



Coloured Trousers No 2

BUCKS COUNTY CRICKET CLUB NEWSLETTER

Editor: Bill Scholes

Welcome to the Christmas edition of **Coloured Trousers**. All involved in the production of the first Newsletter hope you found something of interest. We have had a quite a number of complimentary emails, so thank you all for those, and as yet, no threats of violence! So we thought we would do another one!

Bucks County Cricket Club will kick-off their 2021 white ball campaign away to Oxfordshire on 18th April as the NCCA plan for a full season of cricket across all formats. Fixtures were confirmed by the NCCA at the beginning of this month with county officials across England & Wales finalising venues as we go to press. With all forms of last season's competitions cancelled, this is will now be the first season of the NCCA's new format. Due to our finishing in the bottom half of the Eastern Division in 2019, we now find ourselves in Division 2 of the Eastern Division Championship. This sees ourselves pitted against Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Cumberland and Northumberland in the 3 day red ball competition for the coming summer. Captain Ton Hampton will undoubtedly be looking for his side to challenge for promotion up into Division One at the first attempt.

The format of the T20 competition remains as previously; four groups each containing 5 clubs with the winners of each group going through to Finals day at Wormsley. The 50-over competition will revert back to a knock-out competition, although the early rounds will be played in a group stage. As with the T20 competition, there will be 4 groups of 5 clubs, with the top two in each group qualifying for the knock-out stages of a Quarter-Final / Semi-Final and Final. The group stages of both the T20 and the 50-over competitions will be regionalised and will be contested by the same teams in each competition. Our group will comprise of Bedfordshire (again) Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Wales NC.

The reasoning behind this was that if the groups originally planned for 2020 and Covid restrictions were to remain unchanged, (i) a lot of players would have had to drive many long journeys alone, which has safety implications and (ii) matches requiring overnight stays would have entailed 16 single rooms, as opposed to the 7 twins and 2 singles normally needed - both of which had cost and availability implications. Travelling costs will of course also be reduced.

A full list of fixtures can be found below, with Bucks looking to entertain Hertfordshire in two T20 friendlies on April 11th prior to the big kick-off against Oxfordshire. Dates for the annual 50-over Nurton-York Trophy match against Oxfordshire and the Showcase match against a First Class County have yet to be fixed but you will of course be notified as soon as they are.

NCCA T20 COMPETITION

Date	Opposition	Venue
Apr 18	Oxfordshire	Wormsley
Apr25	Berkshire	High Wycombe
May2	Wales NC	Away
May23	Bedfordshire	High Wycombe

NCCA 50 OVERS KNOCKOUT

Date	Opposition	Venue
May 30	Wales NC	High Wycombe
June 20	Bedfordshire	Southill Park
June 27	Oxfordshire	Gerrards Cross
July 4	Berkshire	Wargrave

NCCA CHAMPIONSHIP - EASTERN DIVISION TWO

Date	Opposition	Venue
July 11-13	Bedfordshire	Bedford School
Aug 1-3	Hertfordshire	Tring Park
Aug 15-17	Cumberland	Away
Aug 22-24	Northumberland	Chesham

The very first fixture on the list immediately grabbed my attention, not least because Wormsley is the subject of a very recent blog from *Yahoo Over Cow Corner* which I have just been reading and it does act as a nice link into the article itself. Hopefully it will also act as a spur for you to ink the date into your diary and come along to watch Bucks v Oxfordshire—a National Counties game ,at Wormsley, against our local neighbours - what a way to get the season off to great start,.

HOMES FROM HOME No 5

Wormsley – A Quintessential English Cricket Ground.

There is a fine line between quintessence and parody. Familiarity generated by the former can often lead to a metamorphosis into the latter. The notion of a quintessentially English cricket ground is well worn territory possessing the inherent danger of venturing down a cul-de-sac filled with clichés and tropes. Regardless of

such developments, the notion still remains pertinent and relevant. The idea of an archetypal venue remains popular because people enjoy such an idea.

