

Over and Out

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE HERTFORDSHIRE
ASSOCIATION OF CRICKET OFFICIALS



January 2023

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Hertfordshire Association of Cricket Officials
Hertfordshire ACO Annual Conference is back for
2023

Sunday, 19 March 2023

www.herts-aco.org

Chairman's Corner

I trust that you all enjoyed the 2022 season, albeit now long past, whether you were on the field or in the box (or in a few cases, both).

Looking out on the white and frozen ground as compared to the summer of almost uninterrupted cricket is quite a contrast! Matches often played in unbearably high record temperatures have challenged us all: pitches were dry, outfielders parched and drinks breaks too numerous to count! Scorers took to having huge fans or, better still, erected gazebos, often ignoring health and safety with wires trailing from their various electronic gizmos! It may be that in years to come such scenes become more commonplace and we will need to adopt strategies to address such conditions.

Our first mid-season Members Evening took place in June and was welcomed by a small but enthusiastic attendance. The evening focussed on how we can differentiate between cases of dissent and those of disappointment, primarily amongst batters who are dismissed. It is now pretty much normal to see cameras in operation at top level recreational cricket and no doubt video clips will be used as a key educational resource in the future. Unfortunately, it appears that during the past season, certainly in several SHPCL games, player behaviour fell well short of what is acceptable so we will be reviewing procedures both on and off the field of play to address this decline.

On a more positive and pleasing note it is good to see that, under the expert guidance of Jon Holland, our County Development Officer, numerous umpire observations were carried out during the season. (Jon has written an article later in this newsletter). Having stepped down from the National Umpires Panel, I joined a small team of ECB Umpire Observers who observed umpires at NCCA matches, which was an interesting and enjoyable challenge. You may have read that during the season the ECB appointed Ian Gould and Tim Robinson as Professional Umpire Coaches. The key point here is that whatever the level of umpire and the standard of match, the observer should offer support and encouragement as well as providing feedback on how the individual may improve performance. Over the winter months much more will be discussed about this topic and will potentially affect all umpires at all levels.

There is plenty for members to look forward to over the winter months in the shape of the ECBACO Roadshows, our Members Evenings and the 2023 Umpires and Scorers Conference, the dates for which are given later in the Newsletter.

In the case of the Conference, planning has already started, but if members have any thoughts or ideas which could be included then please share these with Tim Caldicott or me.

In the meantime, I wish you all good health and happiness for the New Year.

Nick Hall, December 2022

Peter Bradshaw: our retiring President

It would be remiss of me not to include a brief article tracking the journey and service of our retiring President, Peter Bradshaw.

The mere fact that Peter, himself, has had to provide a good deal of the chronology of what follows is testament to the dedicated service he has given to our Association, and beyond, over the best part of forty years. I'm sure all members are truly grateful for all that he has done and we intend to honour his retirement with a presentation in January.

Peter was already standing in club matches prior to attending an umpires training course at County Hall, Hertford, in 1985. He was elected a Full Member of the Association of Cricket Umpires (as it was then) in 1987.

After qualifying, he stood primarily in the Hertfordshire League, together with various Cup, County age-group and independent school matches until hanging up his white coat in 2011.

In 1988, Peter joined the Committee of the Hertfordshire Society of Cricket Umpires (as it was then), and in 1995, he was elected Secretary; a post he was to hold until 2013. During this time, in 2008, the Society was to become a County Association of the newly formed ECB Association of Cricket Officials.

In 1999, the boundaries of the ACU&S Regions were redefined, leading to the formation of Thames Region, which comprised the four northern Home Counties of Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Middlesex. At the Region's inaugural meeting, Peter was elected Regional Secretary and Deputy Councillor (Chairman). Three years later in 2002, he was elected Regional Councillor (Chairman); a post he held until the dissolution of the ACU&S (and its Regions) in 2008. During this period, Peter represented the Region on the General Council of the ACU&S.

In 2013, Peter retired as Secretary of the Hertfordshire Society of Cricket Officials (as it had become), after 18 years in the post and 25 years on the Committee. In 2014 he was elected an Honorary Life Member of the ECB ACO.

On his retirement as Secretary, Peter was deservedly elected as our President, a post which he held until the AGM in November.

Nick Hall

News from Committee Members

Education Officer

Unfortunately, this education season has got off to a very slow start due to work commitments overwhelming my ability to arrange any courses, my apologies.

However, we now have a face-to-face Stage 1 course organised for Sunday 29th January at Hertford C.C. I sent out the link by e-mail recently, but here it is again:

<https://booking.ecb.co.uk/d/llqsqw>

We also have two Stage 2 courses in the planning, one face-to-face at Hatfield Sports Village on Sunday 26th February and one blended learning course to start on Thursday 16th February. Details and links to follow.

