



BUCKS COUNTY CRICKET CLUB NEWSLETTER

Editor : Bill Scholes

Welcome to this 3rd edition of Coloured Trousers, and we hope that you find something of interest to you in these uncertain times. Apologies for the delay in you receiving this edition, but I have been delaying publication in the hope that all would have become clear as we head into March. This is actually the third time that I have written/ re written this introduction (I started writing at the beginning of February !) and all have had a slightly different take on the season to come depending on information available at the time.

Over the last couple of months, both the National Counties and the First Class Counties have issued full fixture lists for all three main competitions – T20, 50 Over K.O, and County championship for the season– in the hope and expectation that with a following wind, they will all be completed in full. However, chickens cannot yet be totally counted, foxes may yet get into the hen house, but with the rapid and successful roll out of the vaccination programme we can all begin to believe that once again we will have cricket, be it playing or watching, to entertain us in the summer months. As it stands at present, lockdown is not due to end until the end of March, and timing could therefore may well be an issue in completing all three competitions but the NCCA and your Committee are quietly confident that at least two thirds of the programme will take place. The NCCA and the ECB are currently in discussions as to whether the Showcase matches against a First Class County, can take place. Apparently, there is a certain, understandable reluctance amongst the First Class counties to venture into the unknown in the current climate and it is uncertain if all the host grounds would be able to meet whatever the Covid-19 requirements would be at the time. Of course, our website will be updated as the situation develops

Picking up on an earlier point about being entertained watching cricket, there is surely now a case for the International Olympics committee to include Beach Cricket in their programme. No pitch preparation needed, and all matches over very quickly!

NEW NATIONAL COUNTY

The change of name from Minor Counties to National Counties is obviously catching as Cumberland CCC have officially changed their name to **Cumbria CCC**. The change became effective from 1st January 2021. This is not the first time that the Club has undergone a name change as the present club was founded relatively recently, in April 1948 as the "**Cumberland and Westmorland County Cricket Club**". The "and Westmorland" was dropped when the side was admitted to the Minor Counties Championship for the 1955 season.



Bucks CCC and the Bucks Cricket Board

An update from Bucks CCC chairman Ian Hodgson

The oversight of cricket in Buckinghamshire is currently split between the Bucks Cricket Board and Bucks County Cricket Club.

In practice, the County Cricket Club is responsible only for the 1st team and Academy and the Over 50/60/70 teams with the BCB responsible for all other cricket including the clubs, schools, younger age groups, disability and women's and girls' cricket. However, there is considerable overlap between the objects of the two organisations and there is a clear logic for ensuring that there is an avoidance of duplication while maximising the opportunities for the development of cricket in Bucks and Milton Keynes.

To this end and with the encouragement of the ECB through conditions for the new county partnership agreements, the BCB and the County Cricket Club have worked together to develop a vision for the future of cricket in Bucks

Bucks Cricket Vision

Cricket at the heart of every community in Buckinghamshire

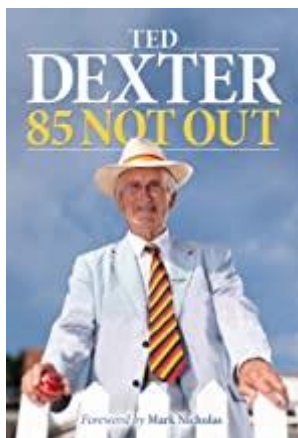
Bucks Cricket Objectives

- *Everybody in Buckinghamshire having access to ongoing participation of the form cricket of their choosing, irrespective of age, gender or ability*
- *To provide a clear pathway for every boy, girl, man and woman to be able to reach their potential given their desire and ability*
- *To deliver representative teams that achieve excellence and are role models for every community in Buckinghamshire*

In the short term, the primary focus is on the development of a proper pathway for cricketers in Bucks to progress from their very first steps to potentially playing for the Bucks CCC 1st team in the National Counties competitions and indeed progressing on to First Class Cricket and even the England team.

Relations between the County Cricket Club and the BCB are good and continue to improve with greater working together and the ultimate intention is to go forward as "Bucks Cricket" covering all the different aspects.

