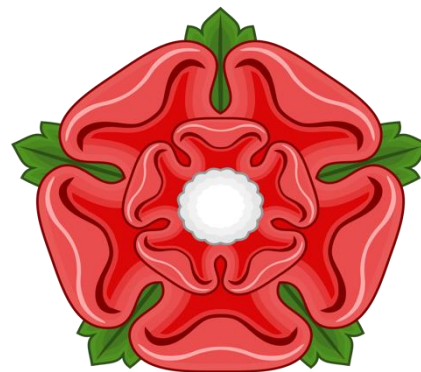


Lancashire Association of Cricket Officials



*Newsletter
June 2020*

Welcome to our third Newsletter of the Covid 19 crisis. We hope you; your family and friends are all keeping well.

As Chairman, I continue to remain in touch with the County Board through our weekly Zoom meetings at which we hear first-hand, through the wonders of modern technology, relevant aspects of that week's meeting between the Counties and the ECB. Without being 'political' I think it is fair to say that over recent weeks the Government have made announcements which have caught the Governing Bodies by surprise despite the clear dialogue that exists between Sport and the DCMS. This has led to some delays in ECB being able to issue agreed protocols following Government announcements. My thoughts on whether we shall see any recreational cricket vary day to day but I do feel that at present the chance of us getting onto the field is currently more positive than it has ever been since the start of the crisis. In this month's Newsletter we have an article which explains each of the major leagues current thinking, be aware this information was gathered a couple of weeks ago, but I think remains relevant, albeit thinking will have moved on somewhat.

Of course, if cricket does resume each of us will be faced with a decision whether or not to participate and I am sure that some will not wish to do so. All I would ask is that everyone waits to see when and under what circumstances and protocols play will resume before making a final decision. In this way your decision will be based on a full knowledge of the facts and not conjecture.

In this month's Newsletter:

Update from around the Leagues

Hugh Evans on Blind Cricket

**The Regional Development Officer
Role by Peter Robinson**

Interview with John Holder

**England's Opening Batsmen – a
Question of Statistics**

**Quiz winners - Frank Hodgkiss and
Brian Simpson each receive a £25
voucher. Answers at the end of the
Newsletter**

**Website- call for volunteers to help
LACO set up a new website**

**Scorers – opportunities to develop
your skills**

**Paddy Brown on his Zoom meeting
with First Class umpires**

Your Executive continue to work hard in the lockdown period, this week our thoughts are turning to the ongoing Autumn/Winter Training session. Like many I am convinced that the current crisis will considerably accelerate many changes in the way we do things. These changes would have occurred anyway but just over a much longer timeframe. Our Training offering is one such area. ECB ACO have already launched an on-line version of the Basics of Scoring and Basics of Umpiring Course as well as the Stage 1 Umpires Course. Three weeks ago, when I received the latest update from Edgbaston over 270 people in Lancashire alone had registered for the Stage 1 Umpires Course. This clearly demonstrates a demand for this type of product, the challenge now is how do deal with this new environment and ensure we can meet this welcome increased demand without compromising the quality. Our July Newsletter will contain more details of how we intend to ensure that our Training programme can continue to run this Autumn/Winter whatever circumstances face us.

We hope you enjoy this Newsletter, as I mentioned last month, we are happy to take contributions on any cricket related topic, not just Officiating. As an example, this month, for the statisticians among you, we include an article about the difficulty of Opening the Batting in Test matches. So, if you have been thinking about any cricket related topic please feel free to put pen to paper or finger to keyboard and let us have your contributions. Following on from last month's interview with our current President Tommy Wilson, this month we include Part 1 of an excellent Interview with former Test Match Umpire and former President of LACO John Holder (pictured below as a member of the 1968 Hampshire side) as well as articles on the Role of the Regional Development Officer and a fascinating piece on Blind Cricket as well as the answers to our quiz from last month.





Following

Lancashire Association of Cricket Officials

@LancashireACO

Official account for the LACO. Responsible for umpires and scorers in Lancashire. Affiliated to the LCF and ECBACO.

Joined June 2015

70 Following 470 Followers



Followed by ECB ACO North Scorers, Kent Cricket Umpires & Scorers, Steve Beswick, and 85 others

Tweets

Tweets & replies

Media

Likes

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Lancashire Association of Cricket Officials @Lancashi... · 29/02/2020

A new generation of umpires? Come and have a go Stand 82

@EmiratesOT #cricketexpo cricketexpo



5

19



As always if you have any comments on the Newsletter of any other aspect of our work don't hesitate to let us know. Our Twitter and Facebook sites continue to have interesting topics and conversations posted so feel free to keep in touch through social media as well.

Keep safe and well.

Rob Hales, Chairman LACO

Update from around the Leagues

Although it is still no clearer when, indeed if recreational cricket will start in the county, I thought I would detail the information on each of the major leagues in Lancashire, at least as far as we know it, please note this was correct at the time of writing but things change!

Bolton League: Have issued fixtures based on a 4th July start date but also have contingency plans for starting dates up to the 1 August with a mixture of league games and T20s. These plans may have to change if the start date is delayed beyond then.

Greater Manchester Cricket League: A number of options has been discussed at Board level, but no conclusion reached until further and better information from both Government and ECB. Clubs have been kept informed of the current state of play, but no dates or options released to the clubs. Umpires have been contacted to ask them would they be prepared to umpire if a start date is agreed.

Liverpool Competition: No formal announcement regarding a possible start date. Various options considered based on a number of dates when play might resume but nothing finalised. It will depend on information from Government and ECB.

Lancashire League: Chairman's Update dated 17 March said:

"The hopes of your Executive to commence play on July 1st is now deemed highly unlikely but we will continue to monitor the situation together with all the advice being published by ECB, LCF and Government.