Said description is often applied to the Sir Paul Getty Ground, located on the Wormsley Estate, a short shimmy up the M40 from High Wycombe in rural Buckinghamshire. Thankfully, whatever positive epithets are proffered more than match the stunning reality that is presented at such a beautiful venue. Similar to another fan favourite, Arundel, one seems to experience a sense of calm once one arrives on the estate, the journey down the gently descending and winding road through the grounds allowing all the cares and woes of the day to dissipate into the Chiltern ether.

Once at the ground, one notices further similarities to Arundel; the almost perfectly flat playing area and the gentle slope that surrounds almost half of the ground. However, unlike Arundel's sense of intimacy and privacy, there is an equivalent of space and capaciousness. Rolling fields stretch behind the boundary opposite the pavilion whilst the valley stretching toward the village of Turville, that used in the television series *The Vicar of Dibley*, drifts away behind the end featuring a children's playground and the ground's nets. Red Kites often soar in the ether overhead whilst sheep can be seen grazing in the aforementioned fields. During the occasional moment of silence one can hear the high pitched screech of the resident birds of prey, providing an extraordinary sight and sound.



Such surroundings have unsurprisingly proved popular. The production crews of *Midsomer Murders* have used the ground for two of their three cricket themed episodes whilst the Minor / National Counties have been regular visitors in recent years, holding the Championship Final at the venue in 2016. However, it is the limited overs formats which have utilised the ground the most; the re-hashed T20 competition visiting for the two years since its reformation whilst the fifty over equivalent has ventured to the Chiltern Hills for its denouement for almost a decade. The representative Unicorns team, sadly now defunct, played some of their 40 over cup matches against the first-class counties back when they were part of the competition. One such fixture, against Gloucestershire, prompted one to undertake a first venture to the venue and the Bank Holiday afternoon contest proved glorious under warm, early May sunshine and amid a not inconsiderable crowd.

Nevertheless, there is ample space for the ground to accommodate a sizeable turnout. Rather, choosing the best spot for a pew is arguably more of a tricky business as one has more than one stunning option. Curiously, neither end of the ground seems to quite capture the absolute brilliance of the arena. Rather, the equivalents square of the wicket seem incrementally better options. Even then, one has to decide whether one wishes to enjoy a view of the majestic thatched pavilion or that of the small scorer's box with the sweeping folds of the Chilterns as a backdrop. Neither view will disappoint. Thus, frequent bimbles around the ground are required

to fully appreciate the differing vistas. One of the most extraordinary is that of the playing area itself, giving the appearance of a billiard table or a fine Axminster carpet.

Naturally, one's eye is drawn to the beautiful pavilion, the venue's inner sanctum. Some pavilions proffer an attractive, aesthetic appearance but one is cognisant that inside there likely isn't much of interest to the lay spectator. In contrast, one ponders what treasures are held within the confines of the Wormsley equivalent due to its apparent capacious nature and a glimpse or two courtesy of the aforementioned episodes of *Midsomer Murders*. Reality is very much left to one's imagination though; entrance to any pavilion is often, quite rightly, a privilege not extended to all and sundry.

Despite the ground's relatively youthful existence, it was opened 1992, there is a mature ambience. The thatched pavilion and the quaint score box possess a tidy, well kept appearance but also possess a certain maturity and very much remain in keeping with the ambient surroundings. Once again, the Sir Paul Getty Ground maintains a presence a healthy distance from the fine line between archetype and caricature. Countryside cricket rarely gets any better.

The article above is No5 in a series of **Home from Home blogs** about cricket grounds that stir the senses by Hector Capelli aka Yahoo Over Cow Corner. Certainly two of the 5 are at the top of my list, with a third not far below. Pictured below are the other 4 grounds – how many do you recognise?



