und den Pitch, das innere Spielfeld, mit rituellem Klopfen beschwoert. Cricket wird oft mit Schach verglichen, doch wenn man als Zuschauer die Spielzuege auf dem ovalen Feld verfolgt, faellt es einem mitunter schwer, diesem "Lebensgefuehl" die Faszination einer Schachpartie oder, um von den koeniglichen Spielen auf den Boden des gewoehnlichen Volkes zurueckzukommen, die Spannung eines Fussballspiels abzugewinnen.

Im Sommer kann ein Cricket Match, Lunch und Tee mit inbegriffen, gut und gern sechs bis acht Stunden dauern. Und dann, bei den vielen Schlaegen, Wuerfen, Runs und Faengen, ist es eben nicht von ungefaehr, dass sich der Captain jeden einzelnen "Schachzug" genauestens ueberlegt, damit er auf das oft unberechenbare Verhalten des Gegners mit viel Spielwitz und noch mehr Geduld reagieren kann. Wenn hie und da ueber laengere Zeit nicht viel passiert, kann ohne Bedenken davon ausgegangen werden, da lauere die eine Mannschaft der andern auf, um beim geringsten Fehler mit genialen Wuerfen oder Schlaegen das Spiel schon dann zu entscheiden, wenn vielleicht noch Stunden zu spielen sind.

Kein reiner Gentleman-Sport mehr

Ein gewichtiger Grund, den St. Moritz Cricket Club zu gruenden, ist die Durchfuehrung des Winter-Cricket-Turniers auf dem St.-Moritzer-See. Wenn sich das heuer schon zum fuenftenmal ueber das Eis gehende Ereignis neben den Pferderennen auch noch etwas bescheiden ausnimmt, der Aufwand der Organisatoren ist enorm.

So sehr es auch den Anschein machen kann, Cricket sei in erster Linie ein Gentleman-Sport, bei dem es nicht zuletzt darum gehen koennte, keine Rasenflecken auf die "Whites", die eleganten, langen weissen Hosen zu bekommen, wer den Sport mit der noetigen Ernsthaftigkeit betreibt, und welchem englischen Sport koennte eine gewisse Ernsthaftigkeit abgesprochen werden, setzt nebst Spielintelli-

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genz auch sehr viel Kraft, Beweglichkeit und Haerte ein.

Den Ball mit gestrecktem Ellbogen, alles andere wuerde mit dem Schiedsrichterruf "No Ball" geahndet, und Effet so in die Naehel des Schlaegers zu werfen und vom Boden abprallen zu lassen, dass der Mann mit dem Holzschlaeger seine liebe Muehe hat, die drei hinter ihm im Boden verankerten Staebe mit den daruebergelegten Hoelzchen zu verteidigen, bedarf eines Trainings wie bei allen andern Leistungssportarten auch. Den Schlaeger zu handhaben und auf die tueckischen Baelle zu reagieren ist ohnehin eine Kunst, die nicht von heute auf morgen zu erlernen ist, und auch das Flair play, jeder gute Spielzug des Gegners wird mit aufrichtigem Applaus quittiert, setzt Erfahrung voraus.

Auf dem St.-Moritzer-See ist alles ein bisschen anders. Statt "Whites" tragen die Spieler warme Trainingshosen. Der Ball ist aus Hartgummi. Der originale Lederball wuerde auf dem Schnee feucht, schwer und unberechenbar. Der Pitch ist ein englischer Kunstrasen. Unter dem wetterbedingten Gemisch aus Kunst- und natuerlichem Schnee kracht das Eis. Der vom St. Moritz Cricket Club in bester Zusammenarbeit mit dem Kurverein in den Schnee gestampfte, gewalzte Cricket Ground kann sich nicht bloss sehen lassen, er haelt den kritischen Blicken der in den beiden angetretenen englischen Teams integrierten Professionals stand. Auf dem Feld wird guter Sport geboten, das Wetter spielt ausgezeichnet mit, auf der benachbarten Pferderennbahn wird trainiert, neben dem Oval landen, nachdem sie schattenwerfend ein paarmal ueber dem fremden Treiben gekreist haben, ununterbrochen Deltasegler und Haengegleiter.