I know from discussions that some leagues think it may be possible to play some cricket from August 1st but I am sure you will agree that our clubs facilities including changing rooms etc must be freely open before that could happen"

Northern Premier Cricket League/Palace Shield: Have stated that it is difficult to come to any conclusions, given that it now seems highly unlikely we will be able to play half a

season from 1 July thoughts are turning to developing some of the scenarios for a shorter season involving cup competitions with initial group stages but little point in going in to detail until more clarity is obtained. However, in the NPCL consultation with clubs has taken place and in PS clubs have been asked to consult with their members regarding availability etc so should we get the go ahead a full plan can be issued promptly.

Ribblesdale League: Their Chairman advised that similar to other leagues it is very much a case of "wait and see" when or indeed if cricket will restart this season" He goes onto confirm that they are in regular contact with ECB/LCF and the league sends a summary of the weekly LCF meeting out to clubs so they are fully up to date with the current situation. "Once we have a potential start date we, as an Executive, will look at options available and consult clubs as to potential format".

Westmorland League:

If there is the chance to play a short season with ten rounds of games, that is the preferred option of the League. But unless a start can be made by the middle of July, that would require the season to be extended till the end of September and will require agreement from clubs, some of whom share facilities with other sports.

Website- call for volunteers

LACO intends to develop its own website which will enable us to host training materials including a stock of video clips. If any member has expertise or perhaps a furloughed son or daughter who does then can they please contact rhales100@btinternet.com to arrange a discussion.

Blind Cricket Experience

I started umpiring Blind Cricket in 2017 following a recruitment drive in Lancashire where there was a shortage of umpires. My first match was Lancashire v Somerset at Cheetham Hill CC. What an experience!

The awareness/training session I had pre-season did not do the game justice. A number of things stood out. The obvious level of enjoyment was exceptional, players were competitive, respect for players and officials was first rate and the skills levels on display was, at times, unbelievable. Players with no or partial sight scoring runs, bowling a good line and length and fielding with an enthusiasm that would put some fully sighted players to shame.

The game is played under the auspice of Blind Cricket England and Wales (BCEW). They organise cricket in a National League and Regional Development Leagues. In Lancashire, there are two clubs – Lancashire Lions and Wavertree Merseyside. Lancashire Lions is well established and have a team in the National League and one in the Development League. Wavertree Merseyside, a relative new club to Blind Cricket, play in the Development League. National League matches are mainly played on a Saturday and the Development League on a Sunday.

The rules of Blind Cricket are essentially the MCC Laws of Cricket with some modifications to allow blind and partially sighted cricketers to play the game. Blind cricketers are all officially registered blind or partially sighted. BCEW give individual players one of 4 sight categories – Total, Low Partial, Mid Partial and High Partial. As the playing rules differ for the different sight categories, the players wear coloured wrist bands to help identification.

The domestic game in England is played with a size 3 football filled with ball bearings to provide audible cues. The size allows partially sighted players to see the ball and the contents allow totally blind players to hear it. The stumps are also larger and made of fluorescent metal. This makes them easier to see and for the totally blind players to touch them in order

to orientate themselves when batting or bowling.

Blind Cricket is far more vocal than normal red or white ball cricket. Verbal signals are used by both umpires and players. Bowlers need to know who is batting and batsmen need to know who is bowling. Bowlers have to ask if the batsman is ready and before starting their run up and must shout 'play' as they release the ball.

Other Law variations include: -

- The ball must pitch twice before the crease of a totally blind batsman and not be rolling.
- The ball must pitch once before the crease of a partially sighted batsman and not be rolling.
- A totally blind batsman is given one chance before being given out LBW and cannot be stumped.
- A totally blind cricketer can make a catch after the ball has bounced once.

What I found alien when I started to umpire was the need to be very vocal with the players and scorers. Umpires need to talk to the players, tell them the score and provide them with assistance during the game. Batsmen with no or poor partial sight will have runners which provides the umpires with a different set of challenges.

Since I started to umpire Blind Cricket, I have been fortunate to umpire league and cup matches cross the North and Midlands, the BCEW T20 Finals Day, England Trial sessions and been nominated to stand in the 2020 'Ashes' series which unfortunately was cancelled due to the current restrictions applicable to cricket. Hopefully some matches before the season ends but if not, there is always 2021.

Hugh Evans

Regional Development Officer

In the last newsletter, I confirmed my retirement as Regional Development Officer (RDO). I thought some of you might be interested in what the role of RDO entails.

Support for the Counties:

The North region covers 6 Counties: Lancashire, Cheshire, Northumberland, Durham, Cumbria and Yorkshire. Each County has a County Development Officer (CDO).

The CDO has 3 key roles:

1. They are responsible for the smooth running of the U2A and U3A accreditation processes within their County. They will instigate any mentor and assessor workshops that are required in their County and put in place a method to identify suitable members to attend them.
2. The CDO is also responsible for overseeing the ECB ACO grading system and ensuring the County grading list is sent to Head Office each year in a timely manner.
3. The CDO should set up a system within their County that identifies umpires who may have the potential to progress to the National Panel

One of the key roles of the RDO is to support the CDOs with these processes and be there to give advice and help with any problems that may arise.

The RDO should organise and chair at least one meeting each year that is attended by the Region's 6 CDOs, to discuss how the processes are working in their Counties and explain any new initiatives they need to adopt

Nominations for the National Panel:

The RDO has overall responsibility for deciding which members in the Region are nominated for consideration for the National Panel (NP). This is probably the most challenging part of the role. One of the first things I did when I became RDO was to set up a system that I considered to be fair and equitable.