BOOK REVIEW by Mike Knox



Ted Dexter was already my boyhood cricketing hero even before I realised he had spent a few years in Buckinghamshire as a child.

At the age of ten, his family moved to Orchard House in the village of Penn. The future Sussex and England captain then attended Norfolk House Preparatory School in Knotty Green, on the outskirts of Beaconsfield. While there, he was taught the rudiments of the game by the headmaster Mr Glover and showed a great talent for the game.

In his last year, the school which had previously been attended by the legendary Bucks fast bowler Ronnie Rutter in the 1920s, became bankrupt and folded. On

that site now is the Alfriston Special School for Girls.

Dexter's adventurous and eventful life story is told in his latest biography '85 Not Out'.

Refreshingly, the book is not ghosted. Lord Ted goes into great detail about his varied life both inside and outside the game.

From Norfolk House, he went to Radley College and then Cambridge University, where his talent was spotted by the Sussex captain Robin Marler, who persuaded Dexter to join that county.

It wasn't long before he won his first England cap against New Zealand in 1958, in the same match as future England captains Ray Illingworth and MJK Smith also made their Test debuts.

Dexter, a magnificent attacking batsman, is remembered as much for his spectacular seventies v Australia in 1961 and West Indies in 1963, as for his nine Test centuries in 62 Tests. He captained the drawn Ashes series in Australia in 1962-63, when his attractive wife Susan caused a stir by doing some modelling while Down Under.

Dexter's Test career was more or less ended by a car accident, in which he broke a leg in 1965, although he did play his final two Tests v Australia in 1968. In fact, he played only four Tests after his 30th birthday.

His premature retirement allowed Dexter, who had already stood as a Conservative candidate against future Prime Minister James Callaghan in the 1966 General Election, to partake in his other hobbies and adventures.

A talented golfer, he failed by just one stroke to qualify for the Open Championship in 1978, at the age of 43

A qualified pilot, he flew his wife and young family to Australia to cover the 1970-71 Ashes series for the Daily Mirror.

Dexter also set up a series of marketing companies, which enabled him to finance his hectic lifestyle and gambling on the horses.

Then came the call to become chairman of the England Committee, ie in charge of the England team. Although it was a lean time for the Test team during his tenancy, he did put in place the reforms that led years later to full time contracts for England players and to the four-day County Championship.

Dexter writes a lot about his family - he had a younger brother David, who suffered from Downs syndrome - and about his Christianity.

The Dexters spent 15 years in Nice, despite Susan being mugged and robbed on

their first day in France. He has now returned to England to be near his son Tom's family in the Midlands.

It's a fascinating story brilliantly told and the book is well worth £20 of anybody's money. (Currently on sale on Amazon for £14.95 – other booksellers of course are available -Ed)

UMPIRING DURING COVID TIMES

Thoughts from Simon Parbery, Bucks ACO member, Thames Valley League and Home Counties Premier League Umpire

It was with an immense sense of relief that many clubs were able to start playing cricket on 11th July 2020. Many club officials and competition committee members worked tirelessly to provide a revised format to reflect both the 'Covid-secure' modifications to the game as well as the limited time available to complete a fixture list in half of the length of a normal season. The flurry of activity in late June and early July extended to the umpiring fraternity as match officials had to digest numerous new directives from both ECB ACO and individual leagues.

The main modifications centred around the aim of reducing close contact between participants as well as restricting contact with any objects on the field and in communal buildings. The new playing conditions included sanitisation breaks at least every six overs, the wicket and bails could only be re-made by the umpires (despite the natural instincts of wicketkeepers), the bowler's clothing and other items could not be handed to the umpire, and the batsmen were asked to adhere to 'running lines' to avoid close contact with the bowler and each other. The restrictions on shining the ball did not appear to have a major impact on the ability of swing bowlers to perform their art, as many scores appeared to be similar or lower than in a typical season, though other factors connected to pitches and rustiness of batsmen may have played a part in this. Off-field administration was generally conducted in a digital manner, including the uploading of team sheets.