Der grosse Unterschied

Im sommerlichen Spiel bewegen sich die Spieler auf dem minuzioes gepflegten Rasen gespenstisch lautlos. Auf dem St. Moritzer See ist jeder Schritt ein kreichendes Ereignis, und der Eifer oder die Nonchalance der auf dem Pitch hin- undherrennenden und Punkte (Runs) machenden Batsmen sind akustisch ueberpruefbar. Am Freitag spielten zwei englische Mannschaften um die Zuoz Club Trophy. Der Sieger trat am Samstag um die Charles Heidsieck Trophy gegen ein Schweizer Team, in dem auch ein paar Pakistani mitspielten, an. Das unter Captain Geoff des Ligneris sensationell spielende Swiss Team gewann nach einem ausserordentlich spannenden Match. Daniel Haering, selber ein aktiver Spieler, moechte seinen Klub und Cricket on Ice (jedes Jahr im Februar) ganz in den Dienst einer hohen Cricket-Kultur stellen. Ein ambitionoeses, hochgestecktes Ziel, dem nur Glueck zu wuenschen ist; denn, was die aufgelegte Hoehe nicht schaffft, isn't cricket!

16 February 1993 - by Heinz Stalder

### **Bowl an ice maiden over; Cricket is 'in' at fashionable St Moritz, or is someone just taking the piste? Heinz Stalder on a cool resort which is making the running**

AH, THE perennial sounds of willow on leather, of England losing a test series, of ice crunching underfoot. Cricket on ice has become a winter festival in Switzerland.

A frozen lake in St Moritz provides a venue as smart as any of the world's beautiful grounds, including even Lord's. It was here, earlier this month, that the St Moritz Cricket Club was officially founded. Although cricket has been played at the Lyceum Alpinum in Zuoz for 70 years, the club's first president, Daniel Haring, hopes to bring the game "out of the classroom" and to enrich the sporting, social and cultural life of St Moritz with a sport which, at least in this part of the world, isn't just about winning.

Cricket is a Lebensgefühl, a game like no other in which one man, the batsman, is pitted against eleven opponents. But the bowler too, when he stands alone before the man with the leg guards and the wooden bat, knows how much his aim may determine the success or failure of his team. Not without good reason, his captain has charged him with the task of confronting the man who stands before him, eyes glued on him and ritually beating the ground with his bat.

In summer, a cricket match (and that includes lunch and tea) can last a good six to eight hours, but then, even with all the hits, throws, runs and catches, it's still necessary for the captain to consider every single move like a chess player, so that he can respond skillfully and patiently to the frequently unpredictable behavior of his opponents. If nothing much happens for long periods, it goes without saying that one side is laying a trap for the other; advantage will be taken of the smallest error and the game will then probably be decided by a few brilliant hits or throws, even if there are still hours of play left. One important reason for founding the St Moritz Cricket Club is to hold a winter cricket competition on the lake. Even if this show on ice may seem a rather modest affair beside the horse racing, it's a costly business.

Cricket is renowned primarily as a sport for gentlemen and it may seem that what matters most of all is keeping those long, elegant trousers free of grass stains, but whoever wants to play the game seriously (and which English game isn't played in earnest?), will deploy considerable strength, agility and toughness, as well as tactical intelligence. Wielding that bat and reacting to spinning balls is a skill not learned overnight and even the art of fair play, where every clever move by your opponent is acknowledged with polite applause, needs years of experience.

On St Moritz lake, the game is a little different. Instead of whites, the players wear warm track suits. The ball is made of hard rubber, because traditional leather would become wet, heavy and unpredictable on the snow. The pitch is artificial grass. Under the weathered mixture of synthetic and natural snow, the ice creaks. But St Moritz Cricket Club has flattened and rolled the snow to create a pitch worthy of the name and it can certainly withstand the critical eye of the professionals who graced both English teams in the tournament. There was good sport to be had, the weather was superb, a training session was in progress on the neighboring race track, and hang-giders kept landing beside the oval - after circling a few times, casting shadows over this alien pursuit.