1. Prior to the start of each season, I asked each CDO to send me the names of members they wanted to be considered. This usually resulted in a list of 5 or 6.
2. I then arranged for these members to be assessed at least twice during the season by assessors from different Counties. Often, I would arrange for them to stand in the top National finals and would contact the RDO for that Region to arrange for one of his top assessors to attend. Other fixtures they umpired were area and regional finals of the National Club Knockout and the National t20 competition. These fixtures allowed for their assessment in matches that were outside their normal comfort zone.
3. Once I had studied all of the assessment reports I asked the relevant CDO to send me the marks from the umpire's league in ranking order, to check they were in the top quartile of the table (this was a requirement for nomination). I then made a decision on who should be nominated.
4. I then had to help and advise the selected nominees in the compilation of a quite extensive portfolio of evidence to support their nomination.
5. The nominations from all Regions then went to Chris Kelly, the National Umpires Manager, who decided which of the members would be elevated to the NP. Once the decision was made, Chris would contact me with the names of those who were successful. I then had to inform the successful umpires, which was a pleasant task, and also the unsuccessful umpires, which was the most unpleasant part of the role.

Assessors for NP nominees:

I made the decision that someone who was assessing an umpire who was being considered

for the NP should himself be on the NP or be retired from it. I felt that these people were in the best position to know what was expected of a NP umpire and to make a judgement as to whether the umpire they were assessing met the grade.

I identified suitable current and former NP umpires from within the Region and asked them if they would consider the role. This resulted in a list of 10.

To ensure they all had the relevant skills to carry out the role in a professional manner, I arranged a training day. Chris Kelly agreed to come and lead the training and everyone attended a County 2nd XI match at Harrogate CC. The day started with a classroom session, followed by a day watching the match and unofficially assessing the umpires. The day ended with a debriefing session afterwards. All of the assessors benefited from this high level training.

ACO Development Committee:

As RDO, I automatically became a member of the ACO Development Committee. The Committee was made up of all the RDO's, Martin Gentle, Chris Kelly and Hamish Grant, with a member of the Management Committee in the Chair.

I really enjoyed being part of this Committee and found being involved at this level really exhilarating. We met quite regularly, I caught the 7.38am train from Lancaster, getting in to Euston at 10.10am, the train proved to be extremely punctual. I then jumped into a cab at Euston and was at Lords at 10.30am. Then the 5pm train back reaching Lancaster at 7.30pm. The ECB offices are accessed via the Grace gates and as I passed the Mound Stand, I used to sneak up to the lower tier and stand at the edge of the outfield and just take it all in. On one occasion during winter, I arrived there only to find that the meeting had been delayed by an hour, so I went to the groundsman's workshop and asked if I could have a look at the square. Mick Hunt's deputy took me out and we discussed the differences between groundsmanship at the highest level and grass roots level, remarkably similar actually. It was a surreal experience being out there on the square surrounded by the imposing stadia and

thinking about what had taken place there in the past.

I am extremely fortunate that, as a result of my involvement as RDO and other work I had done previously for ACO, I have on 3 occasions been invited to attend a day at the Test Match at Lords in one of the ECB boxes. These are amongst the best days of my life and I will be forever grateful for the ECB ACOs invitations. On one of these occasions, after lunch, I found myself sat next to Roger Knight, who at the time was President Elect of ECB ACO. We chatted for about 2 hours and it was surprising how much we had in common, me a working class lad from Carnforth and him Chairman elect of MCC.

I can't deny that I miss being RDO and the level of involvement the role entailed, but as I got older I felt the need to localise my involvement in cricket. I have become my league's Chairman of Discipline and become an active committee member at Carnforth CC. I couldn't have taken these roles whilst retaining the level of commitment required to be an effective RDO for the North Region.

Peter Robinson

John Holder Interview – Part One

My second interviewee for the newsletter is a well known and much loved man, in both Lancashire and further afield. Born in the marvellously named hamlet of Superlative in Barbados, John Holder who celebrated his 75th birthday during lockdown, is an engaging conversationalist. He told me how he was working in the electrical department of a store as a teenager, having not done as well as had been hoped at High school. He had spent too much time doing athletics, playing cricket and having a good time and neglected his studies. "In my time at Combermere High School, two other such schools, Lodge and Harrison College each put out a team which played in the island's First Division Cricket Competition, regularly coming up against the island's best players. So in 1963, aged 18 we came up against Empire CC which was captained by the great Everton Weekes. Their opening bowler was the fearsome Charlie Griffith, who had recently come back from terrorising England's batsmen on the WI tour of that country.

The only concession Charlie made to us school boys was that he did not bowl bouncers unless we got too cheeky. He ran from the sight screen and bowled at top pace. I went in

at number 9 or 10 to face Charlie. As I played back and across the first ball struck the bat which shook in my hands. The next three balls thudded into my left thigh, giving me a dead leg. Captain Weekes, fielding at short leg mercifully stopped the game and massaged my thigh to ease the pain. There were no thigh pads in those days.

The next over was bowled by an off spinner whose end I managed to get to by running a sharp single. I slogged him for 25 before getting out, never facing Charlie again."

All this meant was that John was receptive when recruiters from London Transport came to the island and he eagerly took the opportunity the chance to emigrate which was to change his life. John landed at Heathrow on 18 November 1964 to embark on his new life. A keen cricketer in Barbados, John wasted no time in finding a cricket team. The team

called Caribbean played friendly cricket around the London area. John had played first division cricket for his school in Barbados, against the likes of Everton Weekes, Charlie Griffith and others and further developed his skills during the winter at Alf Gover's indoor cricket school, which he says had a low ceiling, narrow nets and was lit by gaslight. The young quick from London Transport must have been quite frightening to face in that light. I ask John how quick he was, telling him

RADIO TIMES August 8, 1968

BBC 1

9.0 a.m. 9.25
APNA HIGHAR SAMAJHIYE
اپنا ہی گھر سمجھتیے
Make Yourself at Home
for viewers from
Pakistan and India
including
Good, Tasty, and Spicy
Scriptwriter: VERA BROOKS
Lesson 48
Teacher: Robert Chapman
Assisted by Sanaa Dillion-O'By
from the Midlands