There were challenges in getting used to the new regulations. In my first of my two 'pre-season' fixtures, the sanitisation breaks took only a little longer than an over change, as the sanitiser was kept in small bottles behind the stumps. By contrast, in the second game, it took three hours and ten minutes to bowl 40 overs as the players trooped off the field every six overs for what some players appeared to mistake for additional drinks breaks! With the suspension of over rate sanctions for the 2020 season, it was understandable that the Home Counties and Thames Valley Leagues adopted a 40 over format. The use of running lines also created some discontent with club groundsmen, who were wary of lines being painted or indentations being made on adjoining strips. However, the reality of my experience was that most clubs adapted very quickly to the

new regulations and proactive guidance from the umpires to players and club officials prevented many potential sources of conflict.



The aforementioned modifications to the game did not appear to diminish the enjoyment of the game amongst its participants. It was a joy to see that many clubs had a significant growth in the number of players available, which resulted in 3rd, 4th, and sometimes 5th, teams being fielded for the first time in many years. The restrictions on other activities and holiday planning may have created an unexpected gain for club cricket; hopefully the bonds created in 2020 will endure for future seasons. Evidence for the

renaissance of club cricket extended to the general hive of activity around grounds; it was not unusual to see large (socially distanced) crowds at many grounds and a sense of camaraderie before and after play.

It must be noted that umpire appointments officers had to work harder than ever to complete their assignments as they did not have the normal 'lead-in' to the season and many umpiring panels were depleted due to members shielding or electing not to stand. However, this did provide opportunities for other officials to gain experience in higher divisions than they would normally officiate. Furthermore, developing officials were appointed to stand with experienced colleagues in order to filter best practice throughout the umpiring fraternity. From a personal perspective, it was most enjoyable to complete my first season on the Home Counties list and I garnered a huge amount of advice from more established colleagues.

Hopefully the flexibility and positivity demonstrated by the various stakeholders in the game will extend to 2021 as cricket appears to have led the way in demonstrating that it can be played in a safe and enjoyable manner during these unusual times.

MVP

The National Counties Cricket Association has launched a Most Valuable Player (MVP) initiative for the 2021 season and has been introduced to ensure clear and accurate monitoring of performance with rewards going to the best all round players in each format, across the season. The MVP takes into account a number of different factors, combining a players overall performance, not just wickets, runs or catches. There are many skills that are needed to become the leading performer, and this structure ensures the top all round player is rewarded. There will be ongoing updates with prizes for leading players during each competition. The overall winners will be announced at the inaugural end of season NCCA Awards Dinner for all 3 formats : **T20 : One Day Trophy : Championship**

UNSUNG HEROES OF BUCKS C.C.C.

You may not know their names, you may not know what they look like, but they are always there, come rain or come shine. Frozen to death one day in a wooden hut with built in ventilation ie, holes in the walls, boiling hot in a small concrete box with no ventilation on another. The game cannot do without them – they are of course the scorers.

Over the next few Editions we will interview a few of these intrepid men, and women. First up to open the batting is Paul Dean.

Paul Dean

Paul has been scoring for his club Harefield for 35 years. He had no formal scoring training at the time, just picked things up as he went along. He joined the old ACU&S receiving tuition from ex Bucks legendary scorer Leslie Hawkins before joining the newly formed ECB ACO, where he became Bucks scoring officer. Paul was involved in running joint scorer training exercises with Bucks, Oxfordshire and the RAF, whilst also attending regional and national meetings of the ECB ACO.

Fact no one will know about you: Passed my driving test at 17 years old at first attempt with no official lessons, I was taught by a neighbour who was a policeman and had two unofficial lessons

How many years have you been scoring for Bucks CCC?

15 years for 1st XI although did score for Over 50's and Academy side for a couple of years before my first team debut.

And which other Clubs do you currently score for: . Harefield

And who else have you scored for? Royal Household, Amersham at Lords

When did you first start scoring, and how did you first get into scoring ?

1983 for Harefield which was Danny Morrison's first season playing for Harefield. I first got into scoring as my next door neighbour at the time was secretary of the club, I started by umpiring for 2 seasons but found that far too difficult so took up scoring.

Which is your favourite Bucks ground to score at

Tring Park if you can call that Bucks otherwise High Wycombe

And which Bucks club has the best scoreboard facilities

Tring Park, high up and no spectators walking in front of scoreboard.

