

They All Play At Bledlow—From 17 To 70!



ONE of Buckinghamshire's oldest village cricket clubs, Bledlow, flourishing for generations, have playing members from 17 to 70 — and an astonishing wealth of talent in the game.

So many wanted to play last season that they decided to start a second team, for the first time, as well as Saturday and Sunday sides. And they still have more players than they can guarantee a regular game.

Still playing occasionally for the club is that Grand Old Man of Oxfordshire cricket, S. C. B. Lee, of Thame, former Oxford county player, now over 70. He hit up 29—all in carefully-placed

singles—in a recent game. He can still bowl a cunning spinner.

A happy family tradition of cricket keeps Bledlow well supplied with talent. Young David Smith, one of the club's most promising all-rounders, is following the footsteps of his father, Percy Smith junior, who is still playing, and of his grandfather, Percy Smith, sen. And 21-years-old Richard Witney is following the tradition of his father Bert Witney and his uncle Arthur.

With these and other youngsters like Brian Baker, skipper Ron Mitchell, who has succeeded Stuart Edmonds as captain, has plenty of talent for the future.

Mitcheli, a right-hand batsman, and his vice-captain, Tommy Fuller, a left-hander—both have been playing for Bledlow since they left school — usually open Bledlow's batting. Nearly half the side are left-handed bats — to keep their opponents on their toes.

Bledlow miss the help of old stalwarts like Edmonds and Captain A. Fairbrother, playing regularly until last season, but they still have the benefit of experienced like Bobby Sanders, former High Wycombe batsman, Vere Claydon, who played for Redfords, and George Strathdee.

A useful acquisition this sea-

son, too, has been Laurie Beaumont, from Ashford.

It has been a good playing season for Bledlow so far — though leaden skies have dulled the lustre of the usually colourful encounters on the picturesque Manor Farm ground. Perhaps it was tempting providence too much early on to instal a water supply for their carefully-nurtured Manor Park pitch!

Members of the Bledlow senior team, seen here, are: standing—J. Hunt, B. Baker, D. Smith, G. Eggleton, G. Strathdee, R. Witney, L. Kingham (umpire); V. Claydon, R. E. Sanders, R. Mitchell, T. Fuller, J. Ridgley.