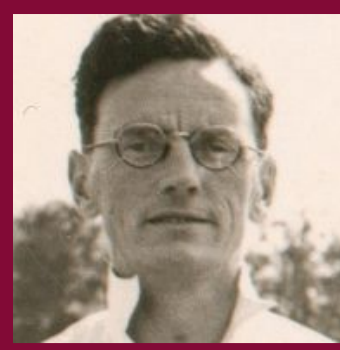


Merrion Player Profiles

Chris Mara 1935 - 1960



In its long history Merrion has been fortunate to have a few members who through their commitment, skills and example could truly be said to have formed the character of the club. Chris Mara, who died five days short of his 90th birthday on 5th November 2001, was one of those members.

Chris was educated by the Christian Brothers and first joined Clontarf CC close to where he lived. But he soon followed his brother Ned, then Merrion's opening bowler, across the river. Chris first turned out for Merrion's 1st XI in 1935 and went on to play 313 matches over a twenty six year career. He was Merrion's opening fast bowler for most of this time and was a key part in Merrion's league and cup successes in the 1940s and 1950s. When his 1st team playing days were over he continued for many years to play on the club's junior sides. He was gifted with a lovely smooth bowling action and even in the twilight of his career was still able to bowl accurately with a beautiful high release.

Senior Records

Chris captained Merrion four times, in 1944/45 and 1953/54, and led Merrion to their second league title in 1945. He headed the club's bowling averages no less than eight times. His career record was one of the most impressive of any Merrion player and he was most unfortunate not to get an international cap.

His best performance was 9/52 and he got one hat-trick, against YMCA in 1941. In 1940, he was part of the first team ever to win the Senior League and Cup double.

Over his senior career Chris took 8 wickets or more in an innings three times and twice reached 50 wickets in a season. He took 45 catches. He played on four Senior League and one Senior Cup winning sides. He is 19th in the all time Leinster Senior Career Bowling averages.

Year	M	Inn	NO	HS	50/100	Total	Bat Ave	BB	5W	Runs Bowl	Wks	Bowl Ave
1935	11	9	3	39		160	26.67		1	248	20	12.4
1936	16	14	2	27		103	8.58		1	335	21	15.95
1937	15	9	2	21		70	10		2	517	35	14.77
1938	12	10	2	41		120	15			344	22	15.64
1939	11	9	0	28		63	7			392	16	24.5
1940	16	9	2	40		78	11.14	9/52	4	558	46	12.13
1941	15	7	1	8		18	3	8/35	6	557	60	9.28
1942	15	9	2	24		85	12.14	7/29	5	573	48	11.94
1943	16	10	1	33		77	8.56	7/27	5	599	40	14.98
1944	17	13	5	43		163	20.38	8/20	2	687	50	13.74
1945	13	11	5	29		116	19.33		5	478	44	10.86
1946	14	11	4	11		49	7		3	492	38	12.95
1947	7	7	2	18		58	11.6			270	10	27
1948	14	10	1	22		84	9.33			374	20	18.7
1949	8	7	2	32		126	25.2			243	16	15.19
1950	14	10	3	27		71	10.14		1	511	36	14.19
1951	9	7	0	60	1/0	111	15.86			304	18	16.89
1952	12	8	2	59	1/0	111	18.5			424	31	13.68
1953	13	12	2	18		93	9.3			515	15	34.33
1954	10	8	0	18		64	8			272	14	19.43
1955	10	8	2	24		31	5.17	7/48	1	336	11	30.55
1956	12	10	1	40		121	13.44		2	385	23	16.74
1957	14	11	3	30		85	10.63	7/31	3	502	41	12.24
1958	15	8	1	6		19	2.71			240	14	17.14
1959	2	1	0	8		8	8			43	1	43
1960	2	2	0	16		20	10		1	46	9	5.11

Year	M	Inn	NO	HS	50/100	Total	Bat Ave	BB	5W	Runs Bowl	Wks	Bowl Ave
Total	313	230	48	60	2/0	2104	11.56	9.52	42	10245	699	14.66



Merrion's Senior League and Cup of 1940. Chris Mara is third from the right standing.