And which is your favourite club ground : Harefield

And which has the worst No, don't answer that!

There are 3 in Bucks but I won't name them.

What are your proudest scoring moments so far ?

Scoring in a Test Match in 2016 at Lords for the England v Pakistan game. and scoring for Harefield CC at High Wycombe when we won promotion to HCPL

Do you have a ground where you would like to score but haven't and why? *Sedbergh School or Arundel as both look very picturesque*

When you are not scoring, what are your interests

Like watching Rugby and walking if weather is good enough as can only do this in the Winter or when lockdown allows.



Paul is second from left, flanked by Sue Drinkwater , scorer for England, David Kendix in cream jacket who scores all England games at Lords and does work for ICC, and on the right is Mark Shepherd who scores for Potters Bar and works for MCC on big games

Next edition will see Ian Thompson under the Scorers spotlight

100 WAYS YOU CAN HELP OR SUPPORT BUCKS CCC

(Well perhaps not a 100 , but there a few)

As I'm sure you are all aware, funding is a constant challenge to all National County clubs and we are extremely grateful to our two shirt sponsors – Gentlemen & Players for our coloured one day strips and The Turberville Family for the white championships clothing. Obtaining these two sponsors has been a great help to us, but we are still looking the fill the gaps between the ECB grant and our total expenditure every season. We are therefore very reliant on membership subscriptions, sponsorships, raffles, and other fundraising activities, such as the Annual Golf Day, and Annual Summer Lunch, to help make up this deficit, so every new member of the Club and of the 100 Club (preferably both !) is of great importance to us.

If you feel you have something to offer in terms of various sponsorships or expertise etc, no matter how small (Every Little Helps to quote the Tesco slogan) do please let us know . By doing so, you could be playing a vital role in the continuing development of Bucks County Cricket Club.

EX BUCKS SKIPPER MIKE PAYNE TAKES UP NEW CHALLENGE AS PLAYER COACH AT AMERSHAM CC



The experienced Bucks all-rounder has moved to Shardeloes for their forthcoming Home Counties Premier League, Division 2 campaign and spoke last week with Andy Bone of Sports Shots about his new role as player/coach.

Payne explained how the switch from Tring Park happened.

The move originally came about through the club approaching me to do some coaching for the up and coming colts to help them make the transition from colts cricket into men's cricket. Having done a similar coaching role previously at a couple of other of clubs this was something I was very interested in. On top of that Sam Helm, who is currently captain, made a couple of convincing phone calls that moved me in that direction.

Amersham will benefit from Payne's playing and coaching credentials. He captained Buckinghamshire's Minor Counties side for four years in total. During 2013 to 2017 he was One-day skipper and Minor Counties 3-day Championship captain for four years and three years respectively, having taken over from Jason Harrison. An ECB Level 3 Coach, Payne is looking to take his ECB Level 4 in the next year or so.

Payne is looking forward to his new position.

The role will be a Player/Coach role. The playing role will be on a Saturday (Home Counties Premier League) as well as helping out with match day preparation. The coaching role will be predominantly working with the older up and coming colts, helping transition from colts cricket to men's cricket, but also oversee and determine strategy and policy to grow the colt section and maximise coaching and performance throughout the club.

It has been a desire of Payne to step up.

With my full-time role being within coaching for the MCC and other coaching commitments I always wanted to do a role within the club I played for. This particular role is something that has interested me for a while now so when Amersham made me this offer it was one I could not turn down.

The new Player/Coach is determined to support the club's development.

From the playing side of the role I want to give Amersham the best possible chance to challenge for promotion, but to also help the younger players within the side to become better players. From the coaching side of the role I want to help the club produce quality cricketers playing as a high a level of cricket as they can. Whether that's for the club's senior teams or beyond.

The new challenge did come off the back of a difficult process, which Payne explained.

Leaving Tring was a very tough decision. I played for the club for 10 years and anyone who knows me knows that leaving any club is a tough decision having only played for two clubs all together. I can't thank Tring Park Cricket Club enough for everything they have done for me but unfortunately, I felt it was time to move on. One of the reasons I made this decision was that I wanted to play in a different league against different opposition. I have played in the Home Counties Division 1 for 15 years with Slough CC and Tring Park CC and thought that now was a good time to take on this new challenge.