In summer, the players tread the meticulously prepared grass with a ghostly silence. On St Moritz lake, every step crunches. Whether the players score their runs enthusiastically or nonchalantly, their performance can be checked acoustically. This month, two English teams played for the Zuoz Club trophy. The winners competed for the Charles Heidsieck trophy against a Swiss team, in which a few Pakistanis were playing. In an extraordinarily exciting match, the Swiss won. Haring, himself an active player, would like to elevate his club and annual Cricket on Ice into a more rarified cricket culture, an ambitious and exalted ambition, deserving a long innings.



5 February 1991 – by Simon Hughes

## **Cricket: Bagging ducks on the frozen lake; Simon Hughes, the Middlesex bowler, watches no-balls replace snowballs**

Despite the prowess of the Swiss on bobsleigh and toboggan, there is still a tangible British influence in St Moritz. Disregarding the trend for figure-hugging Lycra suits, the Cresta Run riders Whitman and Fitzherbert, attired in plus-fours and old motorcycle helmets, still dice with the treacherous zig-zagging ice chute, and are pronounced upon in abrupt pukka-ness by Lt Col Digby Willoughby. "Come come, Higgins, you must be properly attired during riding!"

The rows of bashed toboggans, some emblazoned with RAF emblems, epitomise the situation at the Cresta, where local daredevils like Claus Bertschinger now dominate. But in their never-ending quest for incongruity, the Brits are promoting more eccentric pursuits. Their latest asset is St Moritz's huge frozen lake. First it was the annual horse racing and polo meet, which has become an institution. Now it is cricket on ice.

Bizarre as it may sound to bowl to prominent county players (an ex-England captain or two for instance) at 6,000 feet and -20C on an artificial wicket surrounded by rolled snow, the standard of play was actually quite high.

There was the occasional alarm when a rasping square cut reared off a mogul in the outfield - players all wore skiing gloves and spiked shoes, of course - but the pitch was satisfactory until its foundations began to melt. There were perfect natural 3,000-metre sightscreens at each end and a specially erected pavilion inside which players in thermal jockstraps and Ray-Bans were revived with hot toddies - not so different from Fenner's in April.

Bowlers handed gloves to shivering umpires, who were armed with brooms to clear snow debris, before crunching in. But there was precious little swing - the atmosphere in St Moritz has only two per cent humidity. There was no spin either; the protagonists' fingers were too cold. Lofty hits plugged, drives skimmed towards orange boundary boards and fielders performed outrageous sliding stops. The square leg umpire probed the surface for any sign of David Gower's hire car which disappeared through the ice this time last year.

The aroma of barbecued bratwurst and the occasional sight of a horse-drawn sleigh (giving a new slant to "sledging" in cricket) betrayed the location. But in Switzerland, as in other European cities, cricket is catching on. Milan has a strong team, the MCC will never live down being beaten by one from Paris last year and the quality of the Dutch and the Danes is well known.

The St Moritz side are no more than useful. But, augmented by Chris Cowdrey, Mark Nicholas and other professionals, they were more than a match for the Cresta Cricket Club, though by the time the temperature dipped to -30C, the scorer's fingers were frozen to his pencil. The plan is for an international cricket-on-ice festival next year which, with the participation of enthusiastic teams from Spain, Italy and France, as well as Blighty, might be quite something. Who wouldn't swap an indoor net for this inspiring backdrop, lavish sponsorship and negligible health hazards? It doesn't bare comparison with the Cresta itself, where all you might get for a crippling initial investment of pounds 150 could be broken bones and a resonant ear-bashing from Col Willoughby: "Good God, Hughes! That was a ghastly ride."

The mesmeric appeal of the Cresta will survive though. Once through Shuttlecock, a notorious 90-degree bend, and down the home straight at 70mph, the old-fashioned challenge seems absurd, yet wholly addictive. Like cricket?

# THE TIMES

23 February 1998 – by Michael Henderson

## **Barmy army bats in the snow; Michael Henderson visits a most unusual British cricket setting**

What occurred in St Moritz at the weekend could be put down to a glee club of middle-aged, middle-class people behaving oddly. More charitably, it could be interpreted as a minor triumph for the benign influence of British civilization. Through whatever prism it is glimpsed, a cricket tour to this rich man's playground is a delightfully batty venture.

