

# BFB

ISSUE

34

## WINDS OF CHANGE

ALICE CAPSEY & DANNI WYATT

## EVERYONE'S GAME

ICEC ONE YEAR ON

## SIBLING SYNERGY

WILL & SOPHIA SMALE

JADE DERNBACH

EOIN MORGAN

RISHI PATEL

Beyond the Boundaries  
The PCA membership magazine



# A MAN OF MANY COLOURS PHIL SALT



BROOKS MACDONALD

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# MOVING FORWARDS

Welcome to issue 34 of your membership magazine, Beyond the Boundaries. It has been an important six months off the pitch, and it gives me great pleasure to lead the PCA over this upcoming period as Interim Chief Executive.

Firstly, I want to say that our thoughts at the Association are with the family and friends of my former Worcestershire teammate, Josh Baker, following a tragic start to the season.

The cricket world was truly in shock with the news putting what we do into perspective. Josh will be remembered as an infectious character who was the hub of the dressing room at such a young age.

I would like to thank our outgoing Chief Executive Rob Lynch for his years of service to the PCA, he led us through the Covid pandemic and has achieved much that I'm sure lots of current players are thankful for.

As the women's game continues on its incredible rise, I would recommend reading the feature on page 30 with Danni Wyatt and Alice Capsey. Both players offer a great insight into the women's game at a time when the PCA has successfully fought for minimum salaries to be introduced from next season.

At this year's annual meetings with

each of the professional squads we asked the men's players for their opinion on the schedule with an overwhelming majority agreeing that the current schedule is unfit for purpose, this will prove challenging to resolve in the coming years with more and more cricket being played.

Private investment into The Hundred is a ground-breaking move by the ECB as we continue to navigate the ever-changing landscape of the game and what these changes will mean for our members.

I'm delighted to welcome our new President Eoin Morgan to the PCA, he brings a wealth of knowledge and experience and has a colossal amount of respect in our game. Eoin already knows a lot about the work of the PCA and has kindly supported the Professional Cricketers' Trust in the past, read more about his introduction on page 36.

Finally, speaking of the Trust, I would like to offer a huge thanks to long time supporter Graham Gooch who has agreed to a donation across three years that will allow the PCA to continue offering educational and preventative programmes to young male and female cricketers across England and Wales, you can read more on page 52.

Enjoy your magazine.





INSERT SLUG



22  
ON THE COVER:  
**PHIL SALT**  
A JOURNEY



30 **RESTRUCTURING**  
THE WOMEN'S GAME



# ISSUE 34

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# PULL UP A SEAT

PCA Chair **JAMES HARRIS** reaffirms the fight for a fair schedule.

The 2024 summer presents challenges like we've never seen before as the game is engulfed in major negotiations that are set to change and potentially revolutionise cricket in England and Wales.


Across six separate negotiations, the PCA is working on behalf of players, including the County Partnership Agreement (CPA) that incorporates the women's game for the first time. It is also vital any private investment in The Hundred is a success. The game is changing in front of our eyes, globally.

However, our main focus has to remain our area of influence as current players and there has been a real emphasis on the men's fixture list and creation of minimum standards across the men's and women's game.

We've had very clear direction from the players that they're not happy. Men's players don't have confidence with the schedule for a variety of reasons, mainly from a mental and physical viewpoint. It's time to make a stand.

Professionalism of domestic cricket has gone through the roof but the schedule is holding the game back. It is commercially driven with little thought of player welfare or creating optimum performance levels.

It has become clear to us that the starting point has to be the introduction of minimum standards. It is a complete no brainer. Players who are fresher and afforded preparation time going into games will ultimately produce a better product.

 The game is changing in front of our eyes, globally.

To be clear, the players are happy playing a lot of cricket and we're not talking about a drastic reduction of games. We need the game to come around a table and work this out together, although we appreciate changes for next season may come too soon. We are still aiming for a better balance of rest and recovery in 2025 and further improvements from 2026, to be signed off ahead of next summer.

The collective player voice on these topics has been brilliant to see. Players are sticking together and supporting each other across the men's and women's game.

I would like to end by paying tribute to Josh Baker. It has been a tragic start to the summer and the worst possible news, one of your own passing away at the age of 20. My thoughts remain with Josh's family, teammates and loved ones.



**JAMES HARRIS**  
PCA Chair







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# A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

**DONNA FRASER** wraps up what has been a fruitful 12 months for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Every year the EDI calendar is jam-packed with different cultural celebrations and awareness days. It is almost impossible to recognise all cultural celebration or awareness days in the calendar year. Therefore, we at the PCA have made the decision to select a range of celebratory days which relate to our members – giving them the platform to use their voice to tell their stories linked to the EDI calendar. The year kicked off with a feature on World Hijab Day with Abtaha Maqsood from the Sunrisers, who shared her personal experiences of playing cricket wearing a hijab, which not only raised awareness but also educated our sport and fans of cricket.

International Women's Day (IWD) is a major celebration on the EDI calendar, and for the first time, we held an IWD event for all sports and not just cricket. The event brought over 200 guests from various sports and organisations to join us. Our 'Inclusion in Sport' event lived up to its title with two amazing panels – one with senior women leaders in sport and the second panel with women athletes representing football, cricket and rugby, talking about allyship and leadership. Attendees had the opportunity to network and even have a try at playing cricket with PCA England Legends captain Alex Tudor, which was the highlight for many.

Nelson Mandela once said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

Over the last 18 months, education

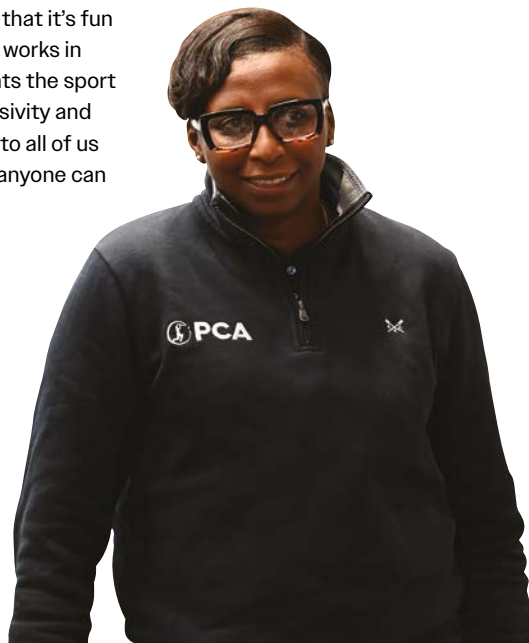
Everyone who works in cricket and plays cricket wants the sport to be recognised for its inclusivity.

has been core to my role, and I've had the pleasure in working with our seven Inclusion Champions to deliver the 'Learn Before Wicket' programme. It has been interesting to see how our members and support staff have received the education on the various EDI topics; a few with slight resistance and the majority, embracing new knowledge, as we all play a role in making cricket more inclusive.

We will continue to find innovative ways to educate our members, support staff and PCA employees so that it's fun and engaging. Everyone who works in cricket and plays cricket wants the sport to be recognised for its inclusivity and enjoyment, therefore it is up to all of us to 'do our bit' to ensure that anyone can be part of this great sport.



**DONNA FRASER**  
Director of EDI







# MEET THE REP

## RISHI PATEL

“We pass information onto the players, so they get a better understanding of where their money is going – as everyone pays their membership.”

Leicestershire’s Rishi Patel enjoyed a breakthrough season at the Uptonsteel County Ground in 2023, crashing more than 800 runs over the course of the County Championship campaign.

Averaging 58.5 at the top of the order with a career-best 171 being his standout individual performance of the season against Glamorgan. His endeavours led to him signing a new two-year deal with the Foxes.

Patel, 24, is looking to build on that success in 2024, but he has also taken on some responsibility off the field as a joint PCA representative and a place on the PCA Players’ Committee, alongside teammate – and star of last year’s Metro Bank One Day Cup final – Harry Swindells.

Aware of the role the Association plays across the country, Patel feels “It is important we are here in this role for our squads to help them understand more about what the

PCA is doing on our behalf. “There are small things that may seem quite trivial, like expenses, and making sure players are on the same level. But then there are other challenges, like wages, and keeping contracts aligned with inflation as the cost of living heightens. All of those aspects of my role allow the players to focus entirely on their cricket.”

Patel played in the Foxes aforementioned Metro Bank One Day Cup victory against Hampshire at the end of last summer. He wants to make sure players are aligned in what they’re working towards: “It gives the PCA a lot of power. They can go back to whoever they are negotiating with and say they have got the nod from the players, and they are all behind us as a group. It gives the Association the upper hand to negotiate the best possible deals. Which us players will all benefit from.”



SCAN FOR INFO ON  
**PLAYERS’  
COMMITTEE**



# A DOMESTIC CHAMPION

Northern Diamonds MVP in the first three years of the professional era 2021-2023 is **LAUREN WINFIELD-HILL**.

**453.84**  
PCA MVP Points

**1,607**  
Runs

“I’ve just been doing whatever’s best for the team.”

**7** Match MVPs

**41** Dismissals  
(29 catches, 12 stumpings)

**55.13** Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy Batting Average

“It’s great to be named amongst some of the biggest contributors in the country.”

**125\***  
Highest Score

**10** Half Centuries **3** Centuries



**131.91**  
Charlotte Edwards Cup Strike Rate

“There’s a lot of emphasis on stats and numbers but the MVP measures how big a contribution you made to winning the game. Ultimately, that’s what we’re trying to do.”







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# A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

**JAMES CAMERON** was appointed the PCA's Non-Executive Chair at the Association's annual general meeting in February and Luke Reynolds sat down with him to discuss his career outside of cricket and the future of the game...



“The women's game is progressing in a pleasing way, attracting athletes and audiences.”

AS a sport, cricket often appoints from within, utilising individuals with a wide breadth of skills and experience, however, the PCA's Remuneration and Nominations Committee decided to think outside the box.

By his own admission, James Cameron was a little surprised to be approached and ultimately formally ratified as the Non-Executive Chair due to some “lateral thinking” by the PCA and specialist recruiters.

An enthusiast of the sport and a participant at a recreational level until recently, Cameron holds cricket close to his heart. He is aiming to bring his extensive skillset gained through a career as a Barrister, award-winning advocate and an authority in the global climate change movement to the benefit of PCA members.

Cameron addressed the PCA Players' Committee earlier this year, providing a fresh approach from a man whose great grandfather was a leader of the Trades Unions Congress and therefore no stranger to representation...

RIGHT James Cameron addresses PCA members at the annual general meeting following formal ratification of his role in February 2024.

BELOW Cameron in deep conversation with PCA President Eoin Morgan and outgoing Non-Executive Chair, Julian Metherell.



### **Tell me about your career to date?**

I'm trained as a Barrister and although I haven't practiced for several years, I have worked on environmental and development matters for over 30 years. I started off at Cambridge at the research centre for international law before I founded an organisation called the Centre for International and Environmental law and I started down the pathway of working on climate change issues.

I wrote a legal opinion for Greenpeace, which was also turned into an article in the legal literature; arguing for state responsibility for climate change in 1988. That's what switched me onto the issue, I just viewed the evidence as a lawyer would and once I understood it, I stayed with it.

I've represented countries all over the world but I feel more proud of the organisations that I've helped to create. I currently hold positions on boards and advisory committees across financial, legal and governmental organisations.

### **How difficult is it to influence change within the climate crisis?**

The problem is so dispersed, everyone is involved, that shouldn't be a wholly negative thing, part of the problem is that it's a human problem

but that just tells you that it can be fixed and there are choices to be made.

It shouldn't depend on what part of the political spectrum you're on. In the energy sector, the solutions are better. Fossil fuels will never be able to compete again with clean electrons on cost, that wasn't the case 30 years ago. I feel like a 'possibilist' and I'm a big believer in our ability to organise a way of responding to real threat which is what we face.

### **How can your experience translate to chairing the PCA Board?**

What I've learnt is that it's possible to build coalitions of interest however difficult it is. Every time you think you've won, you haven't and there's something else round the corner and I know how to deal with that.

I really like the fact that the PCA is a union and I'm actually named after my great grandfather James O'Grady and he was a union leader of the TUC, was in the first labour government and I'm very proud of that connection. I like the idea that it's a players' union and I want to do my best to represent the interests of all the professional players.

### **Your thoughts on the future of the game?**

The women's game is progressing in a pleasing way, I love the fact that the

professional women's game is attracting athletes and audiences.

I love all formats of the sport but there are an awful lot of matches and I do worry about young players burning out. It is a real risk and the game as whole needs to be careful not to overexploit the players.

I want to spend more time listening and learning. It's obviously not a good thing if we have counties struggling. We know that the franchises are extending their reach and we know that they have money power. My sense is that the good prospects are in part balanced by risks that we need to manage very carefully.