NATIONAL COUNTIES CRICKET ASSOCIATION

The NCCA have been running on their website a series of Rising Stars in which they reveal the Ones To watch in each NCCA county. Last month the spotlight turned to Buckinghamshire.



Buckinghamshire have a trio of stars coming through their ranks currently. **Stephen Croft** burst onto the senior Bucks scene in the summer of 2018, taking 8/33 on his senior championship debut against Hertfordshire. Having just turned 21 at the time, the leg-spinner has gone on to play multiple times for the NCCA side, as well as making a mark with Somerset 2ndX1.



Alongside Croft in the spin bowling ranks, is Connor Haddow, The 20 year old left-armeder made his senior Bucks debut in 2019. He starred in the championship game against Norfolk that season, achieving 9 wickets in the match, when he backed up 4/78 in the first innings with 5/55 in the second. Haddow played for Northants 2ndX1 during that summer, and will be looking to further impress the county side going forwards.



The third rising star is **Alex (AJ) Woodland** who is not only a regular for the Bucks senior side, but has played 3 First Class games for Cardiff MCCU. The all-rounder is a regular contributor with bat and ball, and has also been picked in the Gloucestershire 2ndX1 side. The left-handed batsmen scored 89, 87 and 69no during the summer of 2019 for Buckinghamshire along with taking some important wickets with his medium paced seamers.



More members of the NCCA pathway who are worth taking note of.

TO TEA or NOT TO TEA that is the question that has been occupying the thoughts of every cricket lover in the country over the last 6 weeks or so. The recent decision by the Sussex Cricket League to remove the mandatory obligation on the home side to provide cricket teas during their league matches seems to have produced very strong polarised reactions from both clubs and cricketers. The decision spread well beyond the Sussex borders, gaining national TV and press coverage and causing shock waves throughout the cricketing world. However, nil desperandum as teas will now remain in the Sussex Cricket League after a fresh vote overturned the decision to remove the provision of the mid-game meal! Of the 209 votes, a majority of 114 were cast in favour of the motion, with 82 against. Six abstained and there was seven no votes

A letter from league chairman Gary Stanley read: "On behalf of the executive committee, I can now confirm to you that, following the re-vote, the proposal to remove the obligation of the home club to provide teas in the 2021 season has been defeated. "For the avoidance of doubt, the rules around teas are therefore UNCHANGED from current rules. This is of course subject to any restrictions that may be imposed due to Covid, which we hope will not be the case.

However, now that the cage has been opened, I fear we may not have heard the last of this particular project, as other leagues around the country may well be thinking "hmm, that's not a bad idea" Not having to press gang volunteer tea ladies to give up Saturday/Sunday afternoons might solve a few problems, and not having to provide teas would be an added cost saving.

There was an excellent full page spread by Simon Heffer in The Daily Telegraph at the beginning of the month extolling the virtues of the tea interval and why it must not be lost. A few paraphrased words are well worth repeating here.

The tea interval is about charm: cricket always used to be a charming game and one aspect of it's charm was it's rituals. The game must not lose that.

This is a time for players and spectators to relax and meet people, and also to welcome visitors.

Cricket, like everything else, has had a pig of a year – at such a time it's rituals must not be sucked out of it.

Quite why cricket cannot be simply left to those who do not wish to transform it, brings us to another treat in store next season- The Hundred. The competition – it's postponement last season was the only upside of the pandemic – is a monstrosity invented to make cricket more like football, not least because it will suck the charm out of the game. The game will need it's traditions more than ever.

WEIRD CRICKET OCCURRENCES

3 different appeals off the same delivery

There have been some strange shots played over the years, but the one played by Middlesex's Simon Cook (against Northants' Johann Louw in 2004) takes some beating as it led to three separate appeals at once.

Cook had the ball rap onto his pad, cue appeal; then cannon onto the bat and spoon up into the air for Graeme Swann to snaffle, cue another appeal; Swann then threw down the stumps with Cook out of his ground, cue yet another appeal.