Chris was a great servant to Merrion and over his many years in the club he served on management and selection committees and as club secretary. He was an honorary life member of the club. Possessed on a wry sense of humour he added immeasurably to the life of the club and will be sorely missed.

He played his last match for Merrion's 3rd XI against Civil Service in 1981 at the age of 70 and took a wicket with the last ball he bowled.

Merrion Player Profiles

Brad Spanner 1999 - 2002



Rarely has a player had such an effect on a club. In his four years with the club not only did Brad break many of the club batting and all-rounder records but through his encouragement and coaching and as a role model he had an enduring influence on the youth players of the time. To this day a visit to see Brad is a part of the regular itinerary for Merrion players visiting Australia.

It did not start so well. On his first early season outdoor session he was down to coach the U15 Girls team. He had never coached girls before and as it happened there was a light sprinkle of snow. The girls, always quick to spot any weakness, explained to him that this was perfectly normal in Dublin for the time of the year and really they had no problem with the weather and he needed to toughen up.

But it didn't take Brad long to adjust to the new playing conditions. He only made 7 in his first game, but his next six innings included four fifties and a century. His playing career in Ireland and for Merrion was well and truly launched.

Senior Records

In his four seasons with Merrion CC, Brad played in 83 LCU senior matches and scored a total of 3722 runs at an average of 60.02. In achieving this Brad was the fastest Merrion player to 1000, 2000 and 3000 runs and has the highest batting average of any player since Merrion went senior in 1926. His highest individual score of 204* and the number of centuries [12 including the double century] are also Merrion records. In July 2000 he participated in a stand of 269 for the third wicket against Pembroke, another Merrion record, and in the same year his total of 1202 was the highest aggregate score for a season in Merrion's history.

As a bowler for Merrion, Brad took 101 wickets with an average of 14.71. In the field he took 43 catches over the four seasons. He did not keep wicket.

Finally, Brad took part in five of the double century partnerships in Merrion's history - three with Chris Torrisi and two with Gus Joyce.

Year	M	Inn	NO	HS	50/100	Total	Bat Ave	Overs	BB	5W	Runs Bowl	Wks	Bowl Ave
1999	23	20	5	130	8/3	1014	67.60	167	5/41	1	430	31	13.87
2000	20	20	6	204*	7/3	1201	85.79	132			369	25	14.76
2001	18	17	0	107	1/2	530	31.18	36			88	7	12.57
2002	22	21	5	171*	2/4	977	61.06	184	5/26	1	599	38	15.76
Year	M	Inn	NO	HS	50/100	Total	Bat Ave	Overs	BB	5W	Runs Bowl	Wks	Bowl Ave
Total	83	78	16	204*	18/12	3722	60.03	519	5/26	2	1486	101	14.71



Brad Spanner in the field in Clontarf.

Over the three years that Brad was eligible to play in the Irish cup there were a number of memorable performances, none more so than the brilliant century he scored in the semi-final against North County in 2001.

Noteable Performances

	Team Performance	Individual Performances
1999	Merrion win the Senior [Alan Murray] T20 Trophy	Heads the Leinster Senior Batting and All Rounder Averages As overseas player does not qualify for trophies.
	Merrion win the Short [Lewis Traub] Senior League	Scores over 1000 runs in the season.
2000		Makes the highest individual score of season : 204* v Railway in Park Avenue
		Scores 1201 runs in the season: the highest ever for a Merrion player
		Wins the Samuels Cup for All Rounders
2001	Merrion win the Leinster Senior League: first time since 1958	Highest batting partnership for Merrion: B Spanner and C Torrisi make 280 v The Hills
	Merrion win the Senior [Alan Murray] T20 Trophy	
2002	Merrion win the Senior [Alan Murray] T20 Trophy	Makes the highest individual score of season : 171* v Clontarf at Castle Avenue
	Merrion lose to YMCA in Senior Cup Final	Wins the Samuels Cup for All Rounders

Brad was club professional in 1999 and from 2000 - 2002 was appointed Youth Development Officer for the club. Over this period Brad played a major role in developing young cricketing talent in the club and his term of office saw Merrion's youth teams achieve their greatest period of success ever.