### **The PCA is constantly adapting, what is its next challenge?**

We are about to undergo a handover as our Chief Executive Rob Lynch departs to join the MCC and Daryl Mitchell steps up in an interim capacity. We're in the middle of some very important negotiations and we don't want to destabilise them because many are close to being completed. Therefore, the Board made the sensible decision to entrust Daryl who we know well and support 100%. At an appropriate juncture, there will be an open process that we go through for the next permanent CEO.



**2003 - 2024**

# REMEMBERING JOSH BAKER

**Worcestershire's JOE LEACH** reflects on his memories of his former teammate who passed away tragically aged 20 on Thursday 2 May 2024.

This is obviously something that I never thought I'd have to write and it's still desperately raw that we've lost such a young man with so much promise and such a big heart. Where to start? Josh's introduction to the game and the way he took to professional cricket spoke wonders for his character. A cheeky chap, he very quickly became a hub of the dressing room, he was a funny, confident lad who threw himself into professional cricket life and will be sorely missed by us all.

I remember in the weeks leading up to his debut, which I captained, he played some second team cricket and bowled a couple of teams out. Moeen Ali saw his huge potential and then I played with him, and it became apparent how much talent he had so we gave him a chance, his first wicket was Sam Hain, and he took to professional cricket brilliantly and showed his ability as a player.

I'll always remember having lots of laughs with him, no one was safe in the dressing room, he could joke with everyone, and he could take it back too.



We often say at Worcester how close we are. He was a massive part of that. Josh leaves behind a big hole in our unit, I've said this to his parents Paul and Lisa, he was exactly the kind of son you would hope to raise – professional, caring and humorous.

It's an impossibly tough event to happen to any dressing room, it's credit to the guys for pulling themselves together

and we're keen to look after each other, it's put cricket into perspective.

The first game following at Kent was tough, the first part when we observed the minutes applause was hard, there were a lot of tears in what was a sombre atmosphere.

Any of us who are parents can't comprehend what Paul and Lisa are going through. They've been outstanding with the group. I like to think we have given them a sense of family and their presence has helped the group as well, we just want to rally round them and support them as much as possible, which has been the response from the cricket family.

Josh was the sort of character who will be hard to forget anyway, his number 33, will be on our shirts all season as a little gesture to his memory and his family. It was recently his 21st birthday, moving forward remains an awfully sad task. And acknowledging these happier moments without him being with us makes life without him even harder.

**RIP, Bakes,  
Leachy**

# SHORT STORIES AND UPDATES FROM THE WORLD OF CRICKET

## SCHEDULE UNFIT FOR PURPOSE

During the men's pre-season meetings, the PCA completed in depth research from all 18 counties to gauge the feelings of the players towards the current schedule.

The findings revealed that the majority of players in England and Wales feel the congested county schedule is not fit for purpose and the players are concerned for their mental and physical wellbeing.

The statistics showed 81% admitted the current schedule causes them concern from a physical perspective while two-thirds believe the structure isn't conducive to high-performance.



## UNDER THE LID PODCAST

The PCA has ventured into the podcast scene with **Under The Lid – Inside Pro Cricket**, developed in partnership with The Cricketer.

The pod offers a unique look into what it's really like playing cricket at the highest level whilst exploring what's 'Under The Lid' of the special guests.

Hosted by retired World Cup winner Katherine Sciver-Brunton and former Northamptonshire, Yorkshire and Somerset bowler Jack Brooks, the pod invites current professional players on each week for a deep dive into pro cricket.

Weekly episodes are released and you can listen by searching 'Under The Lid' on your podcast provider.



## WELLS FORCED INTO RETIREMENT

Gloucestershire wicketkeeper-batter Ben Wells announced his retirement from professional cricket at the age of 23, in May. He was diagnosed with Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy during a pre-season routine heart screening.

The right-handed batter played 25 professional games for Gloucestershire, including a memorable unbeaten 108 in his final game in 2023.

Wells will be fitted with an implantable cardiac defibrillator to help manage the condition and is receiving support from the PCA to help his untimely transition beyond the field.



## #PATTOSMAY5K

Professional Cricketers' Trust



The inspirational Andrew Patterson completed the Victoria Park 5K in aid of the Professional Cricketers' Trust in May.

Less than 12 months after life-changing surgery, the former Ireland international taught himself to walk again and achieved the herculean effort in eight hours and 43 minutes.

Patterson wanted to give back to the Trust who helped pay for his operation in America after being diagnosed with Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia.

“Kudos to the Trust, for helping me out. Without their help and my daughter raising money I wouldn't have been able to do it and it has been honestly life-changing.”

## MAYNARD'S EPIC WELLYMAN HIKE

Walking from John O'Groats in Scotland to Land's End in Cornwall is hard enough but to complete it wearing wellington boots and to overcome extreme illness is a phenomenal achievement and exactly what former England Test cricketer Matt Maynard accomplished.

Maynard raised more than £20,000 for the Professional Cricketers' Trust and Help for Heroes after fighting off a chest infection just four days into the journey.

“The Trust has been great to me, when I was a player and when we lost Tom, they've done such an excellent job and I'm very grateful to them for how they've supported me.”

## FICA EVOLVES TO WORLD CRICKETERS' ASSOCIATION

FICA has announced a name change to the World Cricketers' Association (WCA) alongside launching its new strategy – ‘the global cricketers' voice’.

WCA currently represents the majority of the best cricketers in the world, across 13 countries. Their new strategy will focus on: providing world class services to players at a global level, enabling and empowering players' associations, positively influencing the direction of the global game, optimising commercial value and strengthening and growing their team impact.







## LYNCH DEPARTS

PCA Chief Executive Rob Lynch departs the players' association at the end of June having served

for over four years after initially joining in February 2020 as Commercial Director.

Officially appointed as CEO in October 2020, after serving an interim period, he leaves the PCA following a progressive list of achievements, include working with the ECB on the security of the England players around their return to Pakistan, navigating the Association through the pandemic and increasing the development of the women's game. Lynch is to join the MCC as Director of Cricket and Operations.

## PCA SUPPORTING DEMENTIA UK

The PCA has teamed up with Dementia UK and their Consultant Admiral Nurse service which provides specialist compassionate support tailored to the needs of people with dementia who participate or have participated in sport.

The service offers: clinical assessment, advice on symptoms, behaviours, care and treatment, emotional support and support with transition of care.



CONTACT THE HELPLINE

CALL: **0800 888 6678**

EMAIL: **HELPLINE@DEMENTIAUK.ORG**

## LEGENDS WELCOME MACRON

The PCA England Legends is delighted to announce that sportswear brand Macron is the new playing kit supplier of the team, signing a three-year deal.

The Italian company have a commitment to environmental sustainability and already supply kits to the West Indies and Ireland cricket teams.

Thank you to outgoing supplier Exito, who enjoyed a 13-year partnership in producing the Legends kit.



## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The PCA Futures Conference returns to England football team's training base, St George's Park in 2024.

The Personal Development and Welfare Programme's signature event will take place on 6 and 7 November.

If you would like to attend please register your interest with your Personal Development Manager.

Pop the cork: Hampshire celebrate their victory against Derbyshire on the balcony at Lord's.



John Morris posts a gutsy 42 runs despite little support from his teammates.

# A GAME OF TWO HALVES



We spoke to players from opposite sides of the Benson & Hedges Cup final of 1988. It was a match defined by its opening overs, leaving **MARK NICHOLAS** (Hampshire) and **JOHN MORRIS** (Derbyshire) to take sides.

**JOHN MORRIS:** We started playing against Cheshire in the NatWest Trophy on the Wednesday before the final and didn't finish the game until Friday. It meant us turning up at the hotel at Lord's at about nine o'clock. Which wasn't unusual.

**MARK NICHOLAS:** It was our first final. Sat in the very quiet dressing room before the game, I spoke to the team about us taking confidence from beating Essex and Worcestershire to get here, as the best two one-day sides of the day. Cardigan Connor, who was

a great guy, shouted, "Skip, steady as a rock," whilst showing the room his raised left hand which was showing not as much as a tremble. Only to then raise his right hand which was shaking like a leaf, saying, "It's a shame I bowl with this one!"

**JM:** Arriving as late as we did, we definitely wanted to bowl first in the morning.

**MN:** It was a good toss to win. But you still need to get the ball in the right place. Which we didn't do at first. It prompted me to stop the game after

three overs. I called on the fielding helmet, went in at short leg myself, and we started again.

**JM:** Batting at five, we lose three wickets in a handful of deliveries. Oh, and I was then dropped first ball, low down at slip by Chris 'Kippy' Smith.

**MN:** The ball was now swinging, and we started hitting a much better length. Which only confirmed what I thought, and that was us being the much stronger side.

**JM:** I think, on paper, we had a much better side than Hampshire. Particularly bowling. But Stephen Jefferies was one of those bowlers. He was a bit of an enigma. I actually played with Steve on my debut, when he played for Derbyshire in the tourist match against Pakistan at Chesterfield in 1982.

**MN:** We chipped through the batting. I remember Johnny Morris playing well. It was still early in his career, but he was already making a bit of a reputation for himself. At one stage it felt as though Michael Holding might slog a few, but he holed out on the boundary to Nigel Cowley's off-spin.

**JM:** To be fair, after that first spell, the ball didn't do that much. I inched the score forward, with support, at one stage, from Bernie Maher. But I ended up running myself out, trying to keep the strike, and that was pretty much that.

**MN:** We lost a wicket straight away, Paul Terry fell to a good away-swinging from Devon Malcolm, which brought me in. I was feeling pretty good, when I was joined by Robin Smith. I told him to just show off; show everyone how good you are. Which he did, before holing out to an incredible running, diving, sliding catch by Steven Goldsmith at fine leg.

**JM:** Goldie's catch was one for the ages. I was in front of square on the boundary and he was behind. As he set off running for the skied hook shot, I didn't think he'd get near it, let alone catch it. But still, after his quick 30-odd, the game had already gone.

**MN:** At the end of the game, I think we stayed in the changing room until being thrown out at around 11 o'clock.

**JM:** I can't remember what we did after the game. We'd left the ground before tea.

I told him to just show off; show everyone how good you are.

**MN:** It was our first one-day win of any kind, which is pretty remarkable considering the previous era had boasted the likes of Barry Richards, Gordon Greenidge and Andy Roberts.

**JM:** I was there to see us win the B&H in '81, here again in '88, the Sunday League in '90, and back in the final in '93, I think it was Derbyshire's best period ever.

**MN:** At the end, I remember feeling pretty sorry for Kim (Barnett). He, like myself, was a long-serving skipper, mirroring my time as a county captain. He was always good to talk to about what it took to lead a team for as long as we both did. And a really good player to boot.

## 9 JULY 1988 HAMPSHIRE VS DERBYSHIRE AT LORD'S

**Derbyshire** 117 all out (46.3 overs)  
**MORRIS** 42, **JEFFERIES** 5-13

**Hampshire** 118-3 (31.5 overs)  
**SMITH** (R) 38, **NICHOLAS** 35\*

**Umpires:**  
DAVID **CONSTANT**, NIGEL **PLEWS**

## HAMPSHIRE WON BY 7 WICKETS

### Hampshire

PAUL TERRY  
CHRIS SMITH  
MARK NICHOLAS (C)  
ROBIN SMITH  
DAVID TURNER  
JON AYLING  
STEPHEN JEFFRIES  
BOBBY PARKS (+)  
NIGEL COWLEY  
CARDIGAN CONNOR  
STEVE ANDREW

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# ON DAYBOOO

17 JUNE 1995

## DURHAM VS WEST INDIES RIVERSIDE

In a new feature, former Durham seamer and current England Men's elite fast-bowling coach **NEIL KILLEEN** talks about his first outing in the first team.



It was a three-day game against the tourists up in the north-east. Geoff Cook rang me ahead of the match to say I was playing. I was on the staff from 1992 and I felt about ready.



We batted first. I was out for two, caught by Sherwin Campbell at slip off the bowling of Ottis Gibson. He must have mentioned it 50 times since.



Bowling, I took the new ball with Alan Walker. 'Wacky' took the first over and then it took me a while to get my first wicket. I say that I bounced Carl Hooper out, but he actually hit a long hop down fine leg's throat. I bowled 20 overs, 1-109.



I was hit all over the body.



This attack included Ian Bishop, Winston Benjamin and Ottis Gibson. I can still hear Brian Lara at slip shouting, "Make the boy dance, Bish..." I don't know what prompted me, but I turned to him and said, "If you came from up where I'm from you'd already know that I'm no dancer!"



I ended up holing out to the leg-spinner Rajindra Dhanraj, caught at mid-on, one-handed, by Bishop. They needed 18 to win in the second innings and I was not needed to bowl.



All in all, it felt like I did alright. But had to wait until August before my Championship debut against Northamptonshire at Wantage Road. My first Championship wicket being Allan Lamb, out on 97, three short of him making a hundred against every First-Class county.