In closing, Payne highlighted a special thank you to a very popular individual.

I just wanted to say a special thank you to Simon Stanway who helped me on and off the field at Tring Park with pretty much everything!

Sports Shots would like to thank Michael for his time and wish him good luck in his new role.

OTHER NEWS OF BUCKS CLUBS / PLAYERS

Gt Brickhill CC have appointed the much travelled Garth Davson (ex HWCC) as their 1st XI captain for the coming season. He will be joined by Jonny Cater who moves from Buckingham Town into a new role as player /coach. Cater is the current Oxfordshire skipper.

High Wycombe CC have re-appointed Dan Marles as captain for the third successive season.

Leigh Tomlinson skippers **Buckingham Town** for a second successive season, whilst the club have added Kevin Clark to the newly appointed role of Director of Cricket. Ex Bucks seamer George Humphries rejoins after a couple of seasons away.

Ex HWCC captain Nathan Hawkes has been appointed as club coach at **Stony Stratford CC**.

Bucks squad member **Dan Ogden** steps up to take over the captains role at Harefield CC, replacing Doug King, another ex Bucks player, who moves up to become Director of Cricket.

The clubhouse at **Tring Park C.C.** has undergone a major facelift during the winter months, with the iconic scoreboard at the front being replaced by a large attractive glass bay window offering a much increased viewing of

matches in progress. The current scoreboard will be replaced by a new digital scoreboard at the opposite end of the ground, facing the clubhouse. Steve Clark continues as skipper of **Tring Park CC**, who have also appointed the vastly experienced Simon Stanway as Coach. **Chesham CC** have re-appointed ex Bucks all rounder Matt Rance to again take charge for their Home Counties Premier League, Division 2 campaign.

BUCKS C.C. AGM THURSDAY 18th MARCH

Due to the on going Covid related restrictions, the AGM will take place remotely this year using ZOOM, a video conferencing vehicle. All members should by now have received official notification from the Secretary Kevin Beaumont, with all relevant information. A benefit of this method is that will allow members to attend, who would otherwise not be able to because of distance or other reasons. There will be a short practice session on the Tuesday before (16th March) for those who may not be familiar with this method or are unsure of trying it.

SOME CRICKETING FACTS YOU MAY NOT BE AWARE OF....

The earliest known version of formal laws for the game was in 1744
First international cricket match was held in New York between USA and Canada in 1844
First bowler to take 4 wickets in 4 balls in a first -class cricket match was Joseph Wells, father of the author HG, in 1862
A tour to Australia in 1861 by an unofficial English team was seen as a "test of strength and competency" which led to the term "Test Match"
West Indian Chris Gayle is the only person to date to hit a six off the first ball of a Test match.
Former England captain Alec Stewart was born on 8.4.63 and scored 8463 runs in Test matches
Sachin Tendulkar is the only cricketer so far to score 100 centuries in internationals: 51 in Test matches and 49 in O.D.I.'s

NCCA PODCASTS

A recent initiative from the NCCA has been the launch of their monthly Podcasts. The second episode has just been released and on it the hosts (Richard Logan and Jim Law) are pleased to be joined by Jack Brooks. The right-arm quick bowler came through the Oxfordshire age group pathway and has amassed over 130 first class appearances for Northants, Yorkshire and now Somerset. Brooks was of course in the Oxfordshire side that played against us in the two Nurton-York Trophy matches last August. Also, in the podcast the NCCA Operations Director, Richard Logan reveals the new 'role models' initiative and how they are continuing to build stronger relationships between the NCCA sides and the first class counties.

ADVANCE NOTICE

BUCKS C.C.C. GOLF DAY

followed afterwards by the

ANNUAL DINNER

at

BURNHAM BEECHES GOLF CLUB

on

FRIDAY 8th OCTOBER 2021

And now for some light hearted reading to pass the time before the return of actual cricket. With grateful thanks to my favourite blogger – Yahoo Over Cow Corner.

