

**AGM will be Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March via Zoom**  
**Special guest – NEIL BAINTON**

**Chair's Thoughts**



2020 has certainly been a different year; Lockdown#1, a busy half season, Lockdown#2, first vaccine approved, a truncated Xmas and a second vaccine approval. We enter 2021 both in more fear of catching COVID

in the near future than ever before, but also with the realistic hope that the 2021 season will start on time – even if it is still under the modified playing conditions of 2020.

I hope that you, and those important to you, are keeping well and finding things to keep you occupied during the new restrictions. I have certainly found winter restrictions more difficult to cope with due to the shorter and more miserable days. Please remember that whilst the Surrey ACO cannot make a big difference, we are trying to do our bit. We see the officials community as a family so if we can be of help please let me know and we will see what we can do (07565 422079 or [dave.walter@ntlworld.com](mailto:dave.walter@ntlworld.com)). We do have a small hardship fund if necessary.

You may have noticed a significant Surrey presence in the last ACO Magazine, both in pictures and in words. This included an obituary for Trevor Woodage who sadly died from a heart attack in June. We were asked to provide some 'models' for an update of the ACO photo library, so we coerced some of our well-known members into allowing themselves to be photographed in action. Generally, things went well, although a couple of shots may well make their way into caption competitions in the future. Simon Hards' initiative in encouraging clubs in Surrey to make use of the lockdown by getting their players to complete the Umpiring Stage 1 course and the keeping of a league table of the clubs getting most people to sign up was particularly successful. This was taken up by a number of other counties, although Surrey provided more than half of the people

signed up across the country. Our initiative with the SJCC to provide training for parents umpiring Pairs cricket and to encourage scoring using the Play-Cricket Scorer app are being taken up nationally.

Nationally nearly 11,000 people undertook online training – 1,650 Basics of Scoring, 3,041 Basics of Umpiring and 6,140 Umpiring Stage 1. Of those the numbers in Surrey were 78, 123 & 1,545 respectively. To supplement this year's offering, an online Stage 2 course has been developed and will be rolled out early in the New Year, with a Stage 3 course already in production. Whilst online courses will be a key part of the future, face to face courses are still very important and we will reinstate them as soon as practical.

Whilst most of our training activities are on hold, we have managed some small online courses and will continue to try to reach out in whatever way are available. Four of our tutors have been accredited to deliver the online Stage 2 course and David Brown has advanced plans to start delivery in February. We also plan to deliver day two of the Stage 3 that was abandoned last year.

Later in this newsletter you will see an interview with Debbie Beesley, since drafting, she has been appointed to the post of Surrey 1XI scorer <https://www.kiaoval.com/main-news/debbie-beesley-named-surreys-1st-xi-scorer/>. On behalf of the SACO committee, I would like to extend our congratulation on this recognition of her hard work and expertise.

In one of our more left field activities, through a friend of a friend link, and with the blessing of the ECB ACO and the ICC Africa, one of our members is about to start a program of support to Umpires and Scorers in Sierra Leone.

Please keep yourselves safe and positive, things will return to normal eventually. In the meantime, please contact us if we can help.

Dave

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**Graham Cooper Retires**

This year has seen Graham Cooper hang up his ball counter and note pad after four decades. His influence in the education and ongoing development of umpires in Surrey has been immense and he has been a major factor in the Surrey Championship Umpires Panel being able to maintain high standards of umpiring skill over the decades. This has benefitted not only the umpires themselves and the Panel as a whole, but also the clubs in the Surrey Championship and has significantly improved the players' enjoyment of the league cricket they have played on Saturdays in Surrey – the influence of his work (including a spell in charge of education for ICC Europe) spreads far and wide.

The SACO committee would like to publicly record our thanks for Graham's service.

**Umpires Cards**

Graham has passed the rights to his Umpire cards to [Acumen Books](#) who provide a special price for SACO members. They are currently out of stock and an order is being planned, so please order early to ensure a restocking in time for the 2021 season. If you have any problems, please let us know [dave.walter@ntlworld.com](mailto:dave.walter@ntlworld.com).



**SACO AGM 2021**

Due to the exceptional circumstances, we delayed the AGM in 2020 and then as there was nothing important to discuss we have decided to skip the 2020 AGM and move to the 2021 AGM.

