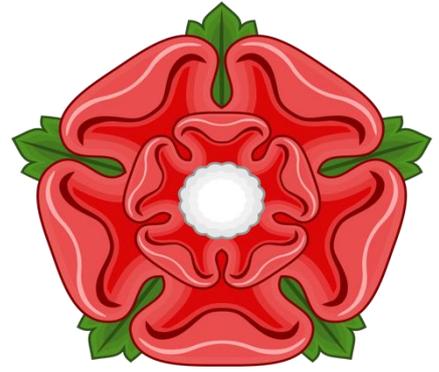


Lancashire Association of Cricket Officials



October 2022

Looking back at the 2023 season I think it's fair to say we enjoyed mixed weather, with the impacts of climate change perhaps something we will need to get used to. Following a wet pre-season, we enjoyed a wonderful May and June before July arrived and what seemed like endless rain. We all know how difficult this can make our role as umpires and scorers, but I want to give a 'shout out' to our League Appointment Secretaries who have a difficult job when the weather is fine balancing the requirements of travelling, varying umpiring abilities, familiarisation with teams, unavailability, lack of numbers, late cry offs etc. This role can be almost impossible when games and venues are endlessly having to be rearranged. It was a particularly difficult year for those involved in the Junior inter league competition where so many games were being re-arranged often at short notice. I was aware of one game that was rearranged about three times all within 24 hours, all at different venues before finally being cancelled! The patience, dedication and sheer professionalism shown by the Appointment Officers was quite remarkable and I thank everyone who took on this role during 2023. We have made representations to LCF about the 2024 season, and I hope that things will be organised differently going forward with a much welcome reduction in the workload.

In this month's Newsletter:

2023 Season Review

**Spot the World Cup Final Umpire
Quiz**

Changes to Training and Education

**Update on Accreditation and
Grading**



I must also thank Dave Cowburn, our County Development Officer, who at the start of the year faced what looked like an impossible task, however with some re-organisation (again involving our League Appointments Officers) as well as a great effort by Dave we successfully scaled the mountain, he provides more detail of the 2023 season and what to expect in 2024 in an article in this Newsletter.

As David Challoner our County Education Officer explains in his article, the whole ACO and particularly umpire education faces the greatest change since its inception. Indeed, there are some who have questioned at times whether the ACO has a role to play in future. I am not someone who subscribes to that view, but our role certainly does change. My personal view is that our focus will rightly move from recruitment, which has always been a 'whole game' problem, to on-going support of our members.

Your Executive has wanted to progress this change but has been frustrated due to the uncertainty that has surrounded both our role and the role of County Boards and the ECB. I believe that we are now starting to see more clearly the role we need to fulfil. As David reports in his article, we are now working to fill the gaps that we think are left following the ECB decision to discontinue all the previous Education courses. We will now concentrate on providing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) whether that is through county wide courses that supplement the new ECB umpires' course, a course for those looking for promotion to the top end of the grading structure M3/W3 and above, or through locally delivered CPD sessions via our League Umpire Associations. I believe we are already well placed to provide such material, as can be seen by the much-praised CPD material on our website www.wordpress.com/lancashireaco but we are always open to further suggestions. So, if you believe you or your colleagues need further training in any specific aspect of your role, please get in touch with us or your own league umpire representatives and we will, I am sure, be able to help.

Winter well and thanks for all your efforts in 2023.

ECB ACO Courses

The last year has seen the most far reaching changes in umpire education since the inception of the ACO.

In 2022, we were informed that all courses at Stages 1,2 and 3 would cease at the end of the education season in April 2022. We ran our final Stage 2 course at Dukinfield CC in March of that year.

From now on all courses will be run directly by the ECB our will also be responsible for the delivery and organisation. .

There will be only one accredited course and this will be designed to meet the needs of all prospective umpires from those wishing to umpire children's softball through to those wishing to officiate in league cricket and beyond.

The course will be a one day course with some pre learning material and it is intended to be delivered on several occasions throughout the year in Lancashire, beginning in 2024. We have lobbied ECB to ensure that people attending this course will receive 12 months free membership of ACO as has been custom and practice

It is fair to say that the committee of LACO has shared some concerns around the process and its delivery and has been working with John Farrell of ECB to allay some of our concerns.

In the meantime, we have a small group of Lancs ACO committee members looking at the provision of unaccredited courses which we will be able to run locally which are able to support new umpires, those having some experience and those wishing to take their umpiring further.

We would hope to be in a position to deliver the first of these from March 2023.