10.30-11.20
WIDE, WIDE AS THE
OCEAN...
A Seaside Mission Service
from
GIRVAN, Ayrshire
Conducted by
The Rev. Dr. Ian B. Doyle
and other members of the
Church of Scotland
Seaside Mission Team
with a congregation of
holidaymakers and children
from the local churches
Praise led by the
Eastwood Folk Group
Presented for television by
Stanley Prichard

11.20
FARMING
Introduced by David Richardson
What about Eggs?
With the prospect of a free-for-all
in the egg market Bill Weeks looks
at the future of egg producers
large and small.
Produced by Jane Kenna
followed by the
Weather Situation
for farmers and growers

BBC 2

1.55 p.m. 4.10*
SUNDAY CRICKET
A series of matches played under
knock-out rules
featuring
THE INTERNATIONAL CAVALIERS XI
Captain: Ted Dexter
(Sussex and England)
who today play
for a purse of 100 guineas
against
HAMPSHIRE C.C.C.
Captain: Ken Mackail
(Hants and West Indies)
at Titchborne Park, Alresford
Among those playing in today's match:
Bobby Simpson (Australia)
Clive Lloyd
(Barbados and West Indies)
Frank Tyson
(Northants and England)
Denis Compton
(Middlesex and England)
Introduced by Frank Bough
Commentators: John Arlott
Brian Johnston, Jim Laker
Television presentation by
Rob Duncan and John Nerman
Organised by the International Cavaliers
Association of Test Match in aid of the Alice Barnard
Memorial Fund

4.25-6.15*
SUNDAY CRICKET
A further visit to Alresford for
the second session of play and the
match result

5.55
TOM AND JERRY
playing cat and mouse in a
selection from the world-famous
award-winning cartoon films
starring TOM THE CAT and a far-
from-understanding mouse called JERRY.
Created by William Hanna
and Jim Bakula
Mouse for Sale
... is not going cheap!

6.5
THE NEWS
AND THE WEATHER MAN
George Lucas

6.15
MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE
asks
THE QUESTION WHY?
with fifteen of the Bishops now
attending the Lambeth Conference
Directed by Kenneth Cameron
Presented by Catherine Martin
Repeated tonight at 11.27

The Midlands International 1968

Today will be the fourth day of this important event.
For The Midlands Bank Victor Ludorum prize only the two top riders
from each of the eleven countries are allowed to compete. Britain's
main hopes lie with Anne Moore riding Psalm in her third
Junior Championship
This afternoon at 4.35

2.45
IN YOUR PLACE
Eleven programmes about design
ideas, centred round a family, a
problem, and a budget
T: A Period Cottage
Introduced by Eric Thompson
Designers:
Alan Irvine, Natasha Kroll
Drawings: Don Kidman
Produced by Sanaa Brooks

3.15
NEWS HEADLINES

3.16
THE LOVE AFFAIR
A new series of
romantic feature films
Today:
Bluebird's Eighth Wife
starring
GARY COOPER, CLAUDETTE COLBERT
with
David Niven
Edward Everett Horton
Screenplay by
BOLLY WELSH and CHARLES BRACKETT
Produced and directed by
Ernst Lubitsch
Michael... CLAUDETTE COLBERT
Nicole... DAVID NIVEN
The Marquis... EDWARD EVERETT HORTON
An American millionaire, seven
times married and divorced, takes
a holiday on the Riviera where he
meets his match at last...

5.30
THE MAN IN THE
IRON MASK
by ALEXANDRE DUMAS
Dramatised in nine parts
by ANTHONY STEEVE
The Vicomte de Bragelonne has
discovered that his affianced
Mademoiselle de la Vallière has
become the King's mistress.
3: The Arrest
d'Arizman... EDWIN RICHMOND
Armin... NOEL WALKMAN
King Louis XIV... NICHOLAS CHAGGIN
Alphonse... JACK CHILLER
Vicomte de Bragelonne... JONATHAN NEWTH
Glovaire... BOBBY MARCY
Louise de la Vallière... SARAH MACREARY
W. Ralston... PETER MACDON
Philippe... NICHOLAS CHAGGIN
Script editor, Michael Vaysey
Designer, Sally Hulse
Producer, CATHERINE LOGAN
Directed by JEROME DAVIS

