

EX-SKIPPER AND SON WITNESS CUP WIN By Jerry Dowlen

A welcome spectator at Hayes Lane on Tuesday night, 19 January 2010, for the Kent Senior Cup game against Whitstable Town was John Dorey who was the Cray Wanderers centre-half and captain during the 1960s.

John is thought to hold the record for the most first team appearances for Cray Wanderers. He played an estimated 500 games between 1961 and 1972 (a total that Cray's current manager Ian Jenkins is close to matching).

John starred for Cray during a very successful era for the club. The Wands played at Grassmeade in those days. John served under managers Arthur Barron, Norman Golding and Jack Payne.

John was renowned as a polished centre half, and a Kent county cap. He joined Cray in 1961, a few weeks after his brother Albert Dorey had signed for the club. The brothers also played for Thanet FC a local Sunday side. Albert played at outside left, and later at left half, up till 1964. Albert returned during the 1970s as manager of Cray's reserve team and then the first team, at Oxford Road. The family connection continued into the next generation when John's two sons Mark and Steve became Cray players towards the end of the 1980s.

Today in the Ryman Premier League there is Billy Smith, a team mate of John's from Cray in the 1960s, who is now manager of Tooting & Mitcham. Carlo Nastri, another ex-Cray player of that time, has assisted Billy at times, for example when Billy was the manager at Crawley Town. Also still in touch with us is ex-player Brian Hill, now living in Hawkhurst, who was one of the first to text his congratulations on the day that the Wands won promotion to the Ryman Premier in May 2009.



Team photo 1965-66 with the Orpington Hospital Cup, Greater London League Cup and Kent Amateur Cup all won in season 1964-65.
Back row (L to R): Alan Taylor, Billy Smith, George Wittey, Peter Warner, Alan Howe, Peter Clark.
Front row (L to R): Len Kenny, Carlo Nastri, John Dorey (circled), Brian Hill, Gerry Whooley

John chose to come with his son Mark to watch Cray's game versus Whitstable on 19 January because he spent much of his working life in Whitstable. He worked in the timber trade. He was good friends with John Newman who was a rival player in the Whitstable team.

John was usually on the winning side when Cray played the Oystermen during the 1960s. There was a 9-0 away win for Cray, on one occasion! So it was rather fitting that the Cray team laid on a 3-0 win for John and Mark to enjoy watching. It was ironic, though, that Lewis Wood should miss a penalty-kick during the game, for John used to be Cray's penalty taker for a while, in the 1960s. John once told me that it started when he scored from the penalty spot in the very last minute of a game against Snowdown CW, to earn a 2-2 draw. "My brother Albert was supposed to take our penalty-kicks, but he didn't want to take that one, so I had to do it!"

John is taking a keen interest in the Wands' 150th anniversary celebrations to take place during the current year 2010. John is assured of being remembered as a "Cray legend" who skippered the club during one of its most successful post-war eras. John was a very popular player, much admired by his team and by all the supporters, and if you count up all the League championships, League cups and County cups that Cray won during his playing days, he must surely have more trophies and medals to his name than any other Cray player.