CRICKET AND ALGORITHMS

The coronavirus pandemic and the resultant lockdowns have brought to the fore certain terms and words that previously were unlikely to have been part of society's vocabulary at large. Thus, the likes of lockdown itself and furlough became part of one's everyday lexicon as everyone attempted to navigate through such extraordinary times.

Another term that rose from relative obscurity was algorithm; little more than a mathematical phrase before its widespread use regarding school and college exams. In truth, algorithms are all the more present in everyday life, perhaps even more so than one necessarily realises. The explosion of the internet and search engines dictates that one's choices are noted and used to generate further suggestions. Such a phenomenon is prevalent on You Tube and these algorithms threw up a suggestion recently proposing that one would like to watch highlights of a match from the 1999 Cricket World Cup. Such a suggestion was readily ignored for the 1999 World Cup is arguably cricket's bete noire, seemingly lacking great drama and noteworthy deeds, akin perhaps to the 1990 Footballing equivalent but without the panache of an Italian backdrop and fond memories of Nessun Dorma. In contrast, a lack of style arguably pockmarked the seventh edition of cricket's World Cup. For instance, after

two editions featuring uniform kits that were aesthetically delightful, the various teams had free reign on design of their attire, resulting in a mish mash of efforts that were largely lacking the pleasing nature of their predecessors.

But the suggestions kept arriving and one's curiosity and inherent love of nostalgia prompted a moment of indulgence that led to an itch being well and truly scratched. And the more one watched the proffered highlights, the more one became intrigued at the quirkiness and random nature of the competition, despite initial opinions of its forgettable nature.

Somewhat pertinently, the algorithms provided curious suggestions, not just the famous contests such as the Australia-South Africa semi-final or the India-Pakistan showdown. Rather, some of the tournament's more obscure matches, those which one necessarily cannot remember the results, proved of interest.

Similarly, the handful of matches that took place in unfamiliar locations. One such highlights package featured a match between the West Indies and Bangladesh in the coastal suburb of Clontarf in north Dublin; a contest played in particularly inhospitable conditions featuring occasional drizzle and a biting gale to the point that the camera stationed above the sightscreen at the City End of the ground visibly swayed in acquiescence to the elements during the early stages of the Bangladesh innings.

Hence, the match featured amusing scenes of Gordon Greenidge hunkered up at the back of a temporary stand attempting to brave the elements, the drinks cart serving hot soup and West Indian manager Clive Lloyd watching wrapped in blankets. Most of the players appeared out of their collective comfort zone but the Irish public were delighted to be experiencing top class cricket, despite the weather. Eight years later the West Indies would return to the venue for a contest against Ireland, an afternoon similarly affected by poor weather as this blogger sat on the boundary, waiting for a resumption in play after a heavy downpour as the Windies quicks pondered the damp run-ups.

Similarly of note, from a quirky perspective, were the highlights of the contest between Kenya and South Africa at the VRA Ground in Amstelveen, a venue surrounded by a litany of Hockey pitches and clay Tennis courts in the Amsterdamse Bos park. The understated nature of the venue was further exemplified by the sight of the South African players wandering across the macadam of the complex's pathways en route to the ground itself akin to a group of schoolboys strolling down from changing rooms whilst the tree inside the boundary proffered a Canterbury-esque vibe to the venue. Kenya's presence in the tournament continued the belle époque of the east African nation in limited overs cricket even if they lost every match convincingly. Nevertheless, four years hence they would reach the semi-finals of the following World Cup; perhaps emphasising how their fall from cricket's top table has proved dramatic and precipitous.

The use of venues in the Republic of Ireland and the Netherlands highlighted the widespread nature of the competition across north-

western Europe although, somewhat bizarrely, neither Ireland nor the Netherlands took part despite hosting matches. Nevertheless, each of the eighteen first-class counties hosted at least one match whilst The Grange Club in Edinburgh welcomed a pair of Scotland contests.

The sense of novelty wove a thread throughout the actual tournament itself with no one team dominating as each country lost at least one match during the first phase. Rather, the opening couple of weeks of competition featured a handful of noteworthy developments that provided a talking point or three.