We are looking to arrange (probably) a couple of Stage 3 courses in the near future, this is currently in the hands of our Regional Education Officer, I will be meeting him on Sunday 22nd January, so hopefully will have more information soon – when there's more to tell, I'll make sure all those who have expressed an interest get the details.

As you will see in the "Dates for your Diary" section, we are planning another conference on Sunday 19th March – please book the date, last year's event was a great success (even if covid kept me away!)

Tim Caldicott

Observation and Mentoring

One area where we (HACO) have struggled in recent years has been in carrying out observations on umpires to assist in umpire development and in those (rare) cases where it was felt a colleague needed a little extra guidance.

In the 2022 season the three 'Wise Men' – Roger Abraham, Brian Shepherd and Gerry Wilkinson - stepped in and offered their services as Observers. As a result, with a little help from Nick Hall and myself, we were able to conduct a total of 64 observations during the season.

Many of you will have experienced an observation in 2022 and the feedback I have received has been consistently positive. In a small number of cases colleagues may have received two observations but this was because we wanted to observe their colleague. When this happened the umpires who had been observed twice gave positive feedback on the progress they had made since their initial observation.

The process we have followed has been that in the week of the observation the umpires to be observed have been advised of who will be doing the observation. The captains of the sides involved have also been advised so that hopefully there are no surprises on the day. Normally the Observers would speak with the umpires prior to the day itself just to let them know what they would be doing. This system worked pretty well though there were a couple of hiccups where I had forgotten to notify umpires!

On the day itself the observation begins from the Observer's arrival on the ground. He makes himself known to the umpires and the captains and attends the toss to look at the interaction between the umpires and the captains and attends the briefing of the scorers.

Thereafter he makes himself comfortable to watch the game either by sitting or walking around the ground and notes issues as they arise. These include signalling to the scorers, umpire positioning, interaction with colleague and players, decision making etc. If practical, they will have a quick word with the captains and the scorers about interaction, signalling etc.

At the end of the game the umpires get a short de brief and the Observer goes home to write up a report which is then sent to the umpire, highlighting the positive areas and any which need development.

We should all be grateful to the Wise Men for their commitment. Not only do they carry out the observations, but they provide excellent feedback and take still further time to complete a written report. Long may they continue.

The ACO are keen to develop the Observer role further and it is likely that some changes will be made in the coming season. Observers may become "developers" as we look to try and identify new talent quickly. I hope to have more details on this at our CPD day in March.

In the meantime, if any of our existing or retired colleagues would be interested in adding Observing / Development to their CVs please let me know and we can discuss how to make it happen.

Jon Holland, HACO Development Officer

Annual Subscriptions

At the HACO AGM on 24 November 2022, a proposal from the Committee was made to the members to increase the annual subscription from £6 to £10 from the start of 2023/24 financial year. The proposal was seconded and passed by the meeting.

There has not been an increase in the annual subscription for approximately ten years, during which time all our costs have risen. One specific area where we are now incurring costs not relevant in previous years, is that of Umpire Observations. As described above, there is a small team of people who observe and report on the panel umpires who stand in the SHPCL on Saturdays. The cost of that function in the 2021/22 financial year was £1,800. Asking our approximately 250 members to contribute an additional £4 to their subscription will partially offset this cost in future years.

The increase in subs will not affect your payments in the current 2022/23 financial year, the majority of which have been received already at the £6 rate. I shall be sending out an e-mail to all members before the start of the 2023/24 financial year (1 October 2023) explaining that each member will need to delete their existing (£6) standing order and replace it with a new one to the value of £10, emphasising that standing orders can only be set up and/or changed by the account holders themselves directly with their bank. It is not something that we, as holders of the HACO bank account, are able to initiate.

Many of our members pay their subscriptions with annual standing orders which were set up to be paid on a range of dates in the past. We shall also be taking the opportunity to ask for all payments to be arranged for the same date by all members.

There is no action required by anyone until later this year, but if you have any immediate concerns about the change, please send me an e-mail.

Gerry Wilkinson, Treasurer

Umpire Fees

All umpire fees for HACO appointments when you are not paid on the matchday (e.g., SHPCL, Schools, County Age Group) are claimed by HACO from the relevant organisers. The relevant amounts are reimbursed to each individual umpire once those claims have been settled.