As England's cricketers were preparing in the heat of Guyana for the fourth Test against West Indies, a hundred enthusiastic revelers were frolicking on the lake in St Moritz. By turn a cricket festival, an endurance test and a noisy reunion for an extended family of friends (including, on this occasion, a team of jolly Dutchmen), it is not a gathering for faint hearts.

The British have been playing cricket on the ice here for ten years, virtually next door to the Cresta Run. They play on a pitch of compressed snow and use a hard, red ball, but it would be stretching a point to call it proper cricket, not when the first ball of the day, on Saturday, turned out to be an orange, and not when a camera crew loiters at square leg. Anthony Bouchier, a committee member and co-founder of St Moritz Cricket Club, with Simon Daggart, a schoolmaster of Eton, explained how it began. "At the time I worked for IMG, and we used to represent the Tourist Board here," he said. "I saw there was polo and horse-racing on the ice and asked them, if we brought some cricketers over, would they help us? The first time we had ten people, and now we've got a party of a hundred, with about 60 cricketers. Many of them have played at a good amateur standard, and we have always invited along a few professionals." Those who have accepted guest parts in previous years include David Gower, who famously abandoned his car when it sank into the lake, Allan Lamb, who conducted fielding practice with tomatoes, Paul Downton, Chris Cowdrey, Mark Nicholas and John Stephenson.

This year the professional cast-list featured three men who are looking to make new starts. Robin Smith has just taken over the captaincy of Hampshire, Jason Gallian has moved from Lancashire to Nottinghamshire and Ed Giddins, who has joined Warwickshire from Sussex, is about to complete the ban imposed on him two years ago for drug use. Four years ago, when England were last in Guyana, Smith made 84 in their first innings. A month later he made his highest Test score, 175, in Antigua. But never before has he been entered in the scorebook, as he was last Friday, as "retired, too good". In this cricket, played over 25 overs a side, a score of 35 is considered a batsman's "quota". Bouchier said St Moritz liked to promote itself as a "somewhat quirky resort". They like the tradition of Englishmen doing daft things, and cricket on the ice is about as mad as it gets. "It is always an advantage to bat first," Bouchier said. "The pitch is crisp and frozen in the morning and later, when the sun disappears and the pitch refreezes, the bounce can get very uneven. Mark Nicholas has said that he was hit on the head twice in his career, by Sylvester Clarke at the Oval, and by a Swiss Pakistani on the ice at St Moritz."

On another occasion Nick Cook, the former Leicestershire and Northamptonshire left-arm spinner, was hit for three successive sixes, the last of which landed in a snowdrift. Because St Moritz is such a busy resort, and a town of conspicuous wealth, if not obvious charm, Bouchier and chums begin their preparations six months before the tour. The highlight of the weekend is a formal dinner held in the imposing Carlton Hotel which, last Saturday, hosted a thrash of epic proportions. The club has begun a summer programme in England, with fixtures at Eton and Wellington College, is taking a team to Amsterdam in September and hopes to visit Vail, Colorado, in 2000. By then its membership may have swelled to battalion size. It is certainly a well-heeled body, with the professions and the City thoroughly represented. It inspires loyalty, too. Jervis Smith, a vice-president of Citibank, who provided a rousing, bowdlerized version of the Marseillaise that will not be heard in Paris on Bastille Day, returns to London today and, first thing tomorrow, he starts his new job in Manhattan.





13 February 2005 - Author: Iain Fletcher

## **How to bowl an ice maiden over; The cricketer's guide to life in the freezer**

As a former country professional, Iain Fletcher thought he'd seen it

The sun is shining as I don my cricket sweater, adjust my chosen headgear - a large woolly hat - and thrust my hands deep into my fleece-lined pockets. I glance round the ground, marvel at the mountains that frame the venue and march out with the rest of the team to field the first session.

So far, a normal start to any game of cricket in the world, something I have done many times as both a professional and an amateur in England, Australia and Asia. The major differences between these venues tend to be the thunder of nearby surf, the minaret of a local mosque or a crowd of street hawkers on the way to the ground. But as I take the field to make my debut for Old Cholmeleians, I pass the thermometer, pause, and give it a quick tap to check it's working: -12C. What are we doing playing cricket?

