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IRISH SENIOR
CUP

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WELCOME TO THE HILLS

This year's final of the Clear Currency Irish Senior Cup is a mouth-watering affair, pitting the established pedigree of six-time winners Waringstown against the club hotly tipped to be entering a similar era of dominance in their union, Pembroke. The prize for both is to see their name engraved on the most coveted prize in club cricket, the Bob Kerr Trophy.

WHO WAS BOB KERR?

Bob Kerr was Chairman of the Irish Cricket Union 2000-02 and President in 2004. He was a retired headmaster and a founder member and long-serving player with North Fermanagh. Bob was a much-loved member of the cricketing community and it was a shock to his many friends and admirers when he died in Jamaica in 2007 just as Ireland's players qualified for the World Cup Super-Eights. It was fitting too, as Bob had worked hard to bring Ireland to that place and would have enjoyed the journey they have taken since. President Mary McAleese phoned the Irish party in the Caribbean to offer her sympathies, saying "Bob Kerr was a great champion of Irish cricket."

In his honour, the Irish Senior Cup (i.e. the trophy itself) was renamed the Bob Kerr Trophy and that name will be attached to the prize forevermore.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE IRISH SENIOR CUP?

The competition itself is now 38 years old, and while that is not a significant anniversary, it has had an extraordinary evolution. It was the brainchild of Murrough McDevitt of Leinster CC, an advertising executive who persuaded Schweppes to come on board as sponsors. The year, 1982, was a difficult one in the Troubles and the idea of running an all-island competition was greeted with suspicion in some quarters. Some clubs declined to compete but the ICU persevered, and everyone eventually signed up and the Schweppes Cup soon became the highlight of the year for club players.

The soft drinks firm continued to back the competition until 1993 but for most of the following 15 years there was no commercial sponsorship. Hope Kerr offered to support it in memory of her late husband and did so for three seasons as the Bob Kerr Irish Senior Cup.

In 2013 Cricket Ireland announced new competition title sponsors in RSA, but confirmed again that the trophy for which the clubs compete would remain as the Bob Kerr Trophy.

Today, the competition is the Clear Currency Irish Senior Cup and we welcome both clubs, supporters and Irish cricket fans to The Hills Cricket Club.

Whoever wins, Bob Kerr's lasting memory will be toasted and hopefully a great final will be talked about for years to come.