7
BBC recording
1 Repeat broadcast
* Approximate time

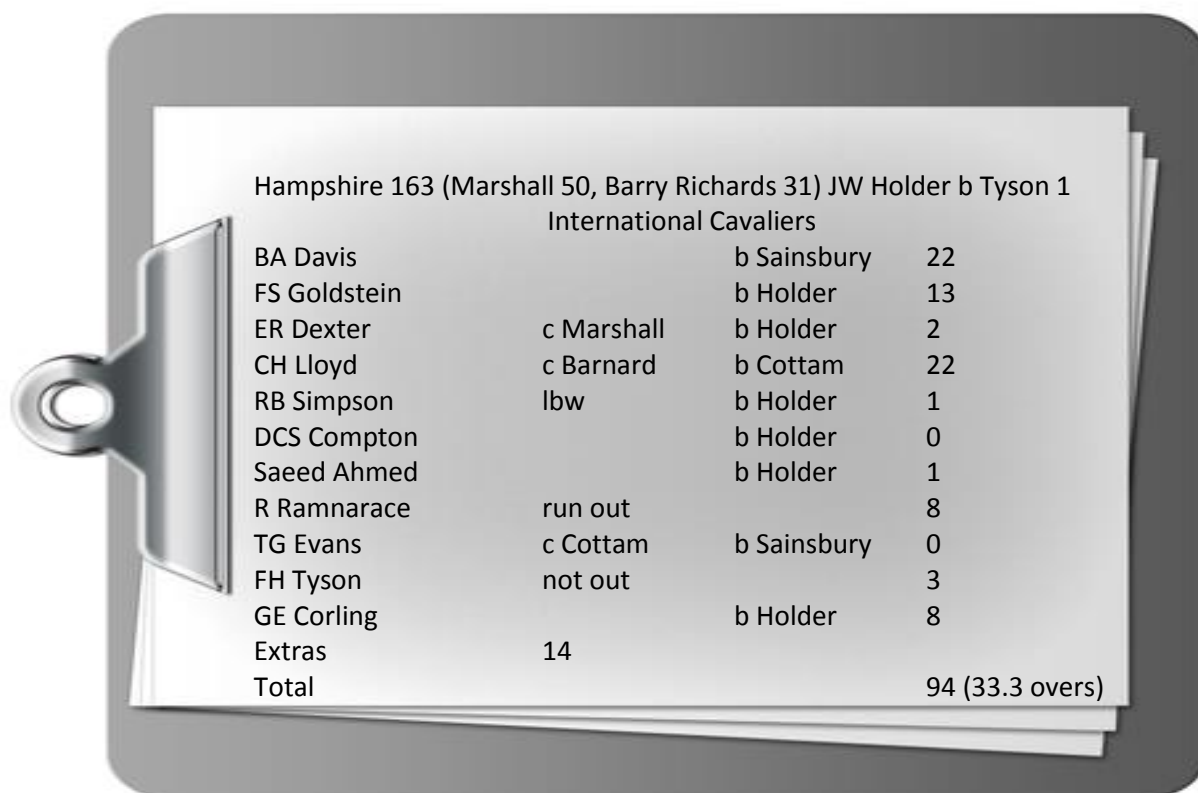
The Love Affair - at 3.16
David Niven appears with Claudette Colbert
in today's film 'Bluebird's Eighth Wife',
a delightful, sophisticated comedy

that Wikipedia says that he was “brisk medium”. Oh, I was quicker than that he laughs. “Before I got injured I would think that I bowled around 90mph.” In 1966 the West Indian tourists played Hampshire at Southampton. John was introduced to Gary Sobers by Peter Lashley a WI player who told him that John could bowl as fast as Wes Hall.

John was recruited to play for the BBC cricket team and playing for them he came across Dr. Bertie Clarke, a legend in club cricket who had played three Tests for the West Indies before the War. Bertie was impressed and recommended John to Hampshire. “Happy Hampshire” John recalls made him welcome immediately and he loved his seasons with the County. I ask him what it was like playing with Roy Marshall, who had once had the dubious pleasure of coaching me. John says “a lovely man, a great player, but very quiet. I got to know him better later when I had joined the First Class Umpires panel and he was on the Somerset Committee. He ran a pub in Taunton. But he was a poor fielder, not wanting the ball to hurt his hands. Couldn’t catch. He panicked whenever the ball came to him.” But John says Marshall would have been a great T20 player today. He had been a magnificent attacking opening batsman who

had come to England on the historic 1950 West Indies tour and stayed here.

I ask John about the day at Titchborne Park in 1968 when he played for Hampshire against the International Cavaliers, as advertised in the *Radio Times* on the previous page. The International Cavaliers’ games were the forerunner of the John Player League and their matches were televised live on the BBC. The *Radio Times* preview mentions Ted Dexter, Marshall, Clive Lloyd, Bobby Simpson, Dennis Compton and Frank Tyson, but there is no mention of the fast bowler whose superlative performance that day would be the best bowling figures recorded in the International Cavaliers games. After Hampshire made 163, the Cavaliers were 35/0 against the opening attack of England bowlers, Butch White and Bob Cottam when John was introduced to the attack. Bowling fast and straight, he was unplayable. Jim Laker commentating with Peter West and John Arlott, with Leary Constantine in the summariser’s chair, wondered aloud who was this lad? John had taken 5/3 when last man, the Australian, Grahame Corling edged him through the slips for four. He was clean bowled next ball and John finished with 8.3-4-7-6. It is worth printing the scorecard:



Hampshire 163 (Marshall 50, Barry Richards 31) JW Holder b Tyson 1			
International Cavaliers			
BA Davis		b Sainsbury	22
FS Goldstein		b Holder	13
ER Dexter	c Marshall	b Holder	2
CH Lloyd	c Barnard	b Cottam	22
RB Simpson	lbw	b Holder	1
DCS Compton		b Holder	0
Saeed Ahmed		b Holder	1
R Ramnarace	run out		8
TG Evans	c Cottam	b Sainsbury	0
FH Tyson	not out		3
GE Corling		b Holder	8
Extras	14		
Total			94 (33.3 overs)

John continued to impress in county cricket, but on Christmas Eve in 1970 his back went. Although he played another two seasons, he knew it wasn't right even though he did well enough to be called up by the West Indies for a training camp in 1972/3 ahead of their series against Australia. West Indies' test performances had been poor and, with Hall and Griffith retired, were in desperate need of a new spearhead for their attack. John's back meant that it couldn't be him and he regretfully wrote to Hampshire to tell them that he was forced to retire from first class cricket. He stayed in Barbados, but found he couldn't settle and he needed no second prompting when his friend Duncan Carter suggested he try his hand in the leagues in Lancashire as a pro. John enjoyed spells with Rawtenstall, Norden and Royton amongst other clubs, finishing as an amateur with Royton in 1982.

