

SCB ACO APPOINTMENTS OFFICER REPORT TO 2011 AGM

I am very pleased to present my third annual report as the SCB ACO Umpire Appointments Officer.

SURREY CRICKET

The vast majority of appointments are made on behalf of Surrey Cricket for their extensive County Age Group and District programs that involved in excess of 300 appointments being made in 2010.

In 2010 we failed to achieve 100% coverage for the first time in 3 years due to an unprecedented number of umpires dropping out ("good reason" in nearly all cases) but we did manage to cover 103 out of the required 105 appointments (but 3 late cry-offs reduced this to 100 out of 105) for the **District Pre-Festival** program held in May on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

The unprecedented rate of dropouts continued in the lead up to and into the **Festival fortnight** and although 12 late cry-offs were covered to maintain 100% coverage (105 appointments in total), 5 matches finished up with one umpire due to a very late cry-off and 4 "no-shows"!

We maintained 100% coverage for the **County Age Group** season with 106 appointments being made to inter-county age group matches ranging from the U/10s through to the U/19s and Academy teams as well as 4 girls' age groups.

Looking ahead to the 2011 season we have accepted a proposal from Surrey Cricket to implement a different Umpire Payment structure for 2011 with the £27 or £32 rate plus 35p per mile travel allowance being replaced with the following flat-rate fee structure:

- £37 for Boys District Matches and Girls U/13 & U/15 County Matches;
- £40 for Boys County Matches at U/14 and younger age groups and Girls U/17 County Matches;
- £43 for Boys County Matches at U/15 and older age groups up to and incl. the Academy and Women's County 1st XI Matches.

Prior to meeting with Surrey Cricket representatives last November, I circulated the 50+ umpires who took part in the District and County Age Group program last season asking for their views on the proposed changes in general and specifically (a) if they would have been better or worse off if they were paid for the games they did last season under the new flat-rate system and (b) how important will the travel distance be in deciding which games they will be available for or accept next season if there is no mileage allowance. It was clear from the responses - over half replied - that there will be winners (those living in the central districts and close to the venues) but those living on the county fringes and those who travel more than 15 miles to a venue will be worse off under the new system. Nearly all have said that the change will not affect their availability for next season, but few, if any, of these had to travel to Cranleigh or Dulwich last season!

Although this new flat-rate structure compare very favorably with the Surrey Championship Umpires' Panel rates I am concerned that, bearing in mind the problems experienced last season, the loss of the mileage allowance will have a negative effect on getting matches covered next season: Venues are not evenly spread across the county with a number on the fringes and based on previous experience I envisage problems getting full coverage for the District program, particularly the festival week, with Cranleigh School being a major venue again in 2011, although there will be fewer fixtures at Dulwich.

I know that Surrey Cricket were concerned by the fact that there were some high mileage claims but this was mainly due to having to make appointments for quite a few games without knowing the venue. Under the flat-rate system I will not be able to make appointments in advance of the venue being known and this has already impacted on the appointments process for 2011.

As a result of the consultation process there were two other significant changes agreed with Surrey Cricket for the 2011 season:

1. The appointment of one umpire only with the manager / coach taking the other end was not popular and caused problems, particularly as they had different priorities to the Umpire, therefore it has been agreed that in 2011 we will appoint both umpires or no umpires to a game.
2. In 2010 we had several instances of umpires having to stand alone but no extra payment as is customary in the Surrey Championship and as one of the arguments used by Surrey Cricket for the new flat-rate system

was to bring their system into line with the Surrey Championship, it was agreed that in 2011 a "double fee" will be paid to those umpires who stand alone.

Surrey Cricket has agreed that we will jointly monitor the impact of the changes during 2011 with a view to addressing any issues as they arise, particularly if we have problems in filling appointments for the 'fringe' venues as is the currently the case with Cranleigh School for both the District pre-festival and festival matches.

NATIONAL KNOCKOUT

In 2010 we had just 8 matches to cover in the first 3 rounds. Appointments for Round 4 (Group Final) onwards were made by the ECB Regional Appointments Coordinators and I am unaware if any Surrey umpires were appointed in these rounds.

In 2011 we have 5 first round matches on 8th May - with the prospect of a similar number of second round matches - and we have provided two umpires for first round matches in Middlesex where there are 14 first round ties!

ECB APPOINTMENTS

In 2010 we had 4 Surrey Umpires - John Carter, Roy Collins, Mick Martin and Bob McLeod - on the ECB Appointments List for County 2nd XI matches, etc. and this year we will have 5 as Chris Kelly, ECB Umpires Manager, has promoted Vernon Fallows to this list.