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# ROCKIN' ALL OVER THE WORLD

Editor **ANDY AFFORD** caught up with cricket globetrotter **PHIL SALT** to talk about how an unconventional route to the top somehow makes perfect sense.



# P

Phil Salt is a right-handed wicketkeeper-batter and has so far played for Sussex, Lancashire, Manchester Originals, Adelaide Strikers, Delhi Capitals,

Lahore Qalanders, Kolkata Knight Riders, Barbados Tridents, Desert Vipers, Dambulla Giants, Islamabad United – and even a second set of Capitals, this time in Pretoria. As well as England in the 50-over and 20-over formats. Phil Salt is 27 years old.

Born in Bodelwyddan North Wales, raised in Barbados, schooled at Reeds in Surrey – and coming to prominence

playing on the south coast with Sussex – professional cricket’s passport to the world has already taken him to Australia, India, Pakistan, the Caribbean, Sri Lanka, and the Middle East. “I find it really hard to dwell on anything I’ve done or achieved,” states the globe-straddling England opener. “And if anything – and probably other people would say this too – I’m a bit self-critical. Overly so at times.”

Salt is speaking from his car. On his way to Birmingham ahead of England’s T20I against Pakistan. The phoneline has already dropped out twice. “The signal is always rubbish along this bit of road, mate” he says, before continuing justly undeterred. “But back to you asking about any realisation of doing well, I don’t think I’ve ever thought that. I don’t really think that I’ve ever been

happy with my performances.”

We decide that his blind spot in positive personal appraisal is probably all bound in the truncated nature of franchise cricket seasons and the nature of them offering little time for reflection. Coupled with Salt’s wholly unconventional route to First-Class cricket generally. In this, his ascension to cricket’s top tier was never a given. Especially so, with those formative satellite 10-over and 20-over competitions starting off in relative underappreciated obscurity. And it being primarily the system within which the maker of two T20I hundreds for England cut his teeth.

Given his starting point in the sport, schedules, match-to-match travel, and pace of the games themselves, as stated previously these aren’t sets



LEFT Phil Salt celebrates with Moeen Ali ahead of the 2022 Men's T20 World Cup.

RIGHT Salt warms up at Sophia Gardens for England's IT20 against Pakistan.

“I knew that good performances were the only way I was going to progress.”

of circumstance that allow for much self-reflection. Play, win, lose, play, win, lose. Before the next tournament pops up on the horizon. “I don’t really know how that happened,” we’re talking about how Salt went about making his start and mark as a franchise player. “I didn’t play any age-group cricket of any kind,” he states matter-of-factly. “I wasn’t in an academy programme, so there wasn’t really an obvious pathway for me to follow; like there can be for a lot of others. But the franchise system taught me one thing very quickly, that it’s a ruthless environment.”

Salt is talking about the almost wilfully revolving door nature – and policy – of global leagues and their teams. These are places where coaches are judged on results by owners. They’re under additional pressure by turning

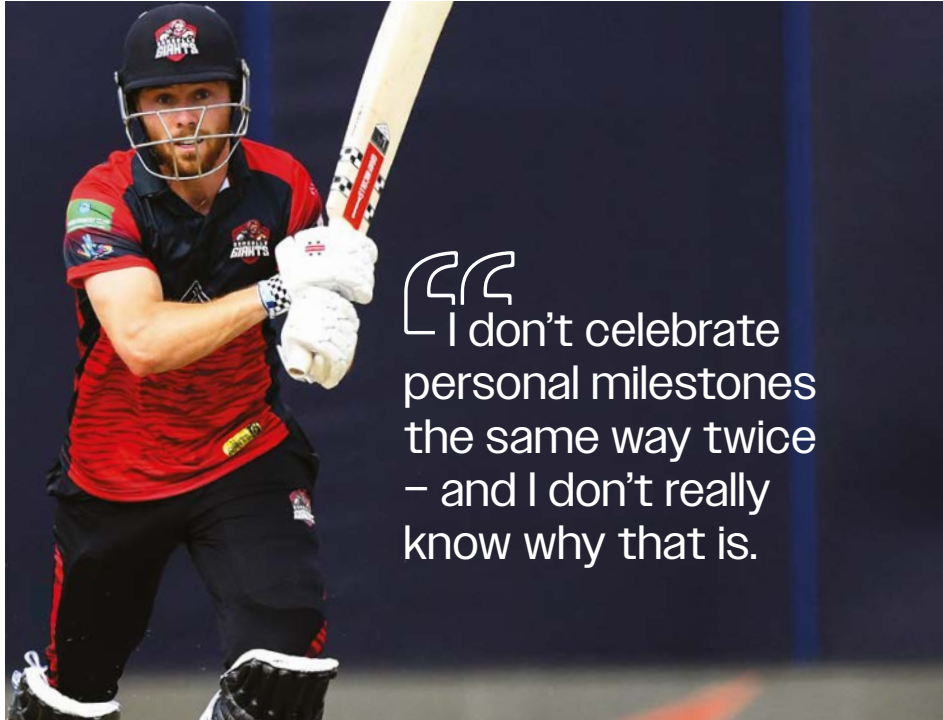
out XIs from squads they’ve personally selected. Choosing, by and large, from a world-class talent pool or via a draft system. For players to then go out and instantly perform at least at expectation levels is the bare minimum. With, in many instances, ‘well above’ being the benchmark. Very much a case of pitch up and perform or we’ll find someone else who can. “Teams aren’t interested in development. Or investment for the future,” he says. “There is no future at all, if you don’t do well,” again offers Salt, injecting a sense of realism. “I was lucky, I think, I knew that good performances were the only way I was going to progress. And knowing there was that immediate need to do well, alongside my long-term professional focus on getting ever better, has always made it hard for me to give myself a pat on the



back. I don't feel I have that luxury."

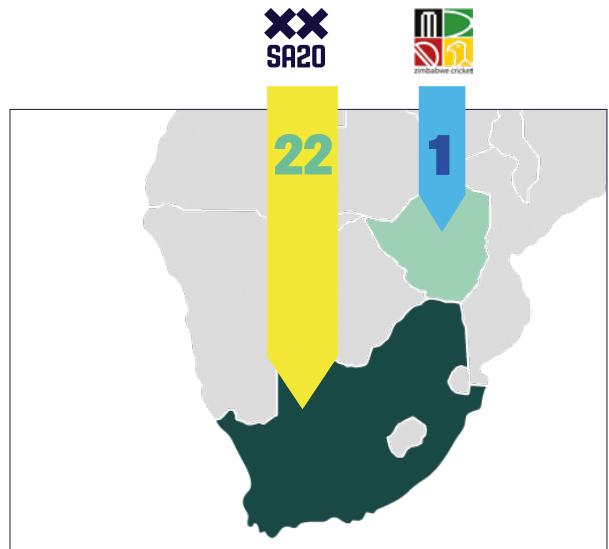
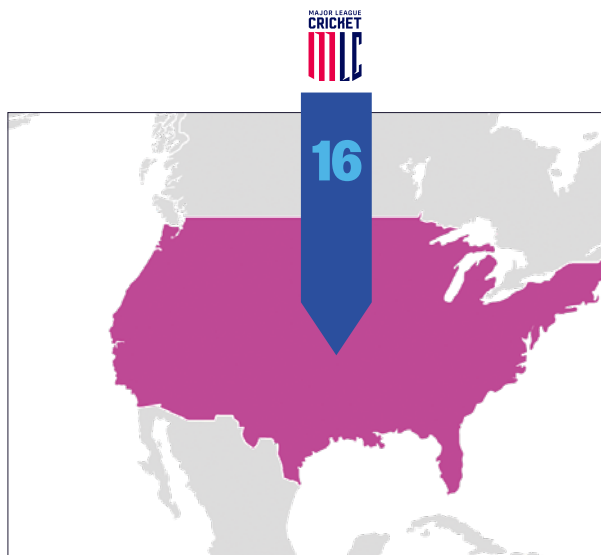
To most observers, there has never been a better time to be a professional cricketer. A career accompanied by seemingly myriad opportunities and means of making a living, as well as an impact globally. But almost by contrast, especially so in terms of Salt's international career, it has coincided with an England one-day side most people would regard as being at its consistently highest point. "I look back at how I competed as hard as I did against the players I did, and wish I'd had a bit more perspective," he says. "Jesus, what a team that was..."

Salt is now near-reverentially reviewing England's 'power couplings', particularly the pairing that stood in his way for a long time at the top of the order. Salt is talking, essentially, about the World Cup winners from 2019. A batting list that included



## BRITS ABROAD

Around the world, in every format. Here's how England's diaspora of cricketers stacked up across the different franchises in the 2023/24 Winter.



Jonny Bairstow and Jason Roy, both at the absolute peak of their powers. Supported lower down by all-time greats in Joe Root, Jos Buttler, Eoin Morgan and Ben Stokes.

“I shouldn’t have competed as hard as I did. I shouldn’t have been so hard on myself about not getting in. I certainly shouldn’t have focused so hard on being better than them...” Salt pauses slightly, you can almost hear him smiling as he speaks, “I would do some pretty odd stuff back then, just to talk to those guys,” he continues. “I’d hang out in the physio room, in the hope of getting to talk to them. It’s a bit of a safe space down there. People chat a bit more openly. I just wanted to hear how those great players did what they did, in the hope I could do better myself.”

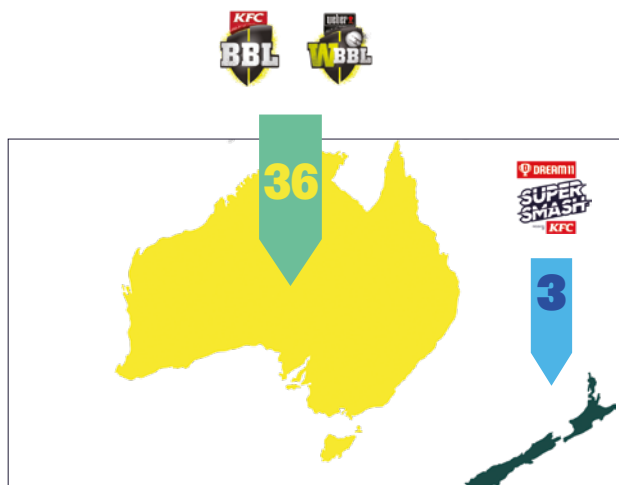
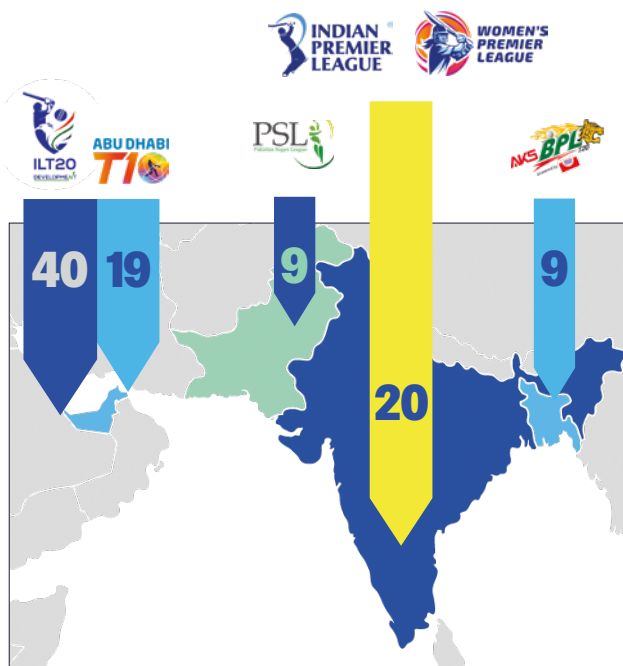
And a lot must have seeped in. Since debut against Pakistan at Cardiff in 2021, Salt’s career has gone from strength

to strength, him scoring limited-over hundreds against the Netherlands (122 at Amstelveen in 2022), before back-to-back 20-over tons (109\* at St George’s and 119 at Tarouba) against the West Indies in December 2023. In this, I venture that these consecutive performances went a bit unnoticed by the cricket-watching public. “I don’t really have a trademark celebration, which doesn’t help, I don’t think,” he offers as some sort of explanation. “I don’t celebrate personal milestones the same way twice – and I don’t really know why that is. And I really avoid talking to the media. Just don’t get me started on why!”



The conversation moves on swiftly, as you might imagine. This time harking back to those formative years. Times spent chasing T20 contracts around the globe during the winter months when few others did. In that, Salt was ahead of his time. “It wasn’t by design, but I learnt quickly and did well and the gigs kept coming. I do have to say that the standard is good generally, but the IPL is a different beast all together.”