N.B. Details of the expected reimbursement dates for the various types of fixtures can be seen under the Umpires and Scorers tab on the HACO website www.herts-aco.org

All reimbursements are by BACS payments to the individuals' bank accounts. Obviously, it is important that we have the most up-to-date details of your account and if you make any change to the bank details we already hold for you, please ensure that you contact gerry.wilkinson333@ntlworld.com with the new account name, six-digit sort code and eight-digit account number.

Gerry Wilkinson, Treasurer

Scorers' Update

As the 2023 season is fast approaching, plans are well underway for courses within Hertfordshire and indeed countrywide. The Hertfordshire Club Scorer Course, for those who have successfully completed the Basics of Scoring Online Course and/or want to progress to become a qualified Level 1 scorer, has spaces available. It is running for 2 Saturdays on 4th and 11th March at Hatfield & Crusaders Cricket Club. We also have places available on a PCS Pro electronic course, on Sunday 2nd April at North Mymms Cricket Club. If you have any club colleagues interested, then please pass on these course details. Spaces for these and national courses can be booked at

<https://www.ecb.co.uk/course-finder?calendars=Scoring&startDate=2023-01-01&endDate=2023-04-30&dateRange=&tab=0>.

Following on from the courses run earlier this year, I am pleased to be able to confirm that 3 candidates have attained their Level 1 Accreditation, Martin Davison (Ickleford CC), Roy Newman (Langleybury CC) and Anthony Levy. Congratulations to them.

With PlayCricket becoming such an integral part of scoring league cricket, this is just a reminder that in March 2022 they ran 3 online demos, covering:

- Club Administration
- Members Admin
- Scoring Training (covering DLS)

These were recorded and they can be watched on the PlayCricket website, in the Support section, then select Administrator section.

If you are a Facebook user, then there is a Facebook page which can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/846221595816674>. There's always someone on there that can help with any issues, even during matchdays.

Hilary Stiffin, County Scorers' Officer

Member Survey

In the next few weeks we will be launching two Surveys for both Panel umpires and Club umpires. The aim is to find out your views , what are your ambitions and how HACO can help you.

Watch out for an email with the link coming your way.

Rob Riddleston

Meet the Committee

Rob Riddleston has joined the committee for 2023

WHERE WERE YOU BORN AND RAISED?

I was born and schooled in Salisbury Wiltshire before joining Barclays after A Levels. I was after a couple of years sponsored to go on a Business Degree in Bournemouth and then joined the Barclays management development programme that started a journey working around the South of England & Guernsey before arriving in London in 1978.

WHEN DID YOU MOVE HERE?

I bought a flat in Northolt before meeting my wife then moving to Rickmansworth in 1981 where I still live albeit in a different house.

HOW DID YOU GET INTERESTED IN CRICKET?

My father was mainly a Rugby man but was a good athlete who played lots of sport in the RAF during and after the war. He played cricket for the village team where we lived outside Salisbury, my grandparents were both scorers and my mother helped with the teas, so summer days were spent on the boundary at Longford Park CC. It was a typical village one team club – the gamekeeper, water bailiff, carpenter, vicar, all played!

WHO WAS THE PERSON WHO INSPIRED YOU TO PLAY THE GAME?

My father who was very sport orientated and instilled in me two things when playing – always keep your eye on the ball and play hard, play fair.

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR CRICKET CAREER FROM SCHOOL TO WHEN YOU RETIRED

We lived on the Earl of Radnor's Estate in Longford Park with the pitch about half a mile away from our house and the cricket ground was in front of the 18th Century Castle that makes Knebworth House look shabby. Sadly, Longford Park CC folded in the late 1990s. My primary school played cricket and I was the wicket keeper then moved onto the Grammar School in Salisbury and played there although I started to realise my enthusiasm for the game was starting to be overshadowed by other boys who were good cricketers. Visits to Taunton to watch the 1963 Windies touring side and sitting on the grass by the boundary (oh halcyon days) and a visit in 1965 to Lords to watch a Test against the Kiwis further kindled my love of the game. I continued to play at clubs when I moved around with my job at Barclays at a friendly basis as this was before leagues started to take over. My winter sport was hockey, and I was marginally better at that so when the first of my 4 children arrived in 1985, I decided on a time basis to focus on a game that lasted 70 minutes rather than 7 hours. I continued to play midweek corporate games when it was 20 over games before T20 was "invented" and was a regular spectator at Lords and the Oval. I realised it was best to stop playing about 15 years ago when I spent more time avoiding the ball in the field. As a player I was an all-rounder, as a batter more like Boycott without the talent and a useful medium pace trundler. When I say useful that was until I bowled to a decent batter.



Longford Park

HOW DID YOU BECOME AN UMPIRE?