Cricket on Ice, as the tournament is billed, started here in St Moritz in 1989, the brainchild of some pleasantly eccentric cricket-lovers, both English and Swiss. Of course, wherever the English, and indeed Asians, go, then cricket will be played; but the Swiss as well? Well, yes, seems to be the answer, due mainly to the fact that the game is played just 20 minutes further down the valley, at the Lyceum Alpinum Zuoz international school. Their affinity with the old colonial game started back in the 1920s, when a teacher from Britain, Gordon Spencer, introduced both cricket and Eton fives, and both games are still well served by specialist coaches at the school. Stamping my feet and securing my gloves, I take position in the covers. Paul Matcham, a partner in a London law firm, assumes a station 10 yards away to form a defensive ring and warns: "If they hit it hard, Fletch, mind for broken fingers."

Considering my fingers already feel like Captain Scott's, this is hardly encouraging. The pitch itself is a couple of cricket mats rolled on to a flattened part of the ice, while the outfield is the natural snow that covers the frozen lake. Apparently, when the former England cricket captain David Gower played in the tournament some years ago, sadly for his automobile parked beyond the boundary, the lake was not frozen enough to support its weight and it sank, slowly glugging its way to the depths. Another attempt at a cover drive that Gower lived to regret...

Not having a car to worry about, my own gloomy thoughts are of imminent frostbite as I acknowledge the urgings of our captain, John Zani - "Win this and we win the trophy" - crouch low and prepare to do my bit for victory. Zani is a circuit judge, and in addition to Matcham, there are two other lawyers and also a government advisor on educational policy in our team, a London club side whose players come largely from Finchley and Hampstead. Not exactly the kind of men one would expect to be risking broken legs and fingers on a frozen lake while in pursuit of a rock-hard cricket ball. Mad dogs and Englishmen? There might be something in the old cliché, save for the fact that the opposition are a mixture of antipodean and Asian expats, with a couple of Swiss thrown in for local flavour. Still, cricket is quintessentially an English game, a legacy to the world, and as this is the final of Cricket on Ice 2005, national pride demands I do my best. The opening batsman for Winterthur Cricket Club takes guard, surveys the field and settles into his stance. It is only then that I realise that, despite the dramatic surroundings and novelty of playing on ice and snow, this is not a gimmick, but proper cricket of a standard seen on thousands of village greens every Sunday throughout the summer. Only on a far stickier wicket.

The conditions mean bowlers' run-ups are understandably shortened, and fielding is made more cumbersome by the fact that trying to sprint on a mixture of snow and ice is not particularly easy. But the competitive instinct is fully evident, and opposition and umpires are honoured in the truest traditions of the game.

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I soon discover how tricky running is on the lake when I move into a prime spot to stop the opposition stealing quick singles. "Yes!" screams the batsman as he dabs the ball towards me. I respond, alert to the chance of a run-out, and nearly measure my length on the snow. "You look like a rather balletic elephant," Matcham informs me as he stifles a grin. At these temperatures, he has more chance of seeing a polar bear. But it's not the only poor display by Old Cholmeleians as Winterthur, the current trophy holders and Swiss champions, benefit from some wayward bowling. Becoming accustomed to the conditions, I notice a ridge has formed at one end of the wicket - no doubt some ice compacted underneath the mats. If the bowlers can land the ball there, it should fly chest high. Our wicketkeeper, Lindsay, a student at Leeds University, has already been hit in the mouth from just such a delivery, so when I receive the call to bowl I have a plan; one step for a run-up and a fast arm action propelling the ball to the ridge.

"Whoa," yells the batter, Bruce, as my first delivery whizzes past his nose. I proceed to hit him about the ribs for the next few overs, but for Bruce there is greater indignity to come. He has travelled 10,000 miles from New Zealand, ostensibly to see his son and new daughter-in-law, but later in the bar, he confesses the real attraction is to play in such a unique cricket match. And his reward for such sacrifice? Dismissed lbw by your correspondent.