Salt did particularly well in 2024’s IPL when playing with eventual champions, the Knight Riders. Right up until the point of returning to the UK for the England duty we spoke about earlier. Averaging



**TOTAL PLAYERS – 94**  
**OVERSEAS SLOTS FILLED – 175**



close to 40 with the bat, scoring 435 runs at a strike-rate of 182.01, those runs were further turbo-charged via a combined 50 4s and 24 6s (344 runs in boundaries), his 'not running for his runs' amounting to a hair under 80 per cent of the aggregate. "I think it's tough to do well there," casting his focus on cricket's biggest and showiest of shows. "There is a high level of skill, there's absolutely nowhere to hide, and you're up against the best players in the world, game after game.

"I read somewhere – I can't remember who said it – but it was along the lines that the best players love the challenge of competing against the very best. That's definitely the case in India." Salt continues, "I've learnt more about gamesmanship, tactics, game management – that sort of thing – than anything else. Players trying to outthink you. To outsmart you. Trying anything

to get a win. From any position. But it is definitely its ruthlessness as an environment that sets it apart. You are definitely only as good as your last performance. It gives it its vitality."

Conversation takes on a most unlikely turn after cricket's glitziest competition. "I still absolutely love playing red-ball cricket," he states. "It goes back to the earliest of days. When working with Mike Yardy at Sussex. I know it doesn't probably look like it, but my whole game and approach has developed from those sessions, working on having a good basic technique and defence."

As unconventional a response as it sounds, I ask him why the form has such appeal to him. "Cricket generally, but four-day cricket specifically, it's the jeopardy of the game that excites me most. Of nicking off early and that being the end of your day. Or being there, still ready to take that one chance

behind the stumps that changes the course of the match late in the day – it's something I absolutely love."

From T10 cricket to 20-over leagues to the 50-over game and finally to the longer-form, I ask finally if there is one thing that he thinks defines his style. "I keep coming back to the word 'tempo'," states the Lancashire man, having signed a three-year deal that took him to Old Trafford from Hove in 2022. "My ability to find a method of batting at a run-rate that works for me and the team. Don't get me wrong, I don't see myself as a batter that will ever still be on nought after 40 balls, but I do think a lot about finding and setting that tempo to win matches. But equally, if the ball is in the right areas, no-one is ruling out the possibility of the scoreboard reading 20-0 in the first over of a champo game either!" And why would they want to.





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# TRAIL





# BLAZERS

A new dawn for the women's game is around the corner as the ECB decide to move away from the regional model and deliver women's cricket through the counties in a new tiered system. The **ENGLAND WOMEN'S TEAM** continues to go from strength to strength as **OLLIE COLLINS** sits down with two of the country's big hitters.





**M**

arch 2010 – an 18-year-old Danni Wyatt makes her debut for England, five years after playing for Staffordshire and being inspired by the infamous 2005 Ashes series.

July 2022 – a 17-year-old Alice Capsey represents her country having attended her first women's match at Lord's in 2017 as England won the World Cup.

The advancements in the women's game between these two England debutants, that currently regularly represent their national side, has been astounding. Those advancements have continued in the following two years as the women's game continues on its stratospheric rise.

Becoming a professional cricketer is something that neither player thought possible. Wyatt made her England debut in 2010 a year before England women's players joined the PCA and

four years before central contracts were first handed to women's players.

Capsey recalls professional contracts being given out in the regional game and thinking that she should take cricket more serious and move on from the tennis scene. "Being a professional never crossed my mind," said Wyatt. "I was just so happy to be playing with Charlotte Edwards, Sarah Taylor and Katherine Sciver-Brunt. The first few years I never really thought about the money and then the contracts came in and I felt very lucky to be part of the that in 2014. The way we get looked after now is incredible, and so we should, because we've been successful for years and we are now role models as we look to inspire and entertain the next generation," said the Southern Vipers batter.

"Playing in regional tennis tournaments, I never really considered a career in cricket until I saw contracts

were offered in the regional game when I was 15, you could see the potential pathway and that's when cricket became more serious for me, before that I was just having fun with it," admitted the 19-year-old.

Next season will see the women's domestic structure move away from the regional system and revert back to the counties in a new tiered system, with eight sides competing in the top tier in 2025. The new structure aims to build on the one club, two teams mantra that was initially brought in with The Hundred.

"Regional cricket has gone up to an exceptional level, whenever I play for Vipers the standard gets better every year. With overseas players coming in it's just made the standard go up again, so that's amazing for the younger players to get that exposure, the new system sounds like it will be exciting," said the 33-year-old.

“Being linked with the men’s team at Surrey can only benefit us,” claims Capsey. “I know there are some concerns and queries around the new system, but I’m really excited to see how it can transition the game. We’re seeing how strong the regional level is with loads of players knocking on the door for England, it’s what we need as international players, it’s only doing good things for the standards of women’s cricket,” the current Stars all-rounder summarised enthusiastically.

There’s no doubt that playing in different competitions around the world has helped improve both player’s skills. Wyatt expressed how living on her own in Australia as a youngster made her develop as a person, firstly representing Victoria and then Melbourne Renegades in the first Women’s Big Bash League, whilst Capsey has enjoyed the bright lights of the Women’s Premier League (WPL) in India playing for Delhi Capitals.

“It really helped me going to Australia, I felt very lucky to be able to play with some great players. It’s one of the best things about being a professional cricketer, exploring the world, new places, meeting new people and it can hold you in good stead after cricket as well. It’s brilliant to play in different conditions and it improved my game,” Wyatt recalled.

Capsey continued, “I’ve absolutely loved every tournament, each country is run very differently. The WPL really showcases women’s cricket which is really cool to be a part of, it’s chaotic at times but it’s an experience every player should want to experience as it adds a completely different dimension to your game which you can’t practice,” said the Delhi Capitals all-rounder.

During England women’s away series in New Zealand, four players missed the first three games of the T20I series due to WPL commitments. Whilst opposingly, England men’s players



representing their teams in the Indian Premier League (IPL) came back before the play-offs to play the home series against Pakistan. Posing the question around the threat of increased franchise tournaments around the world threatening England women’s availability, both players conceded that it could be a concern in the future.

With more than 40 international caps to her name, Capsey was one of the players to miss the start of the New Zealand series: “More franchises will be great for the game but it will affect the schedule and we can’t be in two places at once. I missed the start of that series but playing in those high pressure games in India in those conditions benefitted me more in the long run with a T20 World Cup coming up in Bangladesh that will have similar conditions to India. As long as it’s about making you the best player for England, then that’s fine but I’m sure there will be

difficult conversations to come.”

Wyatt thinks that franchises aren’t a threat yet in the women’s game to international selection but concedes we could see a similar situation to the men’s game: “The franchises are already a threat for the men’s team, you see it when people turn down England contracts to play in the tournaments, that could happen in the women’s game down the line. There’s lots of new tournaments around the world being talked about so we’ll have to wait and see.”

The Hundred has undeniably enhanced television viewership, attendances and interest in the women’s game. The tournament was the first to appoint the two teams, one club concept – a mantra that has brought the men’s and women’s games together. Wyatt may have lost the first two finals in 2021 and 2022 but winning the tournament last year has reaffirmed the competition as her favourite.





"I love The Hundred, the whole concept is amazing, so many kids are there with our names on banners and chanting and singing, you didn't get that when I first started. It's a great chance for the younger players to have that exposure to that level and that stage. It's only going to benefit young players and young girls that are watching because everyone enjoys it," said last year's winner.

Capsey has two Hundred medals with Oval Invincibles, lifting the trophy in 2021 and 2022, the 19-year-old admits she has a lot to thank the tournament for as it has led her to this point in her career: "You can't hear someone that's 10 metres away from you on the field because of the noise, it's amazing. The Hundred has raised the standards in our game, you could see the evidence of that with how we competed against Australia in the Ashes. We're role models now and it's great to get as many girls involved in cricket as possible and put

it on the same level as the men's game. The Hundred is the most inclusive tournament in the world."

Both players have a good relationship with their players' union and have used the PCA at different stages of their career. Wyatt admits she hadn't directly used her union until recently but they have offered great support: "Emma Reid and Sophie Connor have helped me a lot in recent years. They do a lot behind the scenes and I owe a lot to the PCA for fighting for us and helping me with personal development."

Transitioning into the professional environment in the women's game has unique challenges due to the rapid rise of the sport, with Capsey acknowledging support she received when navigating school and cricket commitments: "The PCA are vitally important and the support they offer is invaluable. They fight for you behind the scenes and allow us to perform on the pitch. Without the PCA the acceleration

in the women's game wouldn't have been possible."

Who's to say where the women's game could end up in the next 15 years? The South East Stars all-rounder certainly thinks that it's in a good position and feels that it shouldn't be considered inferior to the men's game: "It's our responsibility now to push it on, if you look back five years who would have thought we'd be here now. It's crazy how quickly it's risen and I'm excited to see where it will go."

Wyatt wants to win the upcoming T20 World Cup in Bangladesh and thinks that will help to continue inspiring the next generation of female cricketers: "I want to keep performing and keep entertaining, it's scary to think where the women's game could go in the future, hopefully I can get a coaching role when I finish playing. Going through my 20s I wondered when this time would come and now it's finally here, when I look back, I've seen it all haven't I?"



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# TURNING THE PAGE

Cricket luminary, **EOIN MORGAN**, talks to BtB about his new role as President of the PCA and where he sees English cricket going next.

Since departing from international cricket – having won two World cups as England’s record appearance-maker in Twenty20 and ODI formats – scorer in each format of the most runs and most sixes (since usurped in the T20 runs department by Jos Buttler) – life for Eoin Morgan now moves at a slower pace. Albeit still a brisk one.

The 37-year-old now finds himself spending more time with family, raising two young children, and being at home. And ‘getting out’ now and again for stints in the comms box, rounds of golf, or just generally being a fan of cricket again. Sport in general, even, he says.

“For the first time in 20 years I’ve been able to plan out exactly what I want to do over the next 12 months,” Morgan says, only half-jokingly over the phone. He’s sat at home in North London and has made time for a chat about

his new role as President of the PCA. “The kids are asleep so we should be good for a while,” he adds. Quietly.

“For the majority of my life, I have lived and breathed cricket. From playing in the street with my sisters as a child, to working in the commentary box now. The sport has shaped every aspect of my life. It’s nice to have a break from what can be a mentally taxing sport,” Morgan continues, again alluding to the time he now gets to spend with his young children.

“Thinking time on cricket – at any level – is probably down to about a third of my year now. But that doesn’t mean necessarily taking a back seat by any means.”

Freshly returning from a brief commentary stint in the IPL, and taking on his new role as President, Captain Morgan is keen to use his global platform and steely-calm demeanour to



Cricket's growing influence in different corners of the globe impacts us, as members, quite dramatically.

English cricket isn't alone in its challenges with scheduling. There are more and more games and tournaments cropping up all over the world.

shape the future of English cricket in his new administrative role. And succeeding two-time World Cup-winning captain, Charlotte Edwards, as President is a task Morgan does not take lightly.

"Part and parcel of taking this position was recognising that the PCA is in such a healthy space, but that it also needs to continue to move quickly with the wider game around the world. Cricket's growing influence in different corners of the globe impacts us, as members, quite dramatically."

This great leader of a revolution – the one that helped turn the country's white-ball side into double world champions, a confident belligerence that has now filtered into the Test side – continues: "The game is constantly moving, resources are shifting, and the emphasis on the different formats are evolving. And we, as an Association, need to stay ahead of that. For me, that involves empowering players to go and do what they do best to earn their money. And perhaps most importantly, enjoy themselves."

As all 'revolutionary' leaders know, time never stands still. "I'm as much of a fan for moving the game forward as anyone. But the rapid jump to fame from nowhere – for lack of a better phrase – we see now is frightening. It can be pretty much overnight in comparison to the change that players of my generation went through.

"By contrast, the girls are being asked to answer that question of fame a lot younger than men ever have. You even have that transition into the public eye occurring during school years for them, which is mind-boggling to me."

This comes as something of a surprise from the Northern Irishman, having left home at 16 to pursue a career in England, but he is keen to add clarity, "There was always a break, there was always a window where there would be no cricket. Where you could recover properly, both mentally

and physically.

"Players aren't afforded that luxury now. And when you're young, you don't want to turn down any opportunity. During that early stage of anyone's career, travelling is the best thing. You are chasing a dream. Whether that's playing a second XI fixture or travelling overseas. That is challenging for any player. Of any age.

"But English cricket isn't alone in its challenges with scheduling. There are more and more games and tournaments cropping up all over the world. The players must come first. With regards to any change, there is no solution to the scheduling issue unless you play fewer games. And who's going to vote for that?"

Going to some lengths to answer his own question, the former England captain reiterates that, "Scheduling is never perfect," he confirms. "There is no league in any country that is. But the tournaments that grow faster and have more success make it more attractive for their home-grown players to play.

"I took my eldest to a Hundred game last year and he absolutely loved it." It is something that the former Middlesex man is audibly excited by. Both as a father, and a proponent of the game. "It's the colours, the music, the food, it doesn't take up the whole day. Even my friends who don't like cricket enjoy The Hundred," he says, before admitting that having friends 'outside of the game' is something that has kept him sane over the years.