During the week John worked as a supervisor in an asbestos factory, a job that provided little satisfaction. He missed first class cricket and thought of becoming an umpire, taking the opportunity of a Laws Course at Manchester University Sports' Ground In 1981/2. He started umpiring in the League, and John Savage the head coach at Lancashire asked him to do some second team games (these were the days when the counties appointed their own umpires to second team fixtures). John's performances were strong enough for him to get on the reserve list for 1982 and then in the first class list for 1983, where he stayed for 27 seasons. He stood in 11 Test matches and 23 ODIs. John says he loved every minute of it, it was far better than working and gave him the best view of the techniques and application of some of the best players in the world. John will talk about his umpiring career in Part Two next month.

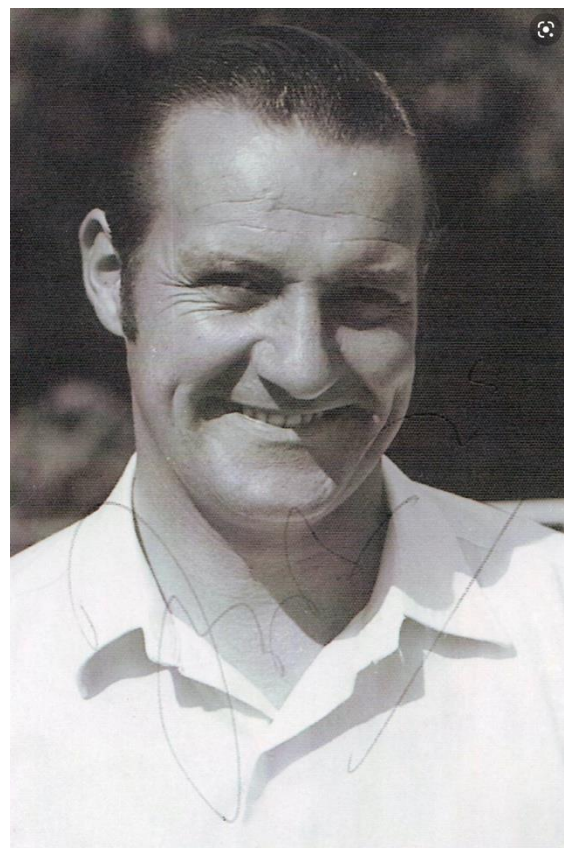
Tim Mansfield

England Opening Batsmen – A Statistical Exploration by Rob Hales

In the May Newsletter I said that we were happy to include any article on cricket in general not just umpiring. So to start the ball rolling I thought I would contribute a piece on England Opening Batsmen. I say 'I' but all the

work was done by a very good friend of mine Peter Hardy. We are both members of a group of friends living in all a parts of the country who normally spend much of the summer travelling to various County grounds to watch County cricket and the rest corresponding on our own WhatsApp group. Last year we spent some time discussing the difficulties England faced in finding a productive opening partnership. The subject arose again when we heard that Brian Bolus an opening bat for Nottinghamshire and England had recently died. Peter's contribution is, with his permission, reproduced below:

Taking the discussion about Brian Bolus a stage further, I have been using the time that I would normally devote to playing cricket to digging around a cricketing discussion point that was long talked about in 2019 – England opening batsmen and their inability to develop significant opening partnerships in test matches.



Brian Bolus (Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and England)

My 'research' about England opening partnerships involved choosing 5 summers

randomly since the 2nd World War and comparing the performance of the openers with what happened in 2019.

There is so much more to analyse but the data shows how difficult opening in Test cricket is:

1948 v Australia: Average opening stand was **41.5** and there were four different opening partnerships in 5 test matches. Hutton and Washbrook put on over 100 in each innings at Leeds, but England were still defeated as Australia chased down a huge score for the loss of only a few wickets. England lost the series 4-0. Cyril Washbrook scored a brilliant 143 at Leeds.

1963 v West Indies: Brian Bolus opened at Leeds and The Oval. He was one of four openers in the series but with Griffiths, Hall and Sobers at their peak the average opening stand was **27.7**. England lost the series 3-1. Mickey Stewart got the best score of any opener with 87.

1977 v Australia: Amiss and Brearley were the openers for the first two tests but Boycott returned at Trent Bridge. In spite of England winning the series the average opening stand was only **38.5**. Boycott's 191 at Leeds was, by some distance, any opener's best score.

1996 v India and Pakistan: There were six test matches during the summer and the average opening stand was **49.1**. Whilst Nick Knight opened in two tests with Atherton, it was Alec Stewart's finest home series. If England only had had a settled selection policy in that era, the opening partnership of Stewart and Atherton would have been constant and would have produced results like this. Stewart's 170 at Leeds was a memorable knock and he has always said that opening the batting was something that he would have loved to have done regularly.

2009 v West Indies and Australia: Cook and Strauss opened in all seven test matches but apart from a 196 partnership in the first innings at Lords against Australia, their stands were disappointing primarily due to Cook's poor form. But England selection had moved on and there was never any question that this stable opening partnership would be changed during the two series. The average opening

stand was **39.0**. Strauss's Ashes ton at Lords where he reached 161 was a superb innings.

2019 v Ireland and Australia: Had Brian Bolus been born 50 years later, his reaching double figures in every test match he played in would have made him a national hero in 2019. This surely was England's feeblest effort by their openers for many a year with the average opening stand being just **16.67**. Rory Burns played in every test but Jason Roy was, sadly, never going to be a Test opener and he survived four matches before giving way to Joe Denley. The quiz question for future generations will focus on Jack Leach's promotion from No11 to No2 in the second innings against Ireland. He, of course, responded with 92. Top score by an opener was Burns' 133 at Edgbaston.

