

## Blackcaps History

The History of the club goes back some 19 years. The following is a chronological break down of all the relevant dates including information about events, competitions etc.

The club started originally as a "once a year" team, consisting of members of the "British Businessmens' Club Düsseldorf" to play an Invitation XI from Christchurch. The club also had very strong links with the British Army, who were then still based in Düsseldorf, indeed the vice-president of the BBCD was always the garrison Colonel. This link became more and more important as the years passed in respect of Cricket grounds. The very first game: BBCD vs. Christchurch took place in June 1985 at the Army ground at Moltkestraße Willich, and it was this game that really started it all, and even today this annual event is still regarded by many as the game: "not to be missed". Indeed it has become a bit of a tradition with the B-B-Q & Beer, Cheese & Cucumber sandwiches, Pimms and all the family joining in on this "Family Day".

A couple of years later, it was decided that there was enough potential to have a go at playing one or two games more a year, and through our military contacts, this was quickly set up and within two years we were playing anything upto 12 "friendlies" a year.

These included: R.A.F. Wegberg, JHQ-N.A.A.F.I., R.A.F. Brüggen, R.A.F. Laarbruch, Düsseldorf Garrison Civilian Mess-Düsseldorf, British Embassy-Bonn to name but a few. Later, contact was made with other non-military teams such as RCC-Hanau, Eindhoven C.C., R.C.C. Antwerp in Europe, and Hempsall C.C. and P&O Dover in England.

During all of these years, the British Businessmens' Club supported the cricket team wherever and however it could, and in return the cricket team members introduced new people into the BBCD.

Over the years the club became more and more well known within the cricketing fraternity, and finally in 1996 the club was invited to help set up and join the "North-Rhine Westfalia Cricket-League" as part of the "Deutsche Cricket Bund". In order to do this the club had to fulfill certain legal requirements which were very complex and after much deliberation and with a touch of sadness, it was decided to make a "clean break" with the BBCD and go it alone.

In 1997 the "Düsseldorf Cricketers e.V." was founded whilst retaining our close ties with the BBCD. In fact some 5 or 6 of the cricket team are still members of the BBCD, something that we wish to maintain.

All in all, the club has gone from strength to strength.

The year 2000, not only marks the beginning of a new century, but also our 5th visit in succession to play P&O in Dover. Over and above all this, we hope to be able to secure the use of a pitch this year, on a long term basis - something that we could call our "Home Ground"

As from 2001 the Düsseldorf Cricket club has become full members of the DSC-99 (Düsseldorf Sports Club - 99) with excellent facilities. The DSC has provided us with an all weather pitch. A bar and restaurant, changing and showering possibilities, and an indoor hall for training in the winter months is available.

In our first year at DSC we were asked by the Deutsche Cricket Association (DCB) to host an International Cricket Match between the touring Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) from England and the German National A Team. This event which took place on 13th June 2001, turned out to be a success in terms of promoting the sport of Cricket in the state of North-Rhine-Westfalia (NRW).

Although we had to have a break from playing competitive league cricket, we were still able to participate in number of friendly matches.

In 2002 and 2003 we continued to consolidate and recruit new members whilst playing ever more matches averaging about 16 per season and expanding our contacts throughout Europe with a number of teams: Ruislip Village C.C. (UK), Mechelen C.C. and Royal Brussels C.C. (both Belgium) to name a few.

With the numbers of members increasing to a favourable level we decided to re-join the competitive arena of Cricket in Germany and field a league team (The Blackcaps) in the NRW league for the 2004 season. This proved very fruitful with us topping the league at the end of the season. We were unable to continue our good form into the final round robin, but were league champions nonetheless and are proud of having achieved this level of success so quickly.

Why the Blackcaps? When you give a New Zealander a position of power... ;-) During the course of 2004 the name "Blackcaps" has become synonymous with cricket in Düsseldorf. It is written as one word so as to play on the German affiliation for concatenating words. We are a club in Germany after all!

In accordance with our tradition of playing friendly games we fielded a second team in 2004 that travelled throughout Europe playing against teams in many different countries. Highlights included: Mechelen C.C., Luxembourg, and Prague.

In 2005 (our 20th anniversary year) we have continued playing both league and friendly matches. In the friendlies we played against Freiburg (in the south of Germany) for the first time and were pleased to be able to host their team in Düsseldorf later in the season. We also continued in fine Düsseldorf style playing against traditional rivals such as Göttingen, FIM (Fellowship of Indian Men), BBCD, British Army All Sorts and once again travelled back to P&O Dover.

Our league performance for 2005 was rather weather affected, with several important matches being called off. Without the chance of a rematch this left us short on points and the spirit to carry on. Nevertheless we have been steeled for a long winter of hard training in order to bounce back in 2006 with new recruits and a renewed will to win.

In 2006 league matches will continue as well as the tradition of freindly team games. We see ourselves well placed to build on our committment to both enjoying and spreading the experience of this wonderful sport in the same spirit as our unique past.