"The majority of people who stay late for autographs at those games are young kids. And that's not always with the global superstars. Young domestic cricketers have quickly become the new fan-favourites.

"The double-headers too, what a great initiative. They provide more exposure to both games. I remember watching Alice Capsey – who might have been only 16 at the time – belting it to all corners of the ground. And there you have it; a young star is born. That is the power of having a





Eoin 'Ice Man' Morgan briefs his team before England's group game against South Africa in the 2019 World Cup.



Cue delirium: Eoin Morgan and Joe Root celebrate winning the 2019 ODI World Cup at Lord's.



It's all smiles for Eoin Morgan at the 2024 AGM.

strong domestic tournament.

“Schedules will eventually change, whether it's agreed upon or the game is forced to make them. If we don't remain agile the game will change around us. If playing for England remains a priority, as it is now, the game is still winning, but you need to create the infrastructure around it.” Since the introduction of T20 – and more specifically the IPL – cricket's metaphorical winds of change have blown the white-ball over to Asia. Where cricket's largest market resides. Our global landscape is now almost unrecognisable. As will be the case in a decade's time.

“We can't take English cricket's privileged position for granted. Being perceived as one of the 'Big Three' – alongside India and Australia – is just where we are in the present day. Look at the West Indies for example, you wouldn't have said 30 years ago that

they'd be in the position they are now.”

Talk of the 'Windies' takes us overseas to this year's World Cup. Where he hopes the tournament will allow one nation to rediscover its passion for the game and another to kick-start theirs.

Morgan was among the more critical observers of England's disappointing 50-over World Cup defence in India last winter and is on the ground commentating as Buttler's boys aim to defend their T20 title over the pond.

His first game was Ireland's matchup against obvious favourites India at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium. “There's a huge opportunity to engage the expat population in America. The opportunity exists to grow a new fanbase.

“Sport's commercial potential cannot be overestimated in America. Cricket has to look at other sports, other avenues even, that's part and parcel of moving with

the times. And I have no doubts this World Cup will go a long way to achieving that.”

Morgan is reassured by the fact that he'll have plenty of time for golf and horse racing in Barbados, plus catching up with friends in New York. Covering T20 games, he says, “is just a joy. And dramatically different to other formats.

“Cricket has already transformed once with T20 cricket. We created a format without even realising that people wanted or needed it. From there the sport has just gone from strength to strength. And without the formation of white-ball cricket, the game would have stood still. We wouldn't have any of these great challenges that we are set to overcome.”

On the field, Morgan was usually poker-faced, sometimes stern, always in control. His presence remained very much the same as we spoke. His closing remarks, as ever looking forward. This time to the bright lights and bold colours of the T20 game, recognition of his position as a revolutionary. Still.

With his objectives of advancement, Morgan makes it clear that he'd rather people didn't notice he was there. “My objective is to add weight to current issues that young men and women – cricketers both past and present – are having to deal with. My best foot forward in this role is to raise awareness of that and hopefully gain support and resources that will aid that. It is the voice of current players that we must make sure is loudest, for they are who will carry our great game forward for generations to come. Cricket cannot exist without the players.”





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# THE LONG WALK

How and why anxiety is cricket's creeping concern and what the PCA is doing to help.

Launched during Mental Health Awareness Week in May, the PCA announced 'There's no protection from anxiety' as the game's means of addressing what are believed to be rising rates of anxiety in professional cricket.

Described as 'an awareness campaign that's designed to reduce stigma and provide crucial support to players facing mental health challenges', it aims to prompt players to firstly pause, and then to reflect on their own, and their teammates' mental health. The physical manifestation of the project comes in the form of a partnership with leading equipment makers Masuri, their helmets – in every dressing room – sporting the tagline and available helpline; this confidential support manned by Sporting Chance, the PCA mental health support services partner since 2018.

Colin Bland is CEO at Sporting Chance, "Despite what my name might say, I don't pretend to be an expert in

cricket. But I do know what is expected of them as athletes is far more than any previous era. It's a massive success for cricket, but obviously an additional pressure on players.

"I would say that the work the PCA is doing in promoting the support that is available to people is helping them reach out when they might previously not have done so."

The PCA launched its helpline in 2005. In 2023 Sporting Chance provided support to more than 100 individuals. This number included 49 current players, of which 49 per cent of them cited anxiety as a primary concern. Worryingly, this prevalence rate surpasses that of any other sport. "Each sport has its own flavour," adds Bland. "If we were to create a pie chart of the presenting issues across all sports, it would definitely slice differently for all of them. But anxiety would be present in all of them.

"As far as cricket goes, even though it's a team sport, it's a team sport that

## THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

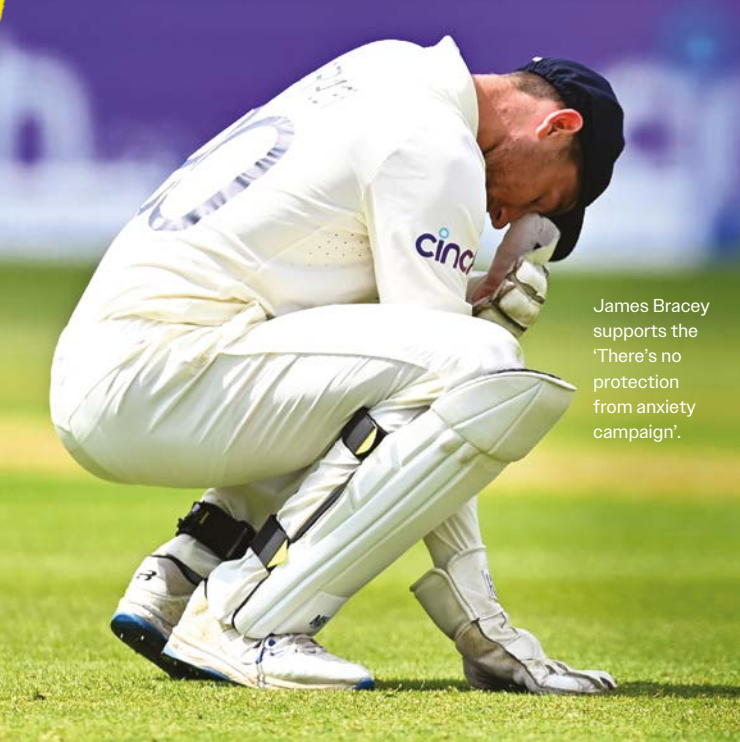
Early statistics show that anxiety is still the highest presenting mental health concern in 2024.

IN 2023, SPORTING CHANCE PROVIDED SUPPORT TO

**100+**

INDIVIDUALS THROUGH THEIR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PCA.

**49%** OF CURRENT PLAYERS WHO USED SPORTING CHANCE IN 2023 REPORTED ANXIETY AS A MAIN CONCERN



James Bracey supports the 'There's no protection from anxiety campaign'.



**62%** OF CURRENT MALE PLAYERS NOTED THE PLAYING SCHEDULE CAUSES THEM CONCERN FROM A MENTAL WELLBEING PERSPECTIVE.

**32%** OF ALL REFERRALS COME FROM THE WOMEN'S GAME

**SINCE 2020** THE LEVEL OF ANXIETY AS A PRIMARY PRESENTING ISSUE HAS ALMOST DOUBLED

  **PCA**

[SPORTINGCHANCECLINIC.COM](http://SPORTINGCHANCECLINIC.COM)

has a lot of individual components – bowling and batting in particular. It's very different to other team sports. It's a team sport played as individuals."

According to Bland, levels of anxiety as a primary presenting issue has almost doubled since 2020. With the provision of talking therapy rising by 11 per cent in the same period. There has also been a 32 per cent increase in referrals in support of those in the women's game. "The final thing I would say," offers Bland. "Is that seeking help and getting themselves to a good place doesn't always mean that they become a better cricketer. But it does mean that they are likely to manage their career better."

Dr Luz Locatelli, a therapist on Sporting Chance's network describes anxiety as "a persistent state of mind in response to pressure, fear and perceived threat." And highlights that, "Anxiety can become a problem if we start consistently worrying about mistakes within training and

competition and focus purely on outcomes." Meaning that players stop analysing the process, their coaches' decisions, and internal competition, leading to what is described as a state of 'negative perfectionism'. Especially when combined with outside influences like family issues and relationships."

Peter Dutton is also a member of Sporting Chance's therapist team. He joined the call when on a walk around Chelmsford, in search of some fresh air. "The pandemic created fear and anxiety in people anyway," he states for context. "And interestingly enough – when factoring in social media – people feel they're becoming mental health experts. And in that, some people are genuinely helping, some others just creating a following for themselves, and some advice isn't always the best advice full stop. And as a lifetime practitioner, it's important to talk to real experts."

Dutton is also able to focus on what is unique to cricket. "Traditionally, you have a lot of down time," he observes.





It's a game where you could wait to bat for two days and then get a good ball first up, and you're done. There has to be real specific elements of focus, it's incredibly difficult to focus for five days. Impossible even. It's not your classic nine-to-five, let's put it that way.

"You also have to live with the idea of failure every day. On social media, from coaches, friends, family.

"Women are involved in this sport younger than men, so it's easier to make changes. That 'boys don't cry' tradition is far from helpful.

"In terms of the process, if initial contact is made, PCA members get six sessions. All starting with an intro session to see 'if we connect,'" offers Dutton. "We're not going to take anybody where they don't want to go," he counters. "And it's not 'an old bloke with a beard and glasses, wearing some brown corduroy trousers', where you have to lie on a couch, cry and talk about your childhood."

"We're just normal people, passionate about our job, helping put the pieces together in search of the 'why'. Just trying to help people realise why they're feeling like they are."

Anxiety manifests itself in many ways. Fear of failure, fears of success, fear of performing badly, fear of performing well – and these are rarely always conscious behaviours. All emanating from any number of different places, but all viewed from an individual's own perception. Making the combination an often unique set of coordinates to grasp and make sense of. "The best way to perform in life, is with freedom," counters Dutton. "If you're a batter or bowler that's tense – even for a fraction – that's going to impact you somewhere along the line. Understanding the individual – sometimes pulling a player outside of the firing line is the best thing, sometimes it's backing them all the way – it all comes into play."



England's team psychologist, David Young, watches a net session ahead of the T20 World Cup in the West Indies & USA.

FROM LEFT England's socially distant team picture at Old Trafford in 2020; Sporting Chance employee Tom Lace under pressure in his former career for Gloucestershire; James Bracey and Lace celebrate an eight wicket victory over Somerset in 2021.



Life after cricket can also prove a contributing factor. “We are talking about a potential loss of identity happening some time in your mid 30s,” states Dutton. “Almost having to start again. Certainly not doing what you’ve always done. As a professional cricketer your days are organised with a purpose and then suddenly it’s like ‘right, get on with it yourself.’”

Dutton believes that positive ‘self talk’ – even when an individual isn’t necessarily feeling it – can have a great impact on careers. “Get a highlights package, cut it down to a minute-and-a-half. Add your favourite piece of music and watch it. Knowing that what is being viewed happened. That’s something you’ve done. Feel the emotion of taking that great catch or making that great shot. Those moments are why we love sport. We crave those dopamine fixes.”

Dutton rounds things up by adding, “It’s a great sport because it’s so hard. It has skill, psychology, body language – what you say to your

teammates, or even the opposition – there are so many different nuances. And that’s without factoring in the fact that other teams don’t go easy on you either! They’re there to win, every bit as much as you are.

Cricketers become professionals for a reason. The reason is because of a love of playing cricket. Carry on loving cricket should get you to where you want to be.”

In any sport, the identification of what are the controllable aspects of performance and what remains outside of that control is vital. And in that, 95 per cent of the time, according to Dutton, “It’s the uncontrollable aspects that cause stress and anxiety. That goes for any sport. In any walk of life.”

For immediate support, PCA members can contact the Sporting Chance helpline at 07780008877. Additionally, players can fill out the online contact form on Sporting Chance’s website to connect with the triage team and arrange a call back.

“It’s the uncontrollable aspects that cause stress and anxiety. That goes for any sport. In any walk of life.”





# FUNDIN' YOUR FUTURE

Financing your education can be an unwanted stress when trying to plan for the future. That's why the PCA's education funding is in place to help assist current and former players. Ollie Collins sat down with England's **SARAH GLENN**, former Durham man **TOM MACKINTOSH** and former spinner turned coach, **SIMON KERRIGAN**, to discuss how it worked for them.

The aim of the PCA's education and training funding is to provide financial assistance to current and former players to support their personal development plans through educational and career development opportunities. The funding aims to support players for life after professional cricket.

The PDM team offer advice on everything from short online courses to full undergraduate and postgraduate degrees to help players in their career transition after playing.

