

Surrey Association of Cricket Officials (SACO)
County Appointments Officer Report for 2022

1. **The 2022 season was my sixth as your SACO County Appointments Officer and I am offering myself for re-election to serve another three-year term.** If confirmed in post, I will have the pleasure of having two assistants to help me in the 2023 season: Graeme Hall with Surrey CCC Performance Department appointments and Richard Wood with schools' appointments.
2. **Regular circulars were sent out (25 across the season) to all SACO umpires during the season** to advertise clubs and schools that had approached me for help sourcing umpires. **I estimate that SACO were responsible for at least 432 umpire appointments (each umpire counting as one appointment) as detailed in my report below.** In addition to these, there were several ad hoc appointments or referrals to clubs seeking umpires through the SACO bureau service.
3. **SACO was asked to make regular appointments for four schools: Hampton, KCS Wimbledon, St. John's Leatherhead and RGS Guildford.** In addition, several ad hoc appointments were made for other schools and **across the whole season I made 67 umpire appointments to such matches.** All schools settled their invoices promptly allowing me to reimburse most umpires at the end of the season.
4. The same cannot be said for some of the University fixtures which, as usual, were the most problematic to organise. Very late requests for umpires for matches (sometimes the day before the game) combined with late (or non) payment of fees being among the problems. As with last season, SACO covered the non-payment of fees to honour the commitment members had made by making themselves available to stand in these games. I propose to refuse to appoint to the two non-paying Universities in 2023 until they re-imburse the SACO account. **Across the season, I made 33 umpire appointments to university fixtures.**
5. I was approached this season by my counterpart in Hampshire to work with them appointing umpires to the **British Gurkha Cricket League (BGCL)** – a Sunday afternoon competition with fixtures held at grounds around the Hampshire/Surrey borders. **I made 24 appointments to these fixtures including appointing one umpire to stand in the Final game at Aldershot CC and another umpire in a BGCL fixture versus the MCC.** Feedback from umpires was that these games were very enjoyable to stand in with the players behaviour generally being impeccable. **In the 2023 season, SACO will be asked to appoint to all the league fixtures which are being played at: Badshot Lea CC, Frimley CC and Tongham CC.**
6. **The Surrey CCC reverted to asking SACO to provide 2 umpires for most of their programme of Performance Department cricket.** In addition, I was asked to appoint umpires to several friendlies against other counties and I made the following appointments:
 - 6 for Surrey Women's friendlies
 - 156 for appointments to Surrey Boys Age-Group matches
 - 14 for appointments to Surrey Girls Age-Group matches

7. Following a couple of seasons in which fees have been frozen, **Surrey CCC has agreed to a 10% rise in umpire fees to Performance Cricket in the 2023 season.** This is very welcome and means they will pay £53 for the older CAG games and £50 for the younger ones (Under 10 to Under 14s).
8. As County Appointments Officer, I was asked to nominate umpires for appointment to several ECB competitions. This includes the following number of appointments:
 - 28 for National Club Championship matches
 - 34 for Boys County Age-Group matches (Under 18s, Under 16s and Under 14s)
 - 15 for Regional Women's Academy matches
 - 4 for County Women's games
 - 18 for Girls County Age-Group matches (Under 18s and Under 15s)
 - 3 for Girls Under 13s Club T20 Regional Final
9. **There was a repeat of problems experienced in the 2021 season with the timely payment of umpire expenses by the ECB.** This was again very frustrating for all concerned and it required numerous queries to be raised with ECB about outstanding payments. The ECB have identified the source of the problems and are revamping the process for the 2023 and **a strong commitment has been made to pay promptly in 2023. In other positive news, the ECB has agreed to raise the 2023 match fees for games that CAOs appoint to from £30 to £40** (mileage will remain at 40p per mile).
10. Towards the end of the season, I was also asked to appoint umpires to the both **the Men's and Women's Surrey Slam finals days (12 umpire appointments)**, the **Surrey Junior Championship Finals days (14 appointments)** and the **Surrey Trust League Finals (4 appointments)**. It was very pleasing to see two SACO umpires appointed by the national ACO appointment committee to significant games. **Matt Johnson stood at Wormsley in the ECB Club T20 Plate finals day and Anthony Blondell at Lord's in the National Village Cup Final.**
11. Finally, as ever I would like to thank all those SACO members who made themselves available for the wide range of games that we are asked to appoint umpires. Feedback was almost universally positive indicating that our services continue to be valued. This is especially the case in what are sometimes perceived as the "less glamorous" fixtures in the younger age-groups where the presence of two smartly-dressed, independent and qualified umpires greatly enhances the enjoyment of the players who are the future of this wonderful game.

John Flatley, Surrey ACO, County Appointments Officer
4th March 2023