

SURREY ASSOCIATION OF CRICKET OFFICIALS

CHAIR'S REPORT TO THE 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This has been a year with two different threads, business as usual within SACO and major change at the ECB ACO. At the local level we continue to do what we do in an effective and professional manner; for which I am grateful to the SACO Committee members for all of their hard work.

The ECB and ECB ACO restructuring continues with Regional Officiating Development Officers coming into post at the start of April this year. Whilst the structure is still coming into place there have been the first round of opportunities for new initial trainers and umpire developers. These are to kick start the new training process and then provide support for the newly trained.

To be honest it feels to me that the urgency to be seen to do something on the EDI (Ethnicity, Diversity and Inclusion) front has caused a rushed, less than thoroughly planned or communicated process. Secondly to provide a transparent and evidence based appointment process for the new trainers, the recruitment process is very regimented and slightly artificial. However, I think that it is important to realise that in Surrey we have a very good group of trainers, but that this is not the case in other parts of the country. Secondly, we have a very good relationship with the Surrey Cricket Foundation which means that as the transition to things being led more by the 'County Boards' than by the ECB ACO centrally we will continue to do much the same job but for a different master and probably with the help of a few paid staff members and with better contacts with the clubs. I do not disagree that the process is currently a little uncomfortable but am confident that the resultant process will be better, but it will take time.

Beyond the seismic changes going on at a national level, life has been relatively mundane as a SACO Chair:

- Young officials training is progressing well, additionally in 2023 we will look to develop those who started on this pathway during 2022.
- We continue to try to reach out into the diverse communities, but with little success.
- We are working with the Surrey Women's Cricket League to improve the quality of officiating in the competition. This includes setting up a panel for the matches in the Premiership through to supporting those umpiring in Division 2.

I continue to be grateful for the support of the Committee who work very hard on your behalf. Particular thanks to David Brown who is standing down this year, but only after delivering the spring training program.

From a personal point of view, I need to acknowledge that my childminding grandparent duties still keep me well occupied. I am happy to continue as Chair but will not be able to do as many additional activities as I have in previous years.

Dave Walter

Chair SACO, March 2023