Current England spinner Sarah Glenn began her Sport Science degree in 2019 and is about to finish having spread the course over five years due to cricket

commitments. The 24-year-old was able to access funding through the PCA to support her further education.

"It's been really helpful, cricket is a great career but I want to start building a future and I think the PCA being able to provide that funding for me has been really reassuring and opens up opportunities after my cricket career."

The leg-spinner said the process was 'straightforward' having previously thought it might take a lot of paper work and wants to encourage others to take up the opportunity of completing the simple online form.

"There's a lot of options now with that funding. If you're thinking about





ABOVE Simon Kerrigan attends the PCA Futures Conference.

RIGHT Sarah Glenn grabs a selfie with adoring fans whilst playing for England.

BELOW Former Durham keeper Tom Mackintosh pouches one before moving to a career beyond the field.

your future, have the conversation with the PCA and utilise the funding. For me, it's opened up other avenues without having to worry about affording it, it's taken a lot of stress off me and it's made me excited for other opportunities. It's made thinking about my future exciting instead of daunting."

Former Durham player Tom Mackintosh first used the education fund after realising he had lots of free time as a newly turned professional player and wanted to pursue other interests outside of cricket.

The 21-year-old completed a three-month online course and it led him to what he wanted to do in the future.



"The education fund doesn't get used by players enough, it's such a fantastic tool. If I didn't do that original course, I wouldn't have ended up going to university or doing my Surveying course."

The PCA covers 50% funding of education and training courses up to the value of £1,500 every year as per the terms of the PCA Education Funding Policy. The former wicketkeeper-batter heard about the funding after a conversation with his Personal Development Manager.

"I had a talk with Jas Singh and it sounded great, I think especially for younger players, when their future is

uncertain, it's so useful to open up another avenue in case your cricket doesn't play out the way you want it to. Initially I wanted to be a professional cricketer but I quickly found out that I wanted other things. Having used the fund to explore other opportunities I couldn't recommend it enough."

Former England, Northamptonshire, Lancashire and recently retired spinner Simon Kerrigan is now High Performance Coach throughout the pathway at Warwickshire having completed his level three coaching course.

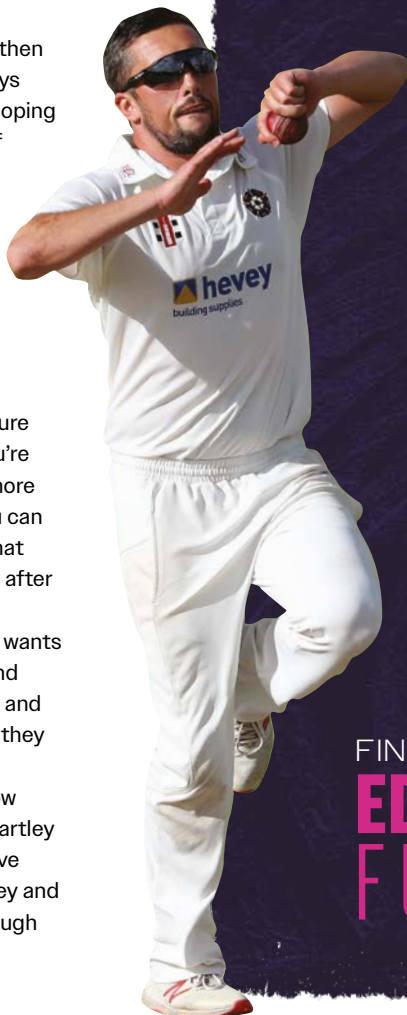
"The funding enabled me to get into coaching and apply my trade. A week in coaching can be all over the place, recently I was at Old Trafford with the first team and then coaching the under 13s a few days later but it's a good way of developing your skills, you're learning lots of different areas."

The 35-year-old admits he should have begun planning for his future at an earlier stage in his career.

"I'm really grateful for how the PCA has supported me over the years, but I must say I was a bit lazy with planning for the future when I was younger because you're just enjoying your cricket. The more education and development you can do at a younger age, the more that will help you make the transition after playing much easier, trust me."

The High Performance Coach wants to upskill as much as possible and help players improve their game and support them in achieving what they want to in cricket.

"It gives me great pleasure now watching players such as Tom Hartley play for England, knowing that I've helped in some way on his journey and that has only been possible through the education fund."



## FUNDING IN NUMBERS

**594** TOTAL NUMBER OF CLAIMS

**14** DIFFERENT SECTORS MEMBERS HAVE CLAIMED FUNDING FOR

**148** COACHING QUALIFICATIONS

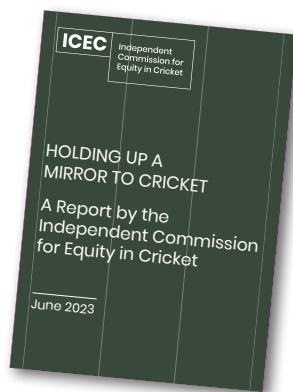
**26** PLAYERS FROM ALL PROFESSIONAL TEAMS ACCESSED FUNDING

**80** UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS

Stats correct from the period February 2018-February 2024.

FIND OUT MORE ON  
**EDUCATION  
FUNDING**





# FACING THE MIRROR

Commissioned by the ECB in 2021, and published during last summer's dual Ashes series, BtB reflects on the **ICEC REPORT**, one year since it shed light on the game's shortcomings as a true sport for all.

One of our great national games, the ICEC report is described by ECB Chief Executive Richard Gould as “a massive moment for the sport”, having drawn its conclusions from both the Cricket Discipline Commission (CDC) and the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket (ICEC). In it, it confirmed a broadly accepted truth. That English cricket suffers from ‘racism, sexism, elitism and class-based discrimination’.

Weight of evidence saw it arrive late, finally appearing in the Summer of 2023, across a sobering 317 pages it included interviews with over 4,000 people within the game, at all levels, and found that around half of those respondents had experienced discrimination. It also highlighted disparity in terms of representation - on the field and in

wider leadership roles. It also stated the power of the sport to change lives for the better; as a ‘game for everyone that belongs to everyone’.

With 44 significant recommendations, it's undeniably the chance to drive change. And the players' representative body was keen to commit their support, saying that ‘The PCA sees this as an opportunity for the Association, led by our members, to lead the much-needed required changes to create a truly inclusive environment for the current and future generations to thrive.’

It has led to the equalisation of England Women's match fees with England Men, and through new or extended partnerships with ACE, Chance to Shine, Lord's Taverners, MCC Foundation and the South Asian Cricket

Academy, the process of removing barriers is continually being worked on.

Donna Fraser is the PCA's Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The first of its kind in cricket player associations, it's clearly an important role, given the extent of the ICEC report. “I think the sport needed it,” she states. “Obviously, it was damning for the sport. It wasn't anything new, but the fact that it was on paper, in writing, when a report comes out like that – reading those lived experiences it really hit home.

“Anything that costs money isn't going to be easy. But people's behaviours and attitude – that doesn't cost anything. People like to feel valued and part of something, rather than being told what to do. The journey, as an education piece, is huge.”



Diving back into the report, it states that male and female players at professional level isn't representative of either the sport's playing base or the wider population, with British Asian and Black British cricketers amounting to 8.1 per cent of all male professional players in 2021. That's compared to 30-35 per cent of the game's weekend cricketers. Huge support for the sport in what amounts to only 10.9 per cent of the general population.

Women have fared equally poorly. The report again stating that in the 278 years since the first recorded women's cricket match, (97 years since the foundation of the Women's Cricket Association) only 12.7 per cent of cricket's most senior leadership are women. With all current 18 of the First-Class county Chairs being men. With 16 – soon to be 17 – White.

With playing compounded by less media exposure and fewer opportunities to play at the premier grounds. It highlights that the England Women's team has never played a Test Match at Lord's. The ECB has promised that 'the home of cricket' will host a first women's Test in 2026.

A prevalence of elitism and class-based discrimination is driven partly by the lack of access to cricket in state schools, compounded by 'old boys'. Startlingly, male England players privately educated stood at 58 per cent in 2021. Outstripping the seven per cent of the general population privately educated. And of the 4,156 people involved - or recently involved - in cricket within the IOEC survey, 42 per cent attended private school. Amounting to 'overrepresentation' on a large scale.

The PCA stated publicly and collectively that the report provided

an opportunity for the game to do better. And in terms of what that progress might look like, from the PCA perspective, "Our recommendations were always meant to be wide-reaching and ongoing," speaks Fraser. "With lots more still to do we've already put in place a formalised complaints process that is sport-wide. And are also having an impact with the game's stakeholders in the development of a set of values for all parties to own; including education, training and a programme of 'culture health checks' around cultural literacy.

"We continue to push the ECB and wider bodies on their commitment to becoming anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-classist organisations, and to do so at pace. Committing budget for core infrastructure and operations of the women's and girls' game, plus equal and direct representation in terms of governance is another area of discussion. Plus, the much-publicised successful overhaul of the player pay structure.

"With Dave Lewis now in place as Chair to oversee regulatory independence, this amounts to progress in terms of general board-level transparency and balance.

"As on-the-ground evidence of the PCA's own progress, constitutional change now sees four of the organisation's nine leadership roles filled by females. Plus, the addition of five new non-executive board members. As well as the active promotion of our reporting mechanisms to members, a new expedited complaints process, an integrated internal Equity in Women's Cricket Working Group (EWCWG), and seven current and former cricketers serving as Inclusion Champions on our EDI educational programme."





CLOCKWISE A recreational net session at Putney Cricket Club; England Women face India at Lord's.



## THEN & NOW

PCA Member survey results, Feb-March 2024, amounting to 265 players that featured in the 2023 season.

# 57%

OF FEMALE PLAYERS AGREE THEY ARE GIVEN EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE THEIR CAREERS (VS 80% OF MALE PLAYERS SURVEYED)

# 83%

ARE MORE COMFORTABLE DISCUSSING ANY FORM OF DISCRIMINATION IN THEIR CRICKET ENVIRONMENT NOW, COMPARED TO A YEAR AGO

# 78%

OF PROFESSIONAL CRICKETERS BELIEVE THAT THEIR CRICKET ENVIRONMENT IS MORE INCLUSIVE NOW THAN IT WAS 12 MONTHS AGO

# 91%

SAID THEY FEEL A SENSE OF BELONGING WITHIN THEIR TEAM

# 88%

EXPRESSED THAT THEY HAD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPACT OF DISCRIMINATION COMPARED TO 12 MONTHS AGO



Professional  
Cricketers'  
Trust



# GOOCHIE'S GENERATION GAME

Former England captain **GRAHAM GOOCH** pledges £90,000 over three years to fund educational courses through the Professional Cricketers' Trust.

Graham Gooch attends an alcohol awareness education session that he helped to fund.

**S**upporting the Professional Cricketers' Trust isn't something that is new to Graham Gooch, the man with 243 England appearances has made sizeable donations over the years and supported the Trust on various fundraising challenges, however his latest act of generosity will help secure preventative and educational courses for future cricketers for years to come.

Having taken part in the Three Peaks Challenge and the Coast to Coast walk for the players' charity, the 70-year-old knows the importance of supporting

the Trust. He has pledged £30,000 a year for the next three years from the Graham Gooch Scholarship and the Essex Cricket Foundation which has supported the PCA's Rookie Camp for the last two years.

"It's a continuation of my support for the activities of the Trust in terms of the work they do and the support they give to young players and former ones too. The Trust is a great cause for our game, especially for young players and I want to make sure they are supported properly," the former right-hand bat said.

“There's lots of pitfalls for youngsters now in cricket and not just in learning the game.”



**The enthusiastic Trust supporter has decided to resurrect his hugely popular Graham Gooch Trust Golf Invitational in the Algarve as another way of raising much needed funds for the players' charity.**



I was approached recently by the Trust to see if I would be interested in running the Golf competition again and I was happy to put my name to it. We've got some good teams signed up and ready to go on the trip to Portugal in late October and hopefully it will create some great fundraising opportunities for the Trust as well. I want to make sure that the Trust can continue providing their fantastic provision for a long time to come."



SCAN FOR MORE INFO ON  
**THE PROFESSIONAL CRICKETERS' TRUST**



The former Essex skipper with 128 First-Class centuries admits there are lots of challenges for young players trying to break into the professional ranks and it's important that they are adequately supported.

"There's lots of pitfalls for youngsters now in cricket and not just in learning the game but exterior factors that can affect them. I've supported alcohol awareness and gambling prevention courses with academies and professional teams, it's important that you make youngsters aware of these things early on, so it

doesn't impede their ability to play and enjoy their cricket. They are the future of our game, so we have to protect them from the potential downsides."

Support for professional players, the former PCA President acknowledges, has moved on ten-fold since the days he represented Essex and England and believes it's about time mental health issues were taken seriously.

"People do need that shoulder to lean on, that solid advice, and maybe a method of trying to improve yourself or recover from an addiction should that situation arise."