The following appointments were made by the ECB Regional Appointments Co-ordinator:

- ◆ **U/17 ECB Cup**
Roger Dyer, David Edwards, Graham Bullock and Matt Johnson to Surrey's two home matches. David Edwards had to withdraw due to injury and was replaced by John White and Roger Croft replaced Matt Johnson who was on holiday.
- ◆ **U/17 ECB 2-Day County Championship**
Jeremy Beckwith, Vernon Fallows, Ian Philippe and John White to Surrey's two home matches.
- ◆ **National Village Cup**
Vernon Fallows and John White were appointed to the Surrey & Berkshire Group Final between Rowledge and Purley-on-Thames; Roger Croft was appointed to Rowledge's matches in the next two rounds with Vernon Fallows and John White being appointed to the National Quarter-Final tie between Rowledge and Bentley from Essex.

SURREY SCHOOLS CRICKET ASSOCIATION

We appointed umpires for the U/12, U/13, U/14 & U/15 Surrey Schools County Cup Finals (although the U/14 Final was subsequently postponed to September), the U/13 & U/15 T20 County Finals and we also appointed 4 umpires for the U/13 T20 Vase Finals Day.

SURREY TRUST & DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE FINALS

Last season we were asked at very short notice (less than a week before) to provide umpires for one of the two development league finals on 29th August at Chessington CC and for both Trust League finals on 5th September at Sunbury CC.

It has been agreed that for 2011 the SCB ACO will make all umpire appointments for these finals with sufficient notice of the dates.

SURREY COUNTY LEAGUE CUP FINAL

I have spoken to Graham Jackson, Secretary of the Surrey County League and he has agreed that the appointment of the umpires for their League Cup Final will be made by SCB ACO as from next season.

APPOINTMENTS BUREAU

Judging by the number of requests I received and the number of "opportunity" mailings sent to the membership last season, it would seem that the bureau service continues to be a success. I made less use of the website last year because the majority of the adverts were for umpires at relatively short notice.

John White
17 March 2011

UMPIRE GRADING FOR 2011

We were not given direction on the process to be followed this year until early December and as we had to submit our return by 7th January - in time for the first meeting of the new ECB ACO Appointments and Grading (Performance) Committee on 14th January - we only had a short time frame in which to complete the process. Following a mailing to members on 9th December, David Edwards and John White met on 31 December to complete the grading process in accordance with the guidance issued by the ECB ACO Senior Executive Officer, Nick Cousins.

There was a new addition to the grading process this year in that provision was made for "Potential & Previous Experience" to be factored in to the grading process by awarding a * to those "*considered to have the immediate potential to officiate at the next level up*" and to recognise "*those who have officiated at a higher level; no longer do so for whatever reason - but could do so again if necessary*" by awarding + grade; for example a grade C5 (+4) could be given to someone opting to umpire at local club level but capable of standing in a Premier League match. Another new initiative was the provision to recommend Premier League umpires for ECB appointments by awarding them a C1* grade.

We have just received confirmation from ECB ACO that our submission has been accepted and we will shortly be circulating the membership with confirmation of their individual grading for 2011. However at this stage we would like to share with you the following feedback from Nick Cousins on our submission:

I assume that the large number of C6 grades represents many members with whom you are not in active contact. I hope you will be able to address this during the coming season and if we (ECB ACO) can be of any help in assisting with this process, please ask. I am a little surprised at the stars and plusses position - I suspect you have not used the + grading options as it was intended, and my apologies if I did not make this clear. The aim is to ensure that in general terms we recognise those umpires who are considered to be 'upwardly mobile' and recognise the depth of experience we have across the whole ACO. Also to ensure specifically that we can 'talent spot' and possibly fast track younger umpires who are new to the ACO and ensure that senior or older umpires do not feel that their previous officiating experience is not acknowledged.

Looking ahead – 2011/2012

Having established a revised classification and grading process please be advised that I will be asking you to repeat this exercise very shortly after the end of the 2011 season

*I would like all submissions to be available for our Appointments and Performance Review meeting on **6th October** with a view to ACOs being able to advise members of their 2012 grades well before the end of the year.*

Submissions will again be based upon the number and level of Premier league (pyramid) matches each umpire has been appointed to – hopefully with additional information about your C6 and currently ungraded umpires -i.e. where they officiate (a particular school or schools / a particular club or friendly matches or whatever).

I hope and anticipate that the process will become easier and less time consuming year on year but I am sure that it is best practice and sensible to ensure that the relevant information is collected as the season progresses, and I hope that you will be able to do that.

We will be taking these points on board when we undertake the 2012 grading process at the end of this season.

John White & David Edwards
17 March 2011