



## **A reception given by Hawks' Club in House of Lords Thursday 19 October 2017 to celebrate Cambridge Sport hosted by Lord Bilimoria**

### **Profiles of the Guests of Honour**

- **Mike Biggar (Queens': rugby union)**

Mike learned his rugby at the hard school that is Sedbergh. He won his Blue in his last year in 1971: when he came down he joined a strong London Scottish side and duly progressed to full International status in 1975, playing in a Scotland side in front of a record crowd of 104,000.

Mike played at open side flanker (7) most of his international career which continued for 6 full seasons including a season when he was appointed captain. He continued to enjoy his rugby with Scottish for a number of seasons subsequently.

Only Arthur Smith and Gavin Hastings from Cambridge have won more caps for Scotland than the redoubtable Michael Biggar.

- **Stephanie Cook MBE (now Carroll) (Peterhouse: Modern Pentathlon)**

Steph was educated at The Perse School for Girls then Peterhouse, Cambridge before moving on to Oxford to read medicine.

Having rowed at Cambridge she then took up modern pentathlon and won the women's individual title in the Varsity match in 1997.

She finally won the gold medal in the Sydney 2000 Olympics in the event, the first time that it had been included in the games. To quote The Daily Telegraph: *'an undemanding little event which merely requires its competitors to ride, shoot, swim, fence and run (though, it should be said, not all at the same time). Hers was the last of Britain's 11 Olympic gold medals, clinched with a three-kilometre run during which she had to make up 49 seconds on the overall leader. She did it with 250 metres to go'.*

Steph then went on to win individual World and European titles in 2001 before retiring from the sport. Having interrupted her professional career, she returned to medicine.

- **Baron Chris Holmes MBE (King's: swimming)**

Chris quite simply is the greatest Olympian the University has produced: he won a total of nine gold, five silver, and one bronze medal at the Paralympic games; he became blind as a teenager.

Having insisted on training with sighted swimmers preparing for the Olympics, his determination and skill meant that he represented Great Britain at the Seoul, Barcelona, Atlanta and Sydney Paralympic Games – from 1988 to 2000.

He remains the only British Paralympic swimmer to win six gold medals at a single Games.

After retiring from swimming he worked as a journalist and solicitor. He was Director of Paralympic Integration for the London Olympics and was elevated to the House of Lords in 2013.

- **Alex O'Connell (Churchill: fencing)**

Alex became a fencing Olympian whilst still an undergraduate, carrying the accolade of '2008 Hawk of the Year' all the way to Beijing. He was the British sabre champion a remarkable 6 times, topping this by becoming 2006 Commonwealth champion as well.

It was clear he had an extraordinary senior career ahead of him when achieving the number 1 world ranking at junior level and becoming Junior World Champion – the first time any Briton had achieved that mark for more than 25 years.

Unsurprisingly, he was President of CUFC in 2008-9.

- **Annamarie Phelps CBE (St John's: rowing)**

Annamarie (Stapleton) was a member of the 1987 Blondie crew. She enjoyed a successful international rowing career representing Great Britain at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta (women's eight).

Annamarie also competed in World Rowing Championships between 1991 and 1995 as well as the Commonwealth Regatta in 1994. She was World Champion in 1993 (lightweight coxless fours) and World Indoor Rowing Champion and World Indoor Rowing Record holder between 1992 and 1995 (lightweight women).

She is a trustee and vice chairman of the British Paralympic Association and has recently been appointed to the board of the British Olympic Association. For good measure she also chairs British Rowing and was made CBE in 2016.

- **Ed Smith (Peterhouse: cricket)**

Ed managed the remarkable achievement of scoring a century on his first class debut for the University at Fenner's in April 1996 (101 v Glamorgan). When not opening the batting he sauntered around the groves of academe to good effect achieving a double first (history).

He played first class cricket for Kent before his astonishing weight of runs (almost 900 in July alone) brought him into the England side where he won 3 caps in 2003 against South Africa, including a debut score of 64.

Leaving Kent he moved to and captained Middlesex, finally retiring from First Class Cricket in 2008. He scored 34 centuries. Ed is now an accomplished broadcaster – notably with Test Match Special – journalist, leader writer and author.