LEFT Gooch, a former PCA President attends Professional Cricketers' Trust fundraiser Festival of Cricket.

RIGHT Former England captain takes on the Trust's Three Peaks Challenge in 2019.



Former England ace Fran Wilson pitches herself to the panel of experts at the 2022 PCA Futures Awards, in association with Ladders.

# OPENING DOORS

Lodders celebrates four years sponsoring the PCA Futures Awards in 2024 by looking back at a partnership of mutual benefit with the future of professional cricketers in mind.  
By **OLLIE WESTBURY**.



**W**ith the average age of cricketers leaving the professional game being 26, the PCA put tremendous value on helping players plan for the future, as I know first-hand after I was released from Worcestershire at the age of 23.

The Association's partnership with Lodders has opened players' eyes through a number of activities to support personal growth and opportunities.

Employing almost 200 people in their four offices across the midlands

and south-west, Lodders first joined forces with the PCA to host and sponsor the Futures Awards in 2021. Since then, there have been three impressive overall winners, former Sussex and Leicestershire bowler Abi Sakande in 2021, Gloucestershire's Tom Smith in 2022, while 20-year-old Yash Vagadia most recently won it in 2023.

A genuine partnership requires collaboration and gain for both parties and after initially joining forces for hospitality services, Hilary Campton, the company's marketing

## TIPS FROM THE WINNERS

“Be creative and tell the story of why you did something and what difference it made to you. What did you learn? You have it all to gain and nothing to lose!”

**ABI SAKANDE**



# 2024 PCA FUTURES AWARDS



## KEY DATES

**Applications Open:**  
2 September – 20 November

**Finalists Presentation Day:**  
10 December



## CATEGORIES

Business Impact  
Community Spirit  
Academic Progression



## PRIZES

£2,000 for each category winner  
Additional £1,000 for overall winner

director, has explained why Lidders wanted to take it to the next level.

"We were quite taken aback when we first got involved. We heard how young the average age of a cricketer is when they are forced to retire, and they need to have a plan for afterwards," said Campton.

"We have got a very expertise-led business. Talent development is really key to us and helping people to have really clear career paths.

"The Futures Awards was mentioned, and it just felt like a really natural fit. We did it the first year, it went really well,

and we have worked closely with the team to keep evolving it and make sure we can add some value.

"We are also huge cricket fans as well here at Lidders so that bit was pushing on an open door."

Finalists of the awards head to Lidders' offices to present in front of a panel of experts in their fields. As part of the day, members also get the opportunity to speak to Lidders' staff who are well-connected in the business and commercial world.

"It tends to be a bit of a mutual

learning experience," she continued. "We take a lot from talking to the players, we have had players come and do work experience with us, and they talk about the challenges they face.

"As a cricketer, everyone can see how you have performed that day, and if you are a lawyer, your colleague might know if you have had a difficult day, but no one else does.

"We see it as a real privilege to be involved, and what we really like is that it feels like a proper partnership and collaboration."



« Explore all avenues that are presented to you. My two potential career options post-retirement are two passions of mine. I may not have known that had I not explored.

**TOM SMITH**

« Be open and honest in your application and provide examples of all of the external skills you've developed through your ventures outside of cricket.

**YASH VAGADIA**





## MEET THE PCA



Where to find us...

### LONDON OFFICE

The Bedser Stand,  
Kia Oval  
London SE11 5SS

### EDGBASTON OFFICE

Box 108 & 109,  
RES Wyatt Stand  
Edgbaston Stadium  
Birmingham B5 7QU

### FULL TEAM

For all members  
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and their contact  
details, scan here.



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# NOTICES FOR MEMBERS

## PCA NEGOTIATOR

From making a simple phone call for advice to a full contract negotiation, the PCA's Director of Cricket Operations Rich Hudson will be able to support you.

Email: [rich.hudson@thepca.co.uk](mailto:rich.hudson@thepca.co.uk)

Call: **07375 414694**

## DISCRIMINATION

There is no place for any form of discrimination at any level of our game. If you experience any discriminatory behaviour, report it:

Anonymously on: **0800 3890031**

or [cricketintegrityline.co.uk](http://cricketintegrityline.co.uk)

The PCA: [equality@thepca.co.uk](mailto:equality@thepca.co.uk)

Reports will be treated seriously and sensitively.

We all have a role to play in raising the game.

## COMPLAINTS

The PCA has its own independent and confidential whistleblowing service. If you have a grievance and wish to file a complaint you can do so via a form accessible on [thepca.co.uk](http://thepca.co.uk)

## EDUCATION FUNDING

Education Funding Forms should be completed online via the website attaching relevant receipts. Log-in to [thepca.co.uk](http://thepca.co.uk) to process your claim.



## DOWNLOAD THE PCA THRIVE APP

Working together to provide an NHS approved mental wellbeing app to support every member.

Download via your app store and email

[alison.prosser@thepca.co.uk](mailto:alison.prosser@thepca.co.uk) for your access code.

## TOURNAMENT SALARY PROTECTION INSURANCE

Get protection ahead of your next tournament at home or abroad. Call Kerry London on **01923 603 651**

or email [pca@kerrylondon.co.uk](mailto:pca@kerrylondon.co.uk)



## TRAVEL POLICY

All current players are covered with travel insurance 365 days a year through Kerry London.

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## KEEP IN TOUCH...



# THE SMALE FAMILY

In March, **WILL** and **SOPHIA SMALE** became the first sibling pairing in Rookie Camp history, the duo talk to BtB about growing up in a cricketing household, sibling rivalries, and representing the family name.

Getting a hold of these two newly professional cricketers proved as difficult a meeting to arrange as any. Not because of a lack of organisation, or desire. But because the reality of aligning two full-time athletes' calendars – especially at what was the beginning of a hectic season – is nigh-on impossible. Fitting in the half hour Zoom call we had on a rainy Wednesday morning was afforded only because of just that: the reliably unreliable English weather. Bless its heart.

"Typical, isn't it." Sophia opens up, whilst glancing out the bay-window behind her, at what looks like a well looked-after family garden. Her older brother Will nods in agreement, he joins us from Cardiff and is awaiting news about the prospect of training happening at midday.

"We've had an ok start at Glamorgan," he concurs, attributing the increased amount of draws in the County Championship to the







Will and Sophia Smale are among the 28 cricketers in attendance of Rookie Camp at Edgbaston on March 5, 2024.

new Kookaburra balls rather than the weather. “We had a great three-day win against Sussex, who were top of Division Two, at Sophia Gardens, and then we were on the wrong end of a tight game against Middlesex. But on the whole, life in professional cricket is treating me well.

“I didn’t expect to be this close to the red-ball team in my first fully professional season, so with the white-ball games around the corner, I’m hoping that I can have more of an impact there.”

Back in the family home, near Newport, Sophia is also awaiting news. She’s scheduled to play for Western Storm against Central Sparks at the Cooper Associates County Ground in Taunton, that game – eventually unaffected by the weather – Storm would lose by 21 runs.

“Personally, I’ve had positive start to the 50-over campaign,” Sophia states, somewhat reservedly. “I’m level with where I was at during the whole of last year, wickets wise. In terms of results, it’s been a mixed bag with games that could have gone either way, just swinging out of our favour,” says the all-rounder, with what amounts to a reluctant admission

“I didn’t expect to be this close to the red-ball team in my first fully professional season. **WILL SMALE**

of things, as everyone knows, not always going your way in professional sport.

That brings us onto the siblings’ appearance at the PCA Rookie Camp in March. So popular, it inducted 28 players into the professional ranks. Held at Edgbaston, the 14th annual event saw Chris Woakes, Georgia Elwiss, Rob Key, and Ian Bell, amongst other guest speakers, welcome 16 male and 12 female members into the game.

Arriving as the first brother and sister appearance in event history is something the pair are incredibly proud about. “We didn’t realise at first. But I guess it’s not surprising. It all happened because I had to focus on my A-Levels last year”, Sophia adds, now into her third term

“Rookie Camp offered an invaluable introduction into the help and support the PCA offer.” **SOPHIA SMALE**



as a professional, despite remaining a teenager. “It offered an invaluable introduction into the help and support the PCA offer, and the different avenues of assistance within the Association.”

For Will, keeping up with his younger sister’s rise through the game offers up challenges in itself. “I’m normally pretty good at keeping an eye on how she’s doing,” he says. “And prior to me forging my own path as a professional this year, I was very good at going to watch her games. That’s a bit more difficult now, I think I’ve only been to one this year,” the middle-order bat adds reluctantly, hinting at what is already a hectic schedule.

His sister, appreciative of his efforts, picks up the conversation: “I’m also aware he hasn’t been at many games this year! I’ve been to watch him play a few times. It’s something I really enjoy. And whilst I can’t get to every game, missing Will’s Vitality Blast debut at the Oval is the one I regret most, the A-levels got in the way again. But we do support each other. A lot.”

A product of each other’s success, that same support runs on into the extended family. Their Grandpa, Malcolm Price, lives next door. The pair credit him with affording them the opportunity to become cricketers. A highly influential player-coach himself, he’s helped shape the Smale household into one as cricket

mad as it is. “Our mum is also involved in the game” says Sophia, “she’s been involved for quite a while now. The sport is a common conversation at home. We don’t talk about much else really.

“It’s never ideal when Grandpa lives next door – especially when you get out cheaply. I always try to hide, especially if Will gets out LBW,” another jab from the slow-left-arm spinner allows Will to regain control of the conversation once again.

“Cricket is our whole life really, I was balancing cricket with tennis until the age of 12 but Grandpa was always on my case about my batting, so I took it up properly from there and sacked the tennis off. I have a lot to pay him back for, especially with all the throwdowns and words of advice. I do have to admit, he’s probably got me to where I am today.”

Sophia again: “I remember going to watch Will a lot, always going down to Newport and running along the side of the boundary. Grandpa will tell you that’s where I learnt to bowl. Running down the hill at Newport, trying to bowl left-arm seam, thankfully he quickly decided I’d be better placed as a spinner. My first memory is winning a bowl-off at Newport, aged five, he’d always taught me to bowl it full and straight, and to bat with a high elbow.”

From the topic of technique, a few comparisons between the two ensue – both being as technically correct as they are. The conversation takes a turn to more jovial pursuits. And that time Sophia got the better of her big bro.

Neither can remember exactly how it happened, just that it did. “I’d hoped you wouldn’t ask about this,” says Will, before allowing Sophia to set the scene. She does so with a grin as wide as the screen: “Two seasons ago the MCC played against Monmouth School, I was playing for the school and Will for the MCC. He respected my bowling for obvious reasons, but I did eventually get him out. I think I got in his head, really.”

Will again: “I’ll never forget that noise. I was obviously getting a lot of stick so decided to come down the wicket and belt her for six. Unfortunately, I yorked myself. After that, and hearing the ‘death rattle’, I daren’t turn round. So I just walked off. It was the penultimate over might I add...”

From there, squabbles commence over the exact mode of dismissal but the one thing that remains true throughout this conversation, despite the divisive nature of the topic, is that these two siblings are in this journey together. Right from the start.

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# OBITS

Remembering those who have graced this great game.

1945-2024

## DEREK UNDERWOOD

KENT & ENGLAND

Left-armer Derek Leslie Underwood made his First-Class debut in 1963 and by the age of 25 he had taken 1,000 wickets.

He won 86 Test caps, the first against West Indies in 1966. Undertaking eight overseas tours with the national side. His 7-50 against Australia at the Oval in 1968 was an undeniable high point.

He made 676 appearances for Kent, taking 2,465 wickets, helping Kent to three County Championships, two one-day cup successes, three National League titles and three Benson & Hedges Cup triumphs.

After retiring in 1987, together with his brother he became heavily involved in the manufacture and installation of artificial cricket pitches. Appointed an MBE in the 1981 New Year's Honours List, he was elected Kent President from 2006 until 2008, subsequently serving with no less distinction as President of MCC. He was 79.



1932-2024

## RAMAN SUBBA ROW

SURREY,  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
& ENGLAND

Born in Streatham and educated at Whitgift School and Cambridge University, Raman Subba Row was the son of an Indian lawyer and an English mother.

A stylish left-handed middle-order or opening batter, he began his career by joining Surrey in 1953. But such was the strength of the all-conquering Surrey side at that time that he was forced to look elsewhere, joining Northamptonshire in 1955 where he also studied accountancy in the winter months.

The first of his 13 England caps came against New Zealand in July, 1958. He made 30 First-Class centuries over his career, later entering the world of public relations. In 1985 he managed the England tour to India and Sri Lanka. Between 1985 and 1996 he chaired the Test and County Cricket Board and later travelled extensively as a highly respected ICC match referee, overseeing 41 Tests and 119 ODIs.

