

# ISIS: THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN GODDESS

Isis Cricket Club was named after the river Isis (Thamesis) which acts as a boundary to the east of Queens College Cricket Ground. But Isis was also an Egyptian Goddess, and the verses below reveal law that all Isis players should probably know:-

- Isis was the Egyptian Goddess of fertility (motherhood) and creation.
- Over time Isis had many names and played many roles in history and myth.
- Isis is the Greek form of an ancient Egyptian word that is perhaps associated with a word for "throne."
- Isis was the daughter of Geb the Earth God – and Nut the Sky Goddess.
- In the Pyramid Texts (c. 2350-c. 2100 BC), she is the mourner for her murdered husband, the god Osiris. In her role as the wife of Osiris, she discovered and reunited the pieces of her dead husband's body, was the chief mourner at his funeral, and through her magical power brought him back to life.
- In a comparatively early period of Egyptian history, Isis assimilated many primitive Goddesses, including Nekhebet, Vatchet, Net, Bast and in particular Hathor.
- Her cult was popular throughout Egypt, but her most important sanctuaries were throughout the Nile delta.
- It is impossible to limit the attributes of Isis as she became all-embracing.
- The last Egyptian temples to Isis were closed around 550 A.D., after the onset of Christianity.
- Many say that Isis evolved into the Greek Goddess Artemis Diana of Ephesus.
- Isis was represented as a woman with the hieroglyphic sign of the throne on her head, either sitting on a throne, alone or holding her child Horus, or kneeling before a coffin. Occasionally she was shown with a cow's head.
- As mourner, she was a principal deity in all rites connected with the dead; as magician, she cured the sick and brought the dead to life; and, as mother, she was herself a life-giver.
- Her original headdress was an empty-throne chair, but became horns and also as seen on the current Isis Cricket Club logo.
- She was also seen as kneeling and having wings.
- Symbols linked with Isis are the tut, knot or buckle and the sustrum, which is a kind of rattle.
- Isis hid her son, Horus, from Seth, the murderer of Osiris, until Horus was fully grown and could avenge his father. She defended the child against many attacks from snakes and scorpions. But because Isis was also Seth's sister, she wavered during the eventual battle between Horus and Seth, and when Isis pitied Seth she was beheaded by Horus during their struggle.
- Despite her variable temperament, she and Horus were regarded by the Egyptians as the perfect mother and son. The shelter she afforded her child gave her the character of a goddess of protection.
- Her chief aspect was that of a great magician, whose power transcended that of all other deities. Several narratives tell of her magical prowess, with which she could even outwit the creator god Atum, and her magic was created with a rod.
- She was invoked on behalf of the sick, and, with the goddesses Nephthys, Neith, and Selket, she protected the dead.
- The cult of Isis spread throughout Egypt. In Akhmim she received special attention



*Fine large statue of Isis shown suckling the infant Horus. The goddess is seated on a block throne, the sides of which are decorated with scale pattern apart from a panel containing an udjat eye and neb sign of lordship.*

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as the "mother" of the fertility god Min. She had important temples throughout Egypt and Nubia. By Greco-Roman times she was dominant among Egyptian goddesses, and she received acclaim from Egyptians and Greeks for her many names and aspects.

- Several temples were dedicated to her in Alexandria, where she became the "patroness of seafarers." From Alexandria her cult was brought to all the shores of the Mediterranean, including Greece and Rome after 4 B.C.
- In Hellenistic times the mysteries of Isis and Osiris developed; these were comparable to other Greek mystery cults



(Researched and written by Keith Ponsford)