My successful appeal echoes down the valley into Italy, and it should help Old Cholmeleians win the game. Instead, it brings a chap called Horace to the crease. Now it may be that, like many in Winterthur, he works in the insurance business and, like most in that industry, considers all risks and rewards before finally eschewing adventure - but he certainly doesn't bat like it. In fact, he's as clean a striker of a ball as I have seen in amateur cricket, and he launches me over the boundary, past the pedestrian walkway and on to the road. I turn to follow the path of the ball and cringe at the loud screeching noise, imagining dents to the Porsches and BMWs parked nearby. But it's just the noise from our captain as the runs pile up. The final target we are set is 185, a lot of runs to score in the allotted 25 overs, and precedent is not with us, Old Cholmeleians' highest-ever score being 130. Things are soon made a lot more difficult as we are reduced to 60 for 5, and yet through patience, strong hitting and aggressive running between the wickets as the fielders mimic Torvill and Dean, victory is earned with two overs remaining. The batting heroes, suitably toasted in the evening, are wicketkeeper Lindsay, still sporting a bruised cheek, and Mani Khalique, a fast-bowling, big-hitting warrior.

Despite the conditions, the most trying aspect of the game is self-preservation. When fielding, an attempted slog swirled towards me on the deep midwicket fence. As it descended from the brilliant blue sky and the cry of "Catch it!" echoed from the expectant bowler, I wasn't about to risk broken digits, and decided that the ball was going to be cushioned in a couple of inches of snow before my hands even got close to it. How to make it look plausible, though?

I paused, staggered left then right, made a great display of shielding my eyes from the sun with my arm, lurched forward and looked suitably distraught as the missile landed a couple of feet in front of me. My left hand wafted close enough, desperately clutching at what I had intended it to - fresh air. My sentiment was one of mission accomplished as my unbroken fingers curled round the ball, and were sound enough later to manage a glass of celebratory champagne.



02 February 2006 - by Iain Fletcher

## **Ice, Ice, Baby - It may look rather debonair—lean competitors in cricket whites gliding on ice against the snowy backdrop of St Moritz. But, as Iain Fletcher, a former pro explains, Ice Cricket is highly competitive and flippin' dangerous.**

Six thousand feet above sea level, ice and snow everywhere and the cricket pitch looks as out of place as a snowman in the desert. Since 1988, a rather eccentric bunch of Swiss, aided by equally eccentric Englishmen, have played a cricket tournament over a weekend for the coveted Cricket-On-Ice trophy. Last year, at the fifth attempt, the Old Chomeleian club from north London triumphed.

This year, on 3rd and 4th February, they will defend their title. But the competition is tough: not since the British Army won in 1997 and 1998 have a team successfully defended the trophy, and the local club, Winterthur CC, from near Zurich are a determined mix of local Swiss and antipodean ex-pats.

Ice Cricket is now a tradition that has attracted stars like David Gower and Allan Lamb. Unfortunately for Gower he drove on to the lake unaware that it was not frozen deep enough to support the weight of his car and he watched bemused as it broke through and gently glugged its way to the bottom.

The tournament would have ended had it not been for the enthusiasm of the Swiss. Twenty minutes further down the valley is the country's finest private school, Lyceum Alpinum Zuoz. In the 1920's a British teacher, Gordon Spencer, introduced cricket and Eton Fives (a hand-ball game played against a wall) to the school and still today both are taught by specialist coaches, providing ample bodies for the annual tournament. Very quickly, during the game last year, it became painfully clear how dangerous it could become. At the best of times a cricket ball is a potential limb-breaking projectile. Add ice and snow and freezing temperatures and heroic lunges to catch it as it whizzes through the alpine air and you soon realise that a choice has to be made—between broken digits or the ball being cushioned in two inches of snow.

The standard of the game, despite being restricted by the temperature and difficult conditions underfoot, is good. The pitch itself is made of two rolled out cricket mats laid over a strip of rolled ice. To begin with it plays well but very quickly ruts end up forming, and if the ball hits one of these it leaps alarmingly at the batsman. All good stuff for the spectators though. Cricket on ice is a game of hitting and for the fielders, largely ducking. The real difficulty is keeping on your feet; wearing three or four layers and big Timberland boots doesn't really make for skillful play.