The umpires conferred, and probably using some variation on scissor-paper-stone, decided that he was caught.

The Last First-class Varsity Match.

From an article by Quentin Jones, Oxford University scorer

On 6 September 2020 at 10.48am at the FP Fenner's Cricket Ground Cambridge, James Vitali ran in to bowl to Angus Livingstone. This delivery would be one of the most historic in first-class cricket. Sadly though, few were aware of the significance of what was about to happen.

The occasion was the last ever University match between Cambridge and Oxford deemed to be first-class.

It was a miracle that the fixture had gone ahead despite the COVID 19 pandemic. The venue for the fixture was originally the University Parks ground, Oxford, but as it was impossible to put an ECB bio-secure bubble around a ground that is situated in a public park, it was played at Fenner's.

Upon my arrival at the main gate, my name was checked and approved, my temperature taken, and I was asked to complete a health questionnaire. The gate was electronically locked behind me. I was required to remain in the ground until the close of play. Fenner's had become Fort Knox.

The 176th University match got underway at 10.30am on 3rd September 2020.

The first varsity cricket match was played on 4th June 1827, at the instigation of Charles Wordsworth, who was also responsible for founding the Boat Race in 1829. It became an annual three-day first-class fixture, normally held at Lord's.

Since the turn of this century the University match moved from Lord's and has alternated between Fenner's and the beautiful University Parks Oxford. Anyone who has had the privilege to walk inside the famous pavilion will have seen the historic plaques listing every Blues team to play for Oxford University since 1827. Amongst the names listed are Cowdrey, Jardine, CB Fry, Imran Khan and in 2013, SS Agarwal.

This was the first University match I scored for Oxford University. Samridh Sunil Agarwal hit the highest-ever varsity score and it was also the highest first-class score made by an Oxford University player: 313 not out from 312 balls. The most incredible innings I have scored.

At 10.48am on 6 September 2020, J C. Vitali (Cambridge) bowled to A W Livingstone (Oxford), who missed the ball and there was an appeal. Umpire C M Watts, at the Gresham Road End, raised his finger. That one act brought to an end 193 years of history. As an official scorer I felt a profound sense of loss and sadness as I entered the data in the laptop and pencilled LBW onto my back-up scoresheet. Cambridge University had won by 249 runs.

The teams, officials and some of the stewards gathered in front of the pavilion after the game and Anthony Hyde of Cambridge University Cricket Club made a speech.

It was the end of an era.

"Not In My Day, Sir"

Regular readers of the Daily Telegraph will be well aware of the Readers Letters section, which over the last 80 odd years or so has attracted very large numbers of letters, with cricket attracting its fair share. The archetypal writer of such letters is a retired colonel living in Tunbridge Wells., but just as verbose have been field marshals, generals, major generals, brigadier generals, lieutenant colonels, majors, and captains. There has also been a very strong 2nd XI back up, with the clergy equally adept with pen and paper- canons to the right, reverends to the left, as well as many a good doctor, MP's QC's, KT's, OBE's, MBE's MCC's and LBW's. A few examples are shown below.

SIR – I am the proud owner of a new MCC cricket cap, purchased in the member's shop in the Pavilion at Lords. It is clearly marked *Made in Australia*.