1934-2024

**DOUG PADGETT**

YORKSHIRE

Doug Padgett gave a lifetime of service to Yorkshire cricket at every level. During a 20-year playing career that brought him two England caps, he stood out as one of the finest right-handed batters to appear in the English game in the years following the Second World War. Soon becoming an integral member of one of the most successful sides in the history of Yorkshire cricket. A team that recorded seven County Championship titles as well as two Gillette Cup trophies.

Born in Bradford, he made 506 First-Class appearances and scored 21,124 runs, a total exceeded by only 11 other Yorkshire players. He was 89.

1932-2023

**HENRY TILLY**

MIDDLESEX

Born in Edmonton, Henry William Tilly played for Middlesex from 1954 until 1961. A right-handed middle-order batter and right-arm fast-medium bowler, in 59 First-Class appearances he took 126 wickets with a best analysis of 6-33 against Essex at Southend in August 1958.

Between 1963 and 1972 he went on to enjoy great success playing for Hertfordshire, proving the mainstay of their pace attack. Upon cricketing retirement, he went on to open a hugely successful sports business, one that has seen HT Sports retain a base in St Albans to this day. He was 91.

1965 - 2024

**PAUL BAIL**

SOMERSET

Millfield educated, Paul Andrew Clayden Bail was a right-handed batter and very occasional off-spinner. Playing 29 First-Class matches in total for Somerset and Cambridge University between 1985 and 1990. A highest score came in the Varsity match of 1986. His 174 was at the time the seventh highest score in a fixture dating back to 1829. He would go on to play for Wiltshire in the Minor Counties, with younger brother Stephen also playing for Somerset in the second eleven.

Graduating with a degree in economics and five blues in cricket and football, his post university career in banking saw him rise to the position of Managing Director with Baird's Private Capital Markets Group. He was 58.

1935-2023

**CHARLES ROBINS**

MIDDLESEX

Robert Victor Charles Robins was the eldest son of former Middlesex and England cricketer Walter Robins.

Born in Burnham, Buckinghamshire and educated at Eton College he made his First-Class debut for Middlesex against Gloucestershire at Lord's, aged 18, in 1953, as a right-handed middle-order batter and leg-break bowler, he would make a total of 60 appearances scoring 712 runs and taking 81 wickets.

While enjoying a successful career in the insurance industry he went on to become a long-serving member of the Middlesex General Committee, subsequently being appointed Chair of the Cricket Committee. He was 88.

1947-2023

**TONY JORDEN**

ESSEX

Tony Jordan went from Monmouth School to Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge in October 1967. Twelve months earlier he had made his debut for Essex. A right-arm fast-medium bowler and lower-order batter, he made 58 appearances for Essex taking 117 wickets and scoring 701 runs. An outstanding all-round sportsman, Jordan went on to play full back for the Barbarians, Bedford, Blackheath, London, Eastern Counties, winning seven international caps with England. He later coached Wasps, London Division, was an England selector, and served on the Rugby Football Union Committee. He was 76.

1932-2024

**GRAHAM TRIPP**

SOMERSET

Malcolm Graham Tripp played for Somerset from 1955 until 1959 as a stylish and correct right-handed batter, and a fine athletic outfielder.

Having shone in club cricket with Clevedon, having won representative honours while serving in the Royal Air Force, he joined Somerset after completing his National Service. He would make 34 First-Class appearances in total and was also a useful footballer and hockey player. Outside of sport, he spent his working life with a successful local timber company, going on to become a director. He was 91.

1940-2024

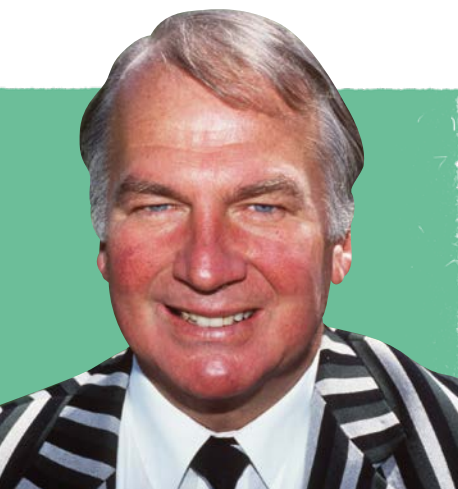
**DUNCAN FEARNLEY**

WORCESTERSHIRE

Born in Pudsey, Charles Duncan Fearnley bucked the norm, least of which by proving more famous for his post-cricket career than when as a player. The Yorkshireman played 98 First-Class games for Worcestershire as a left-handed opening bat, with the club between 1962 and 1971. He scored a single century, 112 made against Derbyshire at Kidderminster in 1966.

He founded the Duncan Fearnley cricket bat company at the end of his playing career, and during the 1980s his distinctive black stylised stumps logo was as famous a brand as there was in the sport. Particularly catching the eye when in the hands of the likes of all-time greats such as Ian Botham, Clive Lloyd, Graham Gooch, Vivian Richards and Sunil Gavaskar.

Named Worcestershire chair in 1986, he oversaw two County Championship titles, two Sunday League and three one-day cups. All within a 12-year tenure. Fearnley was 83.



1942-2024

**ROBIN HOBBS**

ESSEX &amp; GLAMORGAN

At one time Robin Nicholas Stuart Hobbs was the only genuine leg-spin bowler in First-Class cricket.

Born in Chippenham but spending his formative years in Essex, over the course of a 20-year playing career he made 325 First-Class appearances, claiming 763 wickets. He subsequently worked as an area representative for Barclaycard.

2003-2024

**JOSH BAKER**

WORCESTERSHIRE

Josh Baker died just two weeks short of his 21st birthday, as a 6ft 4ins tall slow left-arm bowler he was one of the game's most promising young cricketers.

Born in Redditch, Worcestershire, Josh Oliver Baker, made his First-Class debut for the county in 2021. Universally known as Bakes he went to Warkwood Middle School before completing his schooling at Malvern College.

Playing club cricket for Astwood Bank CC, representative honours came his way in 2021, with two ODI caps for England U19s. Joining Worcestershire, he announced his arrival in the professional game with an undefeated 61 against Middlesex at Lord's.

Winters in Australia at Sydney's Northern District cricket club, in all he made 22 appearances for Worcestershire totalling 411 runs with a top score of 75 against Gloucestershire at the 2023 Cheltenham Festival. His 43 wickets include a best return of 4-51 against Leicestershire at Grace Road in his debut season.

1946-2024

**ARTHUR ROBINSON**

YORKSHIRE

Arthur Leslie Robinson, universally known as 'Rocker', played for Yorkshire from 1971 until 1977. A strongly-built 6ft 3ins tall left-arm fast-medium bowler and lower-order batter, he was born in Brompton near Northallerton and educated at Allertonshire County Modern School.

Beginning as a slow bowler in the Northallerton Evening League, he later found increasing success as a quick bowler, moving to Leeds in 1971 to refine his craft.

He went on to make 84 appearances for the White Rose, taking 196 wickets. His best bowling return was 6-61 against Surrey at the Oval in 1974. He was capped two years later. Returning to play for Northallerton he went on to become a professional groundsman.

1931-2023

**JOHN KENNEDY**

WARWICKSHIRE

John Maxwell Kennedy was a right-handed middle-order batter who played 31 First-Class matches for the Bears between 1960-1962. A fifty on debut (63 made against Oxford University), it would be the following year that marked his best; making 756 runs over the season at a neat average of 27.00. Born at Barton-upon-Irwell, Manchester, he would go on to play for Staffordshire in the Minor Counties competition. He was 92.



1938-2023

**PETER WATTS**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE &  
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Born in Henlow and educated at Bedford Modern School, Peter David Watts first played Minor Counties cricket for Bedfordshire in 1955 as a left-handed middle-order batter who bowled right-arm leg-spin. He and his younger brother, Jim, would play for Northamptonshire.

Making two appearances for the county in 1958, Peter initially struggled to establish himself in the side before being awarded his county cap in 1962.

After nine seasons at Wantage Road he moved to Trent Bridge in 1967 for a single season, taking 30 wickets.

In all First-Class cricket he accrued 4,567 runs and 307 wickets. He returned to Minor Counties cricket with Shropshire in 1969 before ending his career back at his native county.

1932-2024

**GEOFFREY  
HICKINBOTTOM**

LEICESTERSHIRE

Leicestershire born and bred, Geoffrey Alfred Hickinbottom, a stylish wicketkeeper and right-handed lower-order batter, won cricketing honours while on National Service in the Army before spending five seasons at Grace Road. During 1959 he made five First-Class appearances for the Foxes. He later enjoyed a career in club cricket with Leicester Lindum and Cropston.

1946-2024

**MIKE PROCTER**GLOUCESTERSHIRE &  
SOUTH AFRICA

An undeniably great all-round cricketer, Michael John Procter was born in Durban and educated at Hilton College. A six-foot tall well-built genuinely quick right-arm fast bowler – delivering the ball off the ‘wrong foot’ – he was also a technically correct attacking right-handed batter. He would win seven Test caps for his native South Africa – all against Australia – before his country was banned from the international scene.

Between 1965 and 1981 he played county cricket for Gloucestershire winning the Gillette Cup in 1973 and the Benson & Hedges Trophy four years later. Capped in 1968, he captained the county from 1977 onwards, the side being affectionately known as ‘Proctershire’. He won the PCA Men’s Player of the Year in 1970 and 1977.

He remains one of only five cricketers to have scored a century and claimed all 10 wickets in a match. It was a feat he achieved twice, both at the Cheltenham Festival (1977 and again in 1980), both against Worcestershire.

In total he made 482 First-Class appearances, scoring 20,072 runs, and taking 1,113 wickets. He subsequently became Northamptonshire’s first Director of Cricket before returning home to South Africa to become Director of Cricket with Natal. He later coached the national side and became Chairman of Selectors. When serving as an international match referee he oversaw 167 ODIs and 47 Tests.



Procter remains one of only five cricketers to have scored a century and claimed all 10 wickets in a match.



# MEMORY LANE

Celebrating the Men's T20 World Cup going state-side before Bangladesh are the host nation for the Women's version, we look at some of the best shots of the previous editions through the lens of Getty Images.

PHOTO BY  
CLIVE ROSE

## A WINNER'S KISS

T20 WORLD CUP BRIDGETOWN, 2010  
147/6 **AUS V ENG** 148/3 (17.0)

Shot on the evening of the final, the sunset and shimmering Caribbean light made for a stunning silhouette of Paul Collingwood with England's first ICC trophy.



PHOTO BY MIKE HEWITT

## STRANDED

T20 WORLD CUP GQEBERHA, 2023  
**151/6 ENG V IND 140/5 (20.0)**

Run-outs happen so quickly and can become obstructed by fielders or umpires. Often changing the course of a game, in this case, all the action is in frame: Deepti Sharma lies face down in the dirt as Amy Jones whips off the bails to put England in command.



PHOTO BY DANIEL POCKETT

## RIBBONS OF JOY

T20 WORLD CUP MELBOURNE, 2022  
**137/8 PAK V ENG 138/5 (19.0)**

Moments with family are becoming unimaginably precious for cricketers – this was a sweet, unguarded moment between David Willey and his kids in the aftermath of a tense final. Perfectly framed in gold.





PHOTO BY MATTHEW LEWIS

## EVER THE SHOWMAN

T20 WORLD CUP COLUMBO, 2012  
**137/6 WI V SL 101 (18.4)**

With the press afforded access to the changing rooms, the Universe Boss revelled in the attention as the West Indies celebrated their first ICC T20 trophy in style. And that's despite him making only three from 16 balls.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL STEELE



## ALL SQUARE'D UP

T20 WORLD CUP SAINT KITTS, 2010

104 **ENG V AUS** 104

Holly Colvin's jubilation is given the context of a nonplussed Leah Poulton and ecstatic Sarah Taylor. Australia would go on to 'win' the eventual tied super over on the count that they hit more sixes.

# MY FAVOURITE KITS

Accompanying his merry-go-round of variations, **JADE DERNBACH** is the first to talk shirty with his five favourite playing tops through the years.



## SUR / COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP 2018

"This is the odd one out – in that it's not very odd looking – but that doesn't make it any less of a classic. Having had my eyes on the County Championship trophy for my entire career, the day it finally arrived was incredible. We worked a long time for that win. And I didn't half sweat through a few of these shirts."



## SUR / PRO40 2011

"Less harum-scarum – despite the flash of green – winning the Pro40 in this kit was special. The celebrations continued for the best part of a week after that final."

## SUR / T20 2010

"Like marmite. With Andrew Symonds as our overseas we had a good group of guys playing some exciting cricket. I had a pretty dodgy haircut to go with it too."

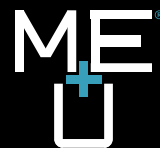
## ENG / WORLD T20 2014

"The last England kit I put on. AB de Villiers pretty much ended my international career that day. But the shirt itself was well fitted and loud as anything. It suited me well."

## ENG / ODI 2011

"An international debut at my home ground was special, I remember receiving the kit and thinking 'wow.'"





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