I always enjoyed the 5 or 10 over spell as a player umpire as well as scoring. Cricket is such a fantastic statistical game which I love. I had also started umpiring Hockey and always got satisfaction managing a game I love so that players can enjoy their day of sport. By this time 2 of my boys had returned from university and had started playing at Rickmansworth CC so I decided it was a good opportunity to watch them play and have a pint on a Saturday summer afternoon, although by this stage my wife was encouraging me to get out the house. Paul Blackwell said to me you know what you are doing (the boy's a fool) so why not put a white coat on and umpire the 3rds on the top pitch and my umpiring career had started. I took all the exams, joining the panel in 2014 then a Championship game followed in 2018 and a Prem game the next year.

WHO ARE YOUR CRICKETING GREATS?

Garfield Sobers, Richard Hadlee and Shane Warne. All have fantastic skill, panache and played the game in an excellent spirit. You watched the game when they were in action.

WHAT OTHER SPORTS HAVE YOU PLAYED/INTERESTED IN?

I have played a lot of Hockey and some Golf but have a wide interest in Rugby Union, Football (Southampton are my Team), Athletics, Tennis and any sport at the Olympics when GB has a chance to win a medal – who says Dressage is boring?

Hockey was always my main winter sport. I started playing in 1968 at school and continued to play every week until about 15 years ago when I switched to Umpiring. I started at Sarum HC and then played at Clubs wherever I lived until I moved to London in 1978 and joined Eastcote HC. I now umpire in the London Area Premier League. I was Chairman at Eastcote Hockey Club for 10 years until 2021 and continue to volunteer for many roles around the club each week.

DO YOU SUPPORT A COUNTY CRICKET TEAM – IF SO WHICH ONE?

Yes Hampshire – I used to travel down to Northlands Road (not the most picturesque ground – more Wantage Road than Arundel) to watch county games in Southampton at a time it was the County Ground before the move to the Rose Bowl. I also spent some time watching games at Dean Park in Bournemouth (very picturesque) now just a Club ground also used by Dorset.

ANY SPORTING HIGHLIGHTS THAT YOU ARE PROUD OF?

Sporting highlights as a player were limited due to my lack of talent but winning a league title at Hockey (it was a division 6 regional league!) and a semi-final in the National Over 50s Cup was as good as it gets. In cricket hitting 2 50s over a weekend was the highlight – it's amazing

the importance of confidence. From a spectator point of view England winning the ODI World Cup at Lords in 2019 was unbelievable tension, swinging fortunes and excitement. Watching it there with my youngest son was the best day I have had with sport although the last hour or so became a bit hazy as the drinks flowed.

FAVOURITE PLAYER AND WHY?

Ian Botham in his early years when he was the best all-rounder I have ever seen with the bat, ball and in the field.

YOUR TOP 3 THINGS ON YOUR BUCKET LIST

1. Boxing Day Test at the MCG
2. Final day of The Masters at Augusta
3. A trip to Machu Picchu

I am now President at Rickmansworth CC.

If you would like to contribute to the next newsletter, whether a story from personal experience, a conversation piece you would like to raise or anything else umpire or scorer related, then please send then to Chris Mountain at secretary.haco@outlook.com.

The next issue will be released in April.

Dates for your Diary

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|--|
| Umpires Level 1 | Sunday 29 th January | Hertford CC | Contact Tim Caldicott |
| Members Evening | Thursday 23 rd February 8.00pm | Potters Bar CC | 2023 Laws Update and quiz |
| Scorers Level 1 Course | Saturday 4 th March and Saturday 11 th March | Hatfield & Crusaders CC | Contact Hilary Stiffin |
| ACO AGM | Sunday 12 th March 7.00pm | Virtual meeting | See 'ECB Over and Out' for details |
| HACO Conference | Sunday 19 th March | University of Hertfordshire Sports Village | |
| Members Evening | Thursday 23 rd March 8.00pm | Potters Bar CC | Guest Speaker Dan Whiting |
| PCS Pro Course | Sunday 2 nd April | North Mymms CC | Contact Hilary Stiffin |

Your Committee Members

Officers

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------------|--|
| President | Alan Price | | |
| Chairman | Nick Hall | | |
| Vice Chairman | Tim Caldicott | | |
| Secretary | Chris Mountain | 07973 876 442 | secretary.haco@oulook.com |
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| Development Officer | Jon Holland | | |
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Committee Members

Peter Hintridge
 Anthony Levy
 Connor Mulholland
 Rod Riddleston
 Hemal Wijesuriya

Co-opted Committee Member

John Bowra