The AGM will be 'online', probably via Zoom, on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March starting at 8pm. In addition to the usual business we have secured Neil Bainton to talk about his experiences of 12 months of Covid restrictions as a first-class umpire.

We are looking for a Publicity officer to add to our team, if you are interested please contact us.

**DBS Process Changes**

During this period of lockdown if your DBS expires it will need to be renewed. There is a revised process in keeping with social distancing, Nigel Legg SACO Verifier ([nalegg64@gmail.com](mailto:nalegg64@gmail.com)) or Mark Babb, Cricket Participation Office, ([mababb@surreycricket.com](mailto:mababb@surreycricket.com)) will undertake online Id verification for SACO members.



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**Views from the Scorebox**

*Martyn Holloway-Neville, County Scorers' Officer, adds a column in this issue with a view on the weirdest season any of us have ever known.*

What a season it has been! With the 2020 training season cut short, the season delayed and shortened, and then a rain-affected July, August and September. This winter will continue to be unusual, with face-to-face training currently on hold. Here's some of the highlights from the 2020 year:

***Phenomenal SJCC training makes national headlines***

With the lockdown curtailing our face-to-face training programme early (including the loss of the region's first Level 2 course for many a year), and with me heading for emergency work patterns, Dave Walter (our Chairman) stepped into the breach. He developed four online modules for Zoom training, which he then delivered for the new Surrey Junior Cricket Championship.

The take-up was, frankly, extraordinary – so much so that the initial sessions were significantly expanded and extended. So impressed were Head Office that they are taking the ideas forward, particularly on Pairs Scoring (which has never featured predominantly before). The importance of this for the future teaching of scoring nationwide cannot be understated and Dave's effort has been outstanding during a difficult period for all of us.

***Basic Scoring sees an uptick***

It would be remiss of me to not recall that the ECB ACCO already have an online scoring course – the Basics of Scoring, which has been available for the last 3 years or so. This course provides an alternative pathway at the start of the scoring journey, teaching essential skills in a straightforward way. 15 people, of all ages, have completed the course this year and we are working with them to identify and support their next step.

***RunsWicketsOvers – using YouTube to teach***

Another national initiative that has seen much fruit over the lockdown periods this year has been an innovative set of videos from the National Education Officer, Sue Drinkwater. Via her RunsWicketsOvers channel, Sue has developed content on a wide variety of subjects, including Play Cricket Scorer (both the phone app and the PC version), linear scoring and (in a nod to the above), pairs scoring. I would particularly recommend her videos on Duckworth-Lewis-Stern for PCS Pro and the PCS phone app, as many of our leagues use DLS in their regulations.

***DLS 4.0 – get your copy today***

The newest edition of DLS was released by the ICC in October. PCS Pro and the PCS app will automatically be updated to add this new version to their repertoire. However, if you require the WinCoda Javascript application, please get in contact with me ([martyn.scstats@sky.com](mailto:martyn.scstats@sky.com)), as I am authorised to hand out the software.

***Surrey scorer reaches List A***

Many of you will know Debbie Beesley, one of our finest scorers in the county, who is currently appointed to Surrey's 2<sup>nd</sup> XI. Debbie fulfilled a dream when she scored for Surrey's 1<sup>st</sup> XI in a Vitality Blast game at the Oval in August – and our exclusive interview with her is below.

***Leaving the scorebox***

We end on a sombre note as we acknowledge and mourn the loss of Jennie Booth, who sadly passed away on 12 November. Most of you will remember Jennie as Surrey's 2<sup>nd</sup> XI scorer for 13 years (2005 – 2017), and as half of a formidable partnership at international matches at The Oval with her husband, Keith. Jennie always had a comment to make on the action as it unfolded, and always had time to bring on new talent. She was an inspiration to me as I began my scoring journey, as I'm sure she was for many of you. She is, and will be, sorely missed

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**An Interview: Debbie Beesley**

Following her first home game at The Oval this summer, Martyn caught up with Surrey 2<sup>nd</sup> XI scorer, Debbie Beesley, on her journey and what it's like to score at our South London home.