Perhaps most intriguing was the emergence of Zimbabwe as the southern African nation surprised almost everyone by qualifying from their group. Skippered by Alistair Campbell, Zimbabwe had won only three matches in four previous appearances in the World Cup but proceeded to win the same number of games in a couple of weeks culminating in a famous bearding of neighbours South Africa at Chelmsford; opener Neil Johnson's half century and three wicket salvo the deciding factors.

As Zimbabwe ascended, so defending champions Sri Lanka descended, losing their opening two matches and conceding 373 to India at Taunton, including a 318 run partnership between the swashbuckling Sourav Ganguly and the imperious Rahul Dravid, as the much vaunted successes of three and a quarter years previous failed to ignite in polar opposite conditions.

Sri Lanka's travails began with a chastening defeat on the opening day of the competition to tournament hosts England but Alec Stewart's men somehow managed to stumble out of the competition despite winning their first two matches at a canter. Nevertheless, Neil Johnson's man of the match performance for the aforementioned Zimbabwean's against South Africa proved enough to eliminate England on net run rate and continue a trend of poor performances at the World Cup that would last another two decades.

England's exit provided grist for the mill of the cricket media but the second phase of the competition itself provoked plenty of discussion as the three qualifiers from each group moved into the now familiar 'Super Six' format; an innovation that likely caused much gnashing of teeth at the time particularly as qualifiers only played against teams from the other first round group and carried forward points gleaned from games against teams from the same group.

Said criteria provided Pakistan and Zimbabwe with a distinct advantage and the second phase appeared set for a dramatic turn of events as the latter threatened, for a while, to chase down 304 against Australia as man of the moment Neil Johnson, in tandem with Murray Goodwin, reached the halfway point of the chase all but level with their illustrious opponents. Nevertheless, the dismissal of Goodwin allowed the eventual champions to constrict the Zimbabweans' pursuit, despite an unbeaten century from Johnson. From such a position of possibility, Zimbabwe regressed back to the mean, performing poorly in the other two Super Six

matches as they squandered the advantage that they carried forward from the first round.

In some respects, the anticlimactic nature of Zimbabwe's defeat to Australia and resultant exit perhaps provided a metaphor for a tournament that never quite caught fire. The denouement to the famous Australia versus South Africa semi-final naturally provided great drama but the remainder of the tournament post Zimbabwe's failure to beat Australia sort of spluttered along, culminating in a one sided final that, again, aptly summed up the lukewarm ambience of the competition. Almost inevitably, the vagaries of the weather dominated the early proceedings. Many a fan would likely claim that May is an underrated month for good weather but an isolated day at Hove or Northampton for a county game is a different proposition to a month long tournament. Indeed, weather provided a theme throughout the tournament as almost every first round match seemed to be influenced by a stiff breeze whilst the stars of the game huddled under three or four layers appearing distinctly unimpressed.

Whatever the reasons behind the lack of nostalgia for the 1999 World Cup, the algorithms of the internet look beyond such sentiments and whimsy. Often times the suggestions prove well wide of one's personal mark and, on face value, the seemingly forgettable nature of the tournament in normal circumstances would likely prompt a glossing over or a curt dismissal of such suggestions. The advent of you know what has altered one's personal goal posts and outlook on many levels though, leading to the enjoyment of simpler things and taking an interest where perhaps one would ordinarily have glossed over in previous years. These are strange times and all that.



Supporting Bucks CCC

- * Interviews
- * Previews
- * Match reports
- * Action images
- * YouTube Match Highlights



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

And finally 3 cricketing quotations that may strike a few chords!

CRICKETING QUOTATIONS

For a moment he stood aghast, contemplating the ruin of his wicket, then with a gesture of despair, turned and ran for the pavilion.

He has never succeeded in applying the right stroke to the right ball, and now in the autumn of his career, it is doubtful he ever will.

I opened the innings and was bowled first ball. The humiliation was too much and I hung up my boots for good.

Thanks for reading, and of course thanks to Ian Hodgson, Simon Parberry, Mike Knox, Su Klyne , Paul Dean, Andy Bone and Sports Shots, Kevin Beaumont and Yahoo Over Cow Corner for their contributions. All very much appreciated, as of course is all or any feedback you may have.

Look after yourselves and stay safe

Bill Scholes

01420 560290

billscholes@hotmail.co.uk