David Challenor

Appointments Officers in Numbers

Rob has rightly praised our Appointments Officers. He himself with Ansh Bansal helping must have been close to 1000 appointments in the Northern League, Palace Shield and the various cup competitions. Ian Herbert reports that he appointed to over 250 county age group games. That's over 500 appointments, before cry offs so the total figure must be over 600. Ian has also been working as a match referee in county games this season. I'm sure we'll learn more about this role in due course....

World Cup Fever (high temperature, banging head, frustration)

For those of us of a certain age, the 50 over World Cup is **the** World Cup. Forget t20 with its razzmatazz and ever slower over rates - who can forget that first final? Roy Fredericks hooking the ball to the boundary but stepping on his stumps, Clive Lloyd's majestic century which seemed to have won the game and the last wicket stand of 41 between Jeff Thomson and Dennis Lillee that brought Australia to within 17 runs of their target. The crowd swarming on the pitch thinking the game was over as Thomson and Lillee kept running and that final catch? Other memories from that first World Cup include Gavaskar's bizarre 36 not out from 174 balls as India eschewed chasing England's 334 finishing on a lacklustre 132/3. England were swung out by Gary Gilmour at Headingley, the left armer taking 6/14 from 12 overs as England collapsed to 93 all out. Snow and Old reduced the Aussies to

39/6 but Doug Walters and Gilmour with 28* from 28 balls added 55 to take Australia to the final.

There were three current Lancashire players in the England team in that semi-final. Can you name them? See end page for the answers.

Anyway this is about the umpires. Can you name all the World Cup Final umpires pictured below. No prizes just a bit of fun. Answers at the end.



Perhaps the only silver lining in England's pretty pathetic defence of their title is that at least one English umpire must be in line for the final?

County Development Report

With the transitional season now over moving from the Accreditation system to the Promotion Pathway we have noticed many changes during 2023.

All ACO members received documentation prior to the season with an opportunity to apply for Promotion with guidelines on how to progress.

All umpires will have or be in the process of receiving new grades as the ECB now have pathways for Men (M) and Women (W).

The highest grade in recreational cricket is now M3 or W3 which has replaced C1 grades.

As an example an M3 grade will qualify an umpire, but not guarantee, to stand in ECB Premier League fixtures.

Lancashire had to organise more than 80 development reports at M5>M4>M3 level, however with a few candidates dropping out of the running and our decision not to make it compulsory for Stage 3 Accreditation candidates to have 2 development reports the county has carried out 60 Development reports during the season.

The reports are now completed on WTU by our team of developers, a good and simple way of reporting once we got used to the process. An introduction to the workings was held at Haslingden CC in May, with Developers registering on WTU for leagues covered by the County.

The 2024 season will hopefully be easier to handle with the Accreditation system now a thing of the past. Anyone wishing to apply for promotion from M5 to M4 or M4 to M3 will do so using the Promotion Pathway route. Look out for the notification from the ECB pre - season and note the dates for submission.

Promotion to M2 (formerly the focus group) is now overseen by the Regional Officiating Development Officer, John Farrell, with input from CDOs and the Development umpires.

We are at the beginning of a new umpire enrolment and promotion era, and the success of it, or not, will depend on many new factors including our education process.

The completed portfolios for the Pathway group had to be submitted to me by the end of September deadline and following meetings by the grading committee in October results will be announced in November.

Our Developers this season have worked wonders, quite often in inclement weather conditions.

All are worth a mention, thanks to, John Smith, Eric Roberts, Paddy Brown , Karen Knott, Howard Thornton and Alan Naylor for supporting me in 2023.

The county are always on the look out for more Developers, if you are interested please contact me for more details .

Dave Cowburn
LCDO

That was the Summer That Was

2023 season in Lancashire – Wet, Glorious, Wet, Job Done.....just.

It was a season of contrasts that brought challenges to umpires and scorers. The new North-West Cricket League put back the start of its inaugural season from 15th April because of the dreadful weather than saw the wettest March on record. Other Leagues pressed ahead and played that first weekend often in ground conditions that were far from ideal but that first weekend was bright and cold. In the Lancashire League almost half of the games had to be abandoned.

There then followed a period of glorious weather in May and June. DLS could be put on one side, Lancashire League, Greenmount professional Jacques Snyman made 158 from 88 balls in his side's 429/6. Great Harwood replied with 346/8 in the highest aggregate in the League's history. A week later Snyman scored 269* from 139 balls.