Peter West Bosham 11 September 2005

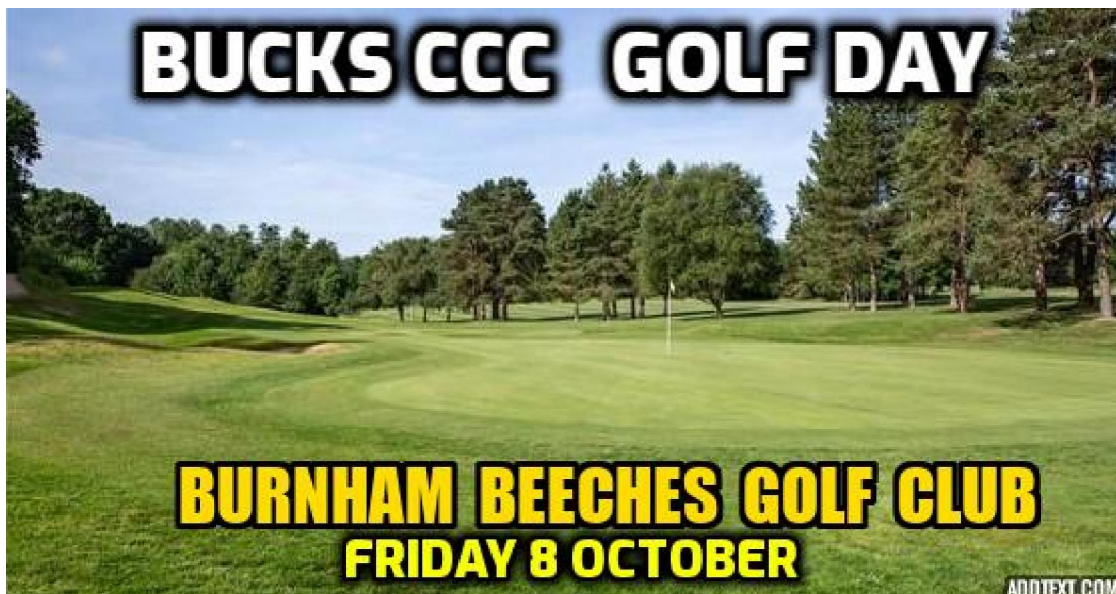
SIR. An anecdote about Brigadier "Birdie" Smith , which he told me himself: After the loss of his arm meant he could no longer play cricket, he umpired Service games. When a batsman hit a six (signal, two arms raised above the head), an Australian voice cried "How're going to do that, Brig?" Birdie responded by raising his one arm, and two fingers, to the sky.

Bernard Clark Sidmouth 16 March 1998

SIR, I have just read in the Daily Telegraph during the Test Match, "Compton kicked the ball into the stumps at the bowlers end with Merchant out of his ground. No one could remember seeing a wicket fall in such a way before". My cricketing days date from those of SMJ Woods, Gregor McGregor and G.J.V. Weigall at Cambridge University in 1887. In those times I cannot recollect that the foot was ever used to "field the ball". This is a comparatively modern invention, and is developing very rapidly, I am sorry to see, in every kind of cricket. It is well to remember that there is such a game as football, which, in my view, should not be confused with the grand old game of cricket.

J. Herbert Twamley Bedford 22 August 1946

ADVANCE WARNING



THE BOOKSHOP

As we are all aware, there has been very little cricket to watch this year, but if you couldn't watch it, the next best thing would be to read about it.

There have been numerous cricket books published over the last few years: biographies and auto biographies of both famous players, and some not so famous, but top of my particular lists have been books relating to county cricket in general, and the watching thereof. I am nowhere near qualified to critique the various books that have appeared in recent years, but occasionally some strike more chords than others. One such is *One Long and Beautiful Summer* by Duncan Hamilton, published this year, but written about the 2019 season. It is a book about the celebration of cricket, but poses the thought that the county game might never be the same again. At the time he was thinking about the slow demise of the red ball game, and the growth of the shorter game, which will only get shorter once the dreaded Hundred arrives.

As I don't wish to bore you with my personal likes/dislikes, I will save discussing another couple of books until next time, but there is one book which has come to my attention and I'm sure will be of interest to all cricket disciples and particularly National Counties cricket followers. **It has literally just come out in the last couple of months and is entitled *The Wicket Men, with the intriguing subtitle of The Last Rites of Minor Counties Cricket*.** Authored by Tony Hannan, and granted full access to the committee and squad, he follows the trials and tribulations of Cumberland CCC as they trek around the grounds of the Minor Counties Eastern Division in 2018 as well as club cricket around the lakes, fells and mountains of Cumbria. On his journeys, he gains interesting insights into the whole ethos of Minor Counties cricket, as it was then, both from the Cumberland and their opponents club officials and importantly from key Minor County Board members. I would definitely recommend it to anyone interested in the nuts and bolts of cricket at our level, and whilst reading the book, I couldn't help but imagine what a similar book about a year in the life of Bucks County Cricket Club would be like. Any volunteers ??