***Tell us a little bit about yourself...***

I started scoring for a small local team in Salisbury when I was 15. When we moved to Surrey, I was lucky to find that one of my college tutors played for Egham CC who were looking for a second team scorer. I went along to meet people and the rest is history. Next season will be my 35<sup>th</sup> with the club.

I first got involved with Surrey in 2015, standing in for Keith Booth for a County Championship match in Bristol during the Test match at The Oval and this arrangement continued until Keith and Jennifer retired at the end of 2017. When Keith announced that they were retiring I was invited to apply and I got the second team job, which I started in 2018.

***What game did you score, and how did you come to score it?***

This year was definitely different. Due to C-19 it was decided that scorers would not travel; that the scoring team would be provided by the home side; and that there would be no second team programme. Most counties asked their second team scorers to cover the first team fixtures, which was a fantastic experience.

My first match as official home scorer came at the Surrey v Kent T20 quarter final when a change of time meant that the regular first team scorer, Phil Makepeace, was unavailable. Mercifully, the match was uneventful, and everything went smoothly.

***Most, if not all of us, know the Oval well. Few of us know what the scoreboard is like. Describe where you score from***

The scoreboard at The Oval is on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the pavilion on the right hand side as you look at the

pavilion from the pitch. The view is amazing as we are virtually right behind the bowler's arm and there is a great view over central London. The official scorers sit at the front of the box with the OPTA scorer on a platform behind. The job of the OPTA scorer is to provide data for web sites and betting sites, but we work closely together as a team as it is always useful to have an extra pair of eyes, especially in situations where you are less familiar with the players.

***What's different about scoring for Surrey, compared to your regular club match?***

The main difference from a scorer's point of view between first class cricket and club cricket is that there are fewer interruptions with people coming to ask the score, how many a batsman has got etc., and that much more is done for you. This year we had no contact with the players, which felt very odd at first but we all soon adapted. We also made good use of WhatsApp to communicate the result



*The Oval from the scoreboard (photo by Debbie Beesley)*

of the toss and any other necessary information.

***What are your hopes for 2021?***

An important part of cricket at all levels is meeting people and making new friends. I hope that next year we will have a full season, whether we will be travelling or not is currently not known but hopefully we will be able to return to normal. However, it is more important that everyone remains healthy to meet once it is safe.

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### **County Appointments Officer update**

At the time of writing, the more infectious strain of the Covid-19 virus makes the immediate few months ahead look very challenging. However, the prospect of a vaccine being rolled out to protect those most at risk of serious illness from the virus gives some optimism that we might expect a fuller cricket season in 2021 than we managed last year.

The ECB certainly appear to be planning on that basis with the draw for the first round of the National Club Championship knockout competition having been made and fixture released on PlayCricket. This year's competition is more streamlined than seen in recent years with entry, generally, restricted to clubs in the top division of ECB Premier leagues. Thus, there are only three home fixtures in Surrey on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May for which I will need to make appointments and any C1 graded umpires who are interested should make themselves available on Who's The Umpire (WTU) by the end of February 2021.

I understand that ECB plan a reasonably full programme of County Women's and Boys County Age-Group fixtures but details have yet to be confirmed. I have already received my first set of schools' fixtures to appoint to and I hope to circulate details of opportunities by the end of February.

*John Flatley*

### **Personal Development for Umpires and Scorers (or Relieving Boredom)**

For those of you looking for some gentle personal development, a refresher prior to the coming season or just to relieve the boredom, we recommend looking at:

<http://www.berkscoa.co.uk/courses.html>

The South Central Region of the ACO, of which Berkshire is a member, has initiated a CPD programme to run through the 2020 season to enable our officials to exercise their minds whether working by themselves or in teams using various technologies like the telephone, WhatsApp, Zoom etc

### **SACO Online Training**

Out of our work with the SJCC we have SACO developed training that introduces people to umpiring and scoring more gently than going straight to a Stage 1 course. This can be delivered face-to-face, as an online session through Zoom or for self-learning by following the links below:

[Umpire Training on SJCC](#)

[Scorer Training on SJCC](#)

If you know of a training need please contact [dave.walter@ntlworld.com](mailto:dave.walter@ntlworld.com)