If last year's icy contestant was anything to go by, this year's will be a corker. Intelligent, responsible men risking broken legs and fingers high in the Alps playing a game with a hard ball that was conceived as a summer sport. Mad Dogs and Englishmen? Yep, and a few Swiss, Australians, Kiwi's and South Africans as well.

### **Dos & Don'ts:**

- § Wear plenty of tops. It is -12° despite the blue sky and sunshine. The South African team that played a few years ago insisted on playing in T-shirts and suffered for it.
- § Sprinting is impossible for very obvious reasons.
- § The ball is hard and freezes harder, while the seam becomes like a razor blade. One of the tactics is to accept a score if the ball is hit obviously hard towards the boundaries. Try to catch one of these at your own risk.

February 06, 2006



Bowling them over in St Moritz. Photo: Barry Bland

### Where slips are all over pitch

BY A CORRESPONDENT

The picture-postcard Swiss resort of St Moritz is famed for the beauty of its ski slopes but, for sheer quirkiness, few sporting occasions can beat the February cricket festival on its frozen lake. This testament to the eccentricity of the sport began in 1988 when a group of Britons challenged local students to a game, which is played on a synthetic-turf wicket. Since then it has become an integral part of the cricket calendar, attracting players and businessmen from all over the world.

08 February 2006 – by Matthew Allen in St Moritz

## **The jet-set Swiss resort of St Moritz is famous for its skiing and Cresta Run, but the frozen lake is also the unlikely venue for an annual winter cricket tournament.**

The 1988 brainchild of a Swiss anglophile, the Cricket on Ice tournament has enticed teams from India, Hong Kong and South Africa to play in sub-zero temperatures.

This year, the 17th time the tournament has been held, the Swiss side Winterthur Cricket Club lifted the trophy after a closely fought triangular contest against London club Old Cholmeleians and pupils from the Lyceum Alpinum international school in nearby Zuoz. Tournament founder and organiser Daniel Haering told swissinfo that Cricket on Ice was born 18 years ago when he and some English friends arrived for a skiing holiday in St Moritz, in canton Graubünden, only to find there was no snow. "We were trying to figure out what to do with ourselves when we suddenly had the idea of playing a game of cricket on the lake," he said. Haering, a former pupil at Lyceum Alpinum, asked the school to send a team and equipment, and a spontaneous idea came to fruition.

### **Ice maiden**

The match was such a success that Haering set about persuading the local tourist authorities to give the tournament a space on the ice each year. The tournament snowballed into an annual event with teams invited from around the world, including a British Army XI and a side comprising police officers from Cape Town, South Africa. "The South Africans had never even seen snow before and suddenly they were playing cricket in a blizzard at minus 20 degrees Celcius," Haering said. "They hadn't thought to bring any gloves and their fingers were so frozen they couldn't catch the ball. I had to run around the town to find 11 pairs of gloves so they could play properly." Former England international cricket stars David Gower and Allan Lamb have also played in previous years. Gower had the misfortune to park his car on a thin patch of ice, which had to be rescued before it sank to the bottom of the lake.

### **Slips**

The bat and ball game is traditionally played in summer on grass from the village greens of England to the Asian sub-continent, southern Africa, the Caribbean, Australia and New Zealand. But the dazzling white surface of the frozen lake framed by spectacular alpine mountains in February is one of the most unlikely places that anyone would expect to see the quintessentially English sport. "The unique setting is part of the charm of this tournament," said Haering. "We always draw a good crowd of cricket fans and bemused Swiss who scratch their heads wondering what's going on.

"The games are always played with a marvellous spirit and the tournament is as much about the social occasion as the matches." Players need to wrap up in thermals, gloves and hats and have footwear with a good grip to stop them from slipping on the outfield. "The first thing players have to get used to is the cold and the thin atmosphere at this altitude," Haering explained. "You need to move to keep warm, but it's not so easy to keep running at 6,000 feet. But despite the unusual conditions, the event is the season's highlight for many clubs, including regular attendees Old Cholmeleians, former pupils of London's Highgate School, which has a close connection with Lyceum Alpinum. "Cricket on Ice has become the highlight of our calendar," said captain John Zani. "Where else can we play cricket in such a spectacular setting and have so much fun?"

### **URL of this story**

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