I have all sorts of additional information to look at such as the percentage of runs scored by the openers out of the total scores, and perhaps how often the 50+ partnerships laid the platform for victory. But apart from last summer's disaster, the span on those random 5 series from 1948 to 2009 show that, regardless of the success of England the span of average opening partnerships is 27.7 to 49.1. Clearly having an average opening partnership that exceeds 50 in any series, takes some doing. It also shows that you need specialists to do the job properly. Whenever you put someone in the job who is not familiar with it, disaster awaits. Dewes in 1948 was thrown in for the last test, a middle order player from Middlesex. In all the other series quoted, specialist openers were at the top of the order. It was not until 2019 and Ed Smith with his huge ego to the fore, decided to defy the evidence and throw Jason Roy to the lions.

I wonder had Peter chosen different years whether he would have got a different answer I doubt it. Regarding his final comment I would point out that Peter is a Surrey supporter!

Brian Bolus: (31/1/1934-7/5/2020) Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and England. Played 7 test matches with an average of 41.33 (higher than his first class average of 34.03).

Meeting with the First Class Umpires

At the beginning of May, over sixty umpires from across the online sphere joined together. Hosted by Leicestershire ACO, the online video call featured a Q and A session from current First Class and International Umpires.

Those who had joined were treated to the first-hand experience of household names such as Michael Gough, Richard Kettleborough, Paul Baldwin and a surprise guest in Ian Gould.

Zoom was used to facilitate the call with those involved from across Europe. Now a household name, the app allows a large number of participants to engage with each other online.

An ideal platform for a Q and A session. Questions ranged from the standard 'favourite ground' to more technique-centred questions and tips for fitness and exercise. Covid-19 also featured, with questions on the chances of cricket this year and how the game as the highest level might be affected.

After 90 minutes, the evening was brought to close. With honest and frank answers from the guest speakers; it was an entertaining evening where participants picked up helpful tips.

Those who stuck around were treated to an individual Q and A with Michael Gough, the Hartlepool-base umpire who recently came out on top in a recent Cricinfo article.

This low-key Q and A was also joined in by primarily current, or ex, members of the ECBACO Young Official's programme. Perhaps a small glimmer of hope compared to the current number of umpires depleting year-on-year.

Paddy Brown



Scoring - RUNSWKTSOVERS – LIVE YOUTUBE DEMONSTRATIONS FOR SCORERS

Sue Drinkwater (ECB ACO Scorer Education Manager) pictured above, has been delivering series of live scoring demonstrations over on her YouTube channel. Covering everything from the basics of scoring, the various methods, including linear scoring to 'Score Alongs' and more advanced demos with Q&As. We encourage all scorers and anyone else interested to head over to YouTube and subscribe to Sue's channel. Sue's presentation on 'Demo with Q&A: Duckworth Lewis Stern (DLS) within Play-Cricket Scorer Pro should be of particular interest to umpires.

The YouTube channel is at

<https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCoBu7VMwO-d6mxDDxYgPx7w>

Sue has also been delivering a podcast about the life of a county scorer. The below link takes you to the latest episode:

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/1073980/3987698>

Quiz Results

There were two entrants who submitted the correct score to last months Quiz. It has been agreed to issue both of them with a voucher for £25. So congratulations to Frank Hodgkiss and Brian Simpson.

1. You are at the striker's end. The wicket-keeper puts his gloves in front of the wicket and you call no ball. The striker hits the ball high into the air and it is caught by cover point running back. The batsmen have completed one run, but it appears that the striker hasn't heard the call and he starts to make his way to the pavilion. The fielder throws the ball to the bowler who breaks the wicket and appeals.

Answer – 2 runs scored and no wicket falls. Relevant Law. 31.7 BATSMAN LEAVING THE WICKET UNDER A MISAPPREHENSION

An umpire shall intervene if satisfied that a batsman, not having been given out, has left the wicket under a misapprehension of being out. The umpire intervening shall call and signal Dead ball to prevent any further action by the fielding side and shall recall the batsman.

2. The bowler oversteps the popping crease with his front foot. The batsman plays a defensive shot, and the ball is spinning towards his wicket. He defends his wicket by tapping the ball away with his bat. A close fielder picks up the ball and seeing the non-striker well out of his ground throws the ball at the bowler's end wicket. The ball hits the wicket and proceeds over the boundary. You are the bowler's end Umpire.

One run scored for the no ball. The non-striker is out run out.

Relevant Laws

34.3 BALL LAWFULLY STRUCK MORE THAN ONCE

The striker may, solely in order to guard his/her wicket and before the ball has been touched by a fielder, lawfully strike the ball a second or subsequent time with the bat, or with any part of his/her person other than a hand not holding the bat.

The striker may guard his/her wicket even if the delivery is a No ball.

34.4 RUNS PERMITTED FROM BALL LAWFULLY STRUCK MORE THAN ONCE

When the ball is lawfully struck more than once, as permitted in 34.3, if the ball does not become dead for any reason, the umpire shall call and signal Dead ball as soon as the ball reaches the boundary or at the completion of the first run. However, he/she shall delay the call of Dead ball to allow the opportunity for a catch to be completed.

The umpire should wait for the ball to become dead before calling and signalling Dead Ball. In this case the ball is not dead and the fielding side has the right to have the opportunity to run out the non-striker. Had he not been out of his ground the umpire would call Dead Ball as soon as the ball crossed the boundary and run scored would still have been limited to the one for the no ball.

3. From a legitimate delivery, the batsman scoops the ball high into the air, 40 yards behind the stumps. Four fielders converge from different directions and all you can see is a melee of arms and legs as three fielders dive for the ball. One emerges with the ball in his hand. The batsmen have crossed and as the striker doesn't walk you consult your colleague before making a decision on whether a clean catch was completed as you couldn't see. He says he can't be sure either.

One run is scored. Neither you nor your colleague can be certain that a fair catch was completed.

Relevant Law

31.6 CONSULTATION BY UMPIRES

Each umpire shall answer appeals on matters within his/her own jurisdiction. If an umpire is doubtful about any point that the other umpire may have been in a better position to see, he/she shall consult the latter on this point of fact and shall then give the decision. If, after consultation, there is still doubt remaining, the decision shall be Not out.