It then started thundering, particularly on Sundays and umpires needed to refer to their Ground Weather and Light rules and work with the scorers on revised targets, recalculate overs, deal with one team who want to play another that didn't. From there it got worse, and several weekends were wash outs. One colleague told me that he was due to umpire games on eight successive days and all of them were washed out. Fortunately, from middle to late August the weather relented and finals were able to be played. Many of the Leagues went to the wire. In the Northern League, Kendal came from behind to pip Chorley by a single run to win their first title since 1994. One more Longridge wicket and Chorley would have won their first Championship since 1980. Burnley have won the Lancashire League title after a dramatic final day. The weather again took a hand in proceedings in the Lancashire League on the final Sunday where any of 4 teams could win the League. Burnley's game at Lowerhouse was abandoned but Darwen's defeat at Norden handed Chris Burton's side the title for the 18th time.

Some of our clubs did well in National Cup Competitions. In the ECB National Club Knockout St. Annes were quarter-finalists losing to Richmondshire. In the ECB National Club T20, Northern reached the semi-final losing to Sandiacre Town. Stayley reached the semi-final of National Village Knockout losing to eventual winners Milford Hall having beaten Shireshead & Forton in the quarter-final.

Roll of Honour 2023 in our Leagues:

Greater Manchester Amateur Cricket League

Division 1 Champions – Vertex Runners-up – Knight Riders

Promoted – Rickshaw and United

Division 1/2 Challenge Cup Winners – Wilmslow Wayfarers Runners-up – Cheetham Gladiators

Greater Manchester Cricket League

Premier League Winners – Roe Green Runners-up – Edgworth

Promoted: Flixton & Bradshaw

Derek Kay Cup; Winners – Prestwich Runners-up – Roe Green

Lancashire KO Cup

Winners – Northern Runners-up - Longridge

Lancashire League

JW Lees Division 1 Champions – Burnley Runners-up – Littleborough

Promoted – Church & Oswaldtwistle and Middleton

JW Lees Worsley Cup Winners – Littleborough runners-up – Lowerhouse

JW Lees T20 Winners – Greenmount Runners-up - Littleborough

Liverpool & District Competition

Champions – Ormskirk Runners-up – Northern

Promoted – Newton-le-Willows and Birkenhead Park

Ray Dugman Trophy - Rainford

Northern Premier League

League Champions – Kendal Runners-up - Chorley

40 over cup winners – Blackpool Runners-up – Garstang

Readers T20 Winners – Longridge Runners-up - Kendal

North-west Cricket League

Senior Premiership Winners – Little Lever Runners-up – Lostock

Hamer Cup- Winners – Padiham Runners-up – Settle

T20 Birtwistle Cup – Winners – Little Lever Runners- up - Barnoldsick

Palace Shield

Moore & Smalley Division 1 Winners – Euxton Runners-up – Mawdsley

Promoted – Barrow and Rufford

Meyler Cup Winners – Carnforth Runners-up – Vernon Carus

Southport & District Amateur Cricket League

Premier Division Winners – Whitefield (Roby) Runners-up – Cheshire Lines

Promoted – Winstanley Park & Goose Green

Sandhurst Shield – Winners – Cheshire Lines Runner-up - Burscough

Westmorland League

Readers Division 1 Winners – Heysham Runners-up – Burneside

Promoted – Silverdale

Hackney & Leigh T20 winners – Burneside Runners-up – Shireshead & Forton

Online Resources



Over the winter, why not visit our website <https://lancashireaco.wordpress.com/> and use the training and CPD resources? The videos on the Laws are particularly excellent covering fieldcraft and match management alongside the opportunity to remind yourself of the detail of the Law. It's also worth visiting the MCC resources on the Laws of Cricket for videos and quizzes. Some of us like the physical nature of the blue book, but one of the advantages of the web based Laws is that they are searchable, and there is an App as well. Over the

winter Facebook users might want to join the events that the group the Close Call <https://www.facebook.com/groups/theclosecall/> which covers other sports as well as cricket. There is learning to be had from other sports.

On the 1938 Ashes tour, Ernie McCormick (right) was called by the umpire sixteen times for no ball before lunch on the second day. As they left the field Don Bradman said to Ernie "it's probably worth you having a go from the other end after lunch." "No don't bother skip" replied Ernie "that buggers gone hoarse."



Quiz Answers

The Lancashire players were Barry Wood, Frank Hayes and Peter Lever.

Left to right by row:

Tom Spencer 1975

Dickie Bird 1975, 1979, 1983

Barry Meyer 1979, 1983

Mahboob Shah 1987

Ram Babu Gupta 1987

Brian Aldridge 1992

Steve Bucknor 1992, 1996, 1999, 2003, 2007

David Shepherd 1996, 1999, 2003

Aleem Dar 2007, 2011

Simon Taufel 2011

Kumar Dharmesena 2015, 2019

Marais Erasmus 2015, 2019