CRICKET QUIZ

1. Who was the first player born in the 1990s to play for England?
2. Which was the first English county that Anil Kumble played for?
3. Who was the last England captain to play South Africa before the ban?
4. Who won the county championships in every season from 1951 to 1958?
5. Where in the West Indies did Brian Lara score his record-breaking 375?
6. Who was the first non wicket keeper player to make over 1,000 catches in first-class cricket?
7. What did ICC stand for before 1965?
8. Who were the first winners of the Women's World Cup in 1973?
9. What is the second of Bob Willis's middle name?
10. Which England batsmen each scored double centuries against India in 1985 in the same innings?



Supporting Bucks CCC

- * Interviews
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Sports Shots raises money for Macmillan Cancer Support & Vasculitis UK
No personal gain is made

Sports Shots is a sport-based news and images service run by a dedicated team: Andy Bone, Lorna Bone, Dale James, Gemma James and Luke Stafford, with support from friends in the sporting community. Focusing in and around Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, Andy and Lorna came up with the idea to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support and Vasculitis UK while following a love of local sport. Sports Shots is not a charity. All donations are made to Macmillan Cancer Support and Vasculitis UK; every effort is made to distribute money raised equally between the two charities. No personal gain is made from Sports Shots.

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH BUCKS C.C.C. ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Can't get to a game – never fear, help is at hand. Don't miss a moment

Website: bucksccc.org.uk

Mob: 07710 066804

Twitter: @bucksccc.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Bucks County Cricket Club

Instagram: [buckscountycricket](https://www.instagram.com/buckscountycricket)

I'm afraid we don't do TikTok yet !

CRICKET QUIZ ANSWERS

.1 James Taylor 2, Northants, 3 M. J. K. Smith, 4 Surrey, 5 Antigua, 6. Frank Woolley
7 Imperial Cricket Conference, 8 England, 9 Dylan, 10. Mike Gatting, Graeme Fowler

BUCKS CRICKET BOARD

Managing Director Richard Hudson has just announced news of a new Chairman and Vice Chairman. We would like to congratulate both Steve Ayres, who steps up to be the Chairman, and our own Ian Hodgson who will take up the post of Vice Chairman from January 1st. I'm sure a number of you are aware that the ECB are pushing counties towards an integrated set up, combining County Cricket Clubs and County Cricket Boards together and this is the first step towards this goal. A copy of the presentation which Richard, Steve and Ian gave to the ECB a few months ago is available on both the websites of the BCB and the BCCC but I will ask Ian to expand on this subject in the next issue of **Coloured Trousers**.

MASOOR KHAN

We would like to congratulate Masoor Khan, our multi-talented off spinner and opening bat, on becoming the Gloucestershire Cricket Boards new Urban Development Officer. Masoor has been with the GCB since October 2014 where he began as a part-time community coach before turning full-time in 2016. Since then Masoor has taken an active role with the majority of their community-based initiatives, becoming the Chance to Shine Street and ECB City Cup lead. Whilst project managing Chance to Shine Street, Masoor and the GCB have received local and national accolades namely Street Coach of the Year 2019 and more recently Project of the Year 2020 for the work within the community of Easton at the Chance to Shine Awards held annually.

Well, I think that's it for now. Don't forget, if you have anything to say (as long as it's not rude!) or an article of interest, please let me know.

We realise that we are operating in very difficult times but would like to thank you all for continuing to support Bucks County Cricket Club and we wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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