4. From a legitimate delivery the striker plays a cover drive towards a distant boundary. The pursuing fielder dives for the ball in front of a group of players from the batting side. They signal four, but the fielder ignores them and throws the ball over the stumps to the wicket-keeper. The batsmen have completed two runs and just crossed on the third, but stop running when they see their teammates signal the boundary. They are both in the middle of the pitch when the wicketkeeper removes the bails and appeals. You are at the striker's end.

Your colleague should call Dead Ball and consult you. Assuming that from your positions neither umpire can tell if a boundary was scored, it would be sensible to ask the fielder if the ball crossed the boundary or whether he came into contact with the ball whilst outside the boundary. If he says neither occurred then your colleague has no choice to give the batsman out. Two runs are scored.

You cannot be certain that the requirements for a boundary were met and cannot allow yourselves to be influenced by players from the batting side or other spectators.

5. From a legitimate delivery the ball removes a single bail and goes on to hit the helmet behind the wicketkeeper.

The batsman is out bowled and the ball is dead as soon as the dismissal occurs. Anything that happens afterwards is irrelevant.

20.1 BALL IS DEAD

20.1.1 The ball becomes dead when

20.1.1.1 it is finally settled in the hands of the wicket-keeper or of the bowler.

20.1.1.2 a boundary is scored. See Law 19.7 (Runs scored from boundaries).

20.1.1.3 a batsman is dismissed. The ball will be deemed to be dead from the instant of the incident causing the dismissal.

6. In a cup game where the playing conditions include legside wides, the striker takes a big swing at a ball well down the leg side. He misses but treads on his wicket removing a bail. The wicketkeeper dives for and misses the ball and sets off in pursuit whilst the batsmen run two. On his return to the wicket the striker repairs the wicket. There is no appeal.

Three runs are scored; a wide and two byes. The batsman cannot be given out without an appeal.

31.1 UMPIRE NOT TO GIVE BATSMAN OUT WITHOUT AN APPEAL

Neither umpire shall give a batsman out, even though he/she may be out under the Laws, unless appealed to by a fielder.

7. From a no ball, the batsman fails to make contact with his bat, but the ball grazes his pad and runs down towards fine leg. He has played a shot. The wicketkeeper hares after the ball, dropping his gloves near the stumps. The batsmen have crossed, but then have yes/no confusion and are both at the non-striker's end when the ball is thrown to the striker's end by the wicketkeeper. The short leg fielder has picked up and put on the gloves. He takes the ball cleanly and removes the bails and appeals for the run out with both batsmen arguing at the bowler's end.

Seven runs are added to the score. One for the no ball, one for a leg bye and 5 penalty runs for illegal fielding. You would also call Dead Ball the instant the ball touched the gloves. You would also report the incident.

28.1 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

No fielder other than the wicket-keeper shall be permitted to wear gloves or external leg guards. In addition, protection for the hand or fingers may be worn only with the consent of the umpires.

28.2 FIELDING THE BALL

28.2.1 A fielder may field the ball with any part of his/her person (see Appendix A.12), except as in 28.2.1.2. However, he/she will be deemed to have fielded the ball illegally if, while the ball is in play he/she wilfully

28.2.1.1 uses anything other than part of his/her person to field the ball.

28.2.1.2 extends his/her clothing with his/her hands and uses this to field the ball.

28.2.1.3 discards a piece of clothing, equipment or any other object which subsequently makes contact with the ball.

28.2.2 It is not illegal fielding if the ball in play makes contact with a piece of clothing, equipment or any other object which has accidentally fallen from the fielder's person.

28.2.3 If a fielder illegally fields the ball, the ball shall immediately become dead and

- the penalty for a No ball or a Wide shall stand.

- any runs completed by the batsmen shall be credited to the batting side, together with the run in progress if the batsmen had already crossed at the instant of the offence.

- the ball shall not count as one of the over.

8. From a no ball, the striker skies the ball straight up in the air. The batsmen run and as the bowler prepares to make the catch, the striker barges him out of the way. You consult with your colleague and agree that the contact was wilful.

One run is scored from the no ball and, on appeal, the striker is given out for obstructing the field. The fact that it is a no ball doesn't override the dismissal.

21.18 OUT FROM A NO BALL

When No ball has been called, neither batsman shall be out under any of the Laws except 34 (Hit the ball twice), 37 (Obstructing the field) or 38 (Run out).

9. The batting side needs one run to complete a victory. The striker is 99 not out. He plays an exquisite cover drive and the batsmen run. They have crossed, but not completed a run when the ball crossed the boundary. How many runs are added to the score?

Four runs are added to the score. For one run to be scored and the game finished, both batsmen would have to complete one run.

18.1 A RUN

The score shall be reckoned by runs. A run is scored,

18.1.1 so often as the batsmen, at any time while the ball is in play, have crossed and made good their ground from end to end.

10. The batsman pads up to a ball which hits the top of his pad, balloons over the wicketkeeper and hits a helmet. In your view no shot was played.

No runs are scored. You would call Dead Ball when the ball hit the helmet.

23.3 LEG BYES NOT TO BE AWARDED

If in the circumstance of 23.2.1 the umpire considers that neither of the conditions therein has been met, then Leg byes shall not be awarded.

If the ball does not become dead for any other reason, the umpire shall call and signal Dead ball as soon as the ball reaches the boundary or at the completion of the first run.

The umpire shall then

- disallow all runs to the batting side;
- return any not out batsman to his/her original end;
- signal No ball to the scorers if applicable;
- award any 5-run Penalty that is applicable except for Penalty runs under Law 28.3 (Protective helmets belonging to the fielding side).

TOTAL RUNS SCORED 21 for 4 WKTS