



# SUSSEX CRICKET SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

FOUNDED : 1965

PATRON: JOHN BARCLAY DL

PRESIDENT: DAVID BOWDEN MBE

CHAIR: VACANT

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website:

[www.sussexcricketsociety.org](http://www.sussexcricketsociety.org)

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### **2022/2023 Society Programme**

#### **2022**

**Oct 12** – Evening meeting  
AGM followed by talk  
from Jon Filby

**Nov 16** – Lunch  
Speaker Bill Athey

**Dec 14** – Lunch  
Speaker Paul Farbrace

#### **2023**

**Jan 11** – Lunch  
Speaker John Barclay

**Feb 15** – Lunch  
Speakers, Patrick Ferriday  
and James Mettyear,  
authors of "Field Of  
Dreams"

**Mar 22** – Afternoon Tea  
Speaker Derek Pringle

All dates are  
Wednesdays.

*Any views expressed in the newsletter are those of the writer, not those of the Committee of the Society.*

Since the last newsletter we heard the sad news of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The Society shares with the Nation in the grief, while recognising her service over 70 years to both Country and Commonwealth. From a cricket point of view I remember her at Test Matches, usually at Lord's, when introduced to the two teams. We also join in wishing King Charles III a successful reign. It was fitting that before the first day's play of Sussex's Championship game against Worcestershire, players, staff and spectators stood in a respectful minute silence, as I think was the case around the Country.

### **Society Matters**

As the 2022 cricket season draws to a conclusion, so the Society's attention turns to our 2022/3 "winter season" of events. A reminder that our **AGM is on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 7.00pm** in the Spen Cama Pavilion at the First Central County Ground, Hove. The agenda along with accounts were issued with last month's newsletter. Now you will find the Committee review of the past year plus a note outlining the reasoning for altering the titles of Patron and President, a policy which we hope members will agree on when presented at the AGM.

Also at the AGM we will elect the Society Player of the Year. On the evening, we invite both nominations and a vote. This award goes back to 1971 when Tony Grieg was chosen, and most recently Tom Haines for the 2021 season. Following the AGM Jon Filby will address us no doubt reflecting on the 2022 season and may look ahead giving us what information he can on the plans for the future, and in particular the Sussex view on the Sir Andrew Strauss proposals.

Further ahead still, on **November 16** comes the first of our **four lunches** this winter with **Bill Athey** as the speaker. An application form is enclosed including menu options, please return with payment (preferably transfer or alternatively cheque) to Barbara Eagles by **7<sup>th</sup> November**. Barbara's contact details are on the application form. The cost is £27 per person



Pic Sussex CCC

**Bill Athey's** career as player in first class cricket ran from 1976 to 1999 with Yorkshire, Gloucestershire, Sussex and 23 Test matches for England, where his sole century was 123 v Pakistan in 1987. The previous winter when part of Mike Gatting's England party to Australia he was a key performer with three half centuries forming a reliable opening partnership with Chris Broad. On leaving Sussex he spent a few season coaching Worcestershire. In all his 467 first class games (80 for Sussex) saw him amass 25,423 runs at 35.69, 55 centuries with a top score of 184 in 1986 for England B against Sri Lanka in Galle, an innings lasted over seven hours showing his powers of concentration. Other than his first class appearances, he also played a total of 459 one day matches which included 31 one day internationals. So a considerable cricketing career suggesting plenty of stories to regale us with. A memorable afternoon is in prospect.

**Sussex News** – This is being written before the game at Durham and so after the heavily rain impacted game at Hove against Worcestershire. A goodly number of Worcestershire supporters made the trip, partly as many follow their County home and away, and also Hove seems a popular away venue for many counties. Sussex gave a debut to the Pakistan all-rounder, Faheem Ashraf who became by my quick count the sixth “overseas” player to represent the County this season (all formats). By accounts he has been on the Sussex “radar” for some while, and so he could in effect be on “trial” possibly for next year. I suspect he would not have picked a damp Hove to show his qualities, witness his contributions of 2 with the bat and 1/120 bowling. Yet his previous record with Pakistan suggest a far better all round cricketer. Performance in the next two games may be a better guide. At 28 coming up 29 he is mainly a bowling allrounder but also free hitting batter and has played as many as fourteen tests - the most recent in a high scoring draw against Australia in Rawalpindi last March. He has also represented Pakistan in 31 ODIs and 42 T20s

Worcestershire had the better of a draw due mainly to good bowling (Jack Leach is still an effective bowler in these conditions) on the first day, followed by a double century from Jack Libby. A considerable amount of time was lost to bad light and rain, day three looked particularly unpleasant for the few present (not myself). Jack Carson, who seems a fine cricketer with bat or ball impressed as did James Coles.

**England News**. Firstly, the men duly won at The Oval to clinch a 2-1 series win in what turned out to be another three day game, though would have been two but for bad light on the second day of actual play. This makes me think that if Tests need to be played in September then a 10.30 start as in the Championship would be fitting. With dry grounds and pitches nowadays, particularly at the Oval, the prospect of a 10.30 start might not be the issue that it was some years ago. The combination of Brendan McCullum and Ben Stokes with their inspiring leadership have set a new dynamic, and successful tone for English cricket.

Secondly, more recently India’s women beat England in an ODI at Hove due mainly to intelligent bowling and their top order batting strength, possibly the slow nature of the pitch assisted India. This, in front of a good sized, but not full, crowd. 2022 has been a good season to enjoy Indian batting at Hove!

**Clubs – Sussex Premier League**. Roffey duly won the league, their sixth title since first winning the League in 2014 - a truly remarkable dominance in recent years, and yet a friend who follows them closer than I do told me that they were not as strong as in previous years. They are introducing some younger players including batter Sam Henderson who is part of the Sussex Academy. Captain Matt Davies with his batting and leadership is a key as are the all round qualities of Rohit Jagota. Also important was the left arm spin of Jas Bassan a recruit from Burgess Hill pre-season having previously played for Hornchurch and Bexley) taking 60 wickets and also played a couple for games for Sussex seconds. The dry summer (not a single game at least in the premier division was lost to rain) arguably assisted Roffey’s array of medium paced and spin bowlers, but this does not in any way detract from their consistent winning habits.

On the last day of the League season East Grinstead had a comfortable win over already relegated Brighton, so Roffey needed to win at also relegated Hastings and for a while Hastings were 135/3 chasing 256 and threatening an upset, but as so often Roffey know how to win and duly took the remaining wickets for just 53 thus clinching the title. With Hastings and Brighton relegated they will be replaced by Cuckfield, returning to the top division after one year away, and Mayfield. The latter came rather from behind on the last day when West Chiltington (who otherwise had a good season) seemed likely to be promoted but lost at Burgess Hill only for Mayfield to overtake them winning at Cuckfield who by then were already guaranteed finishing top. Mayfield’s promotion is good for East Sussex joining Eastbourne as the East’s sole representatives. A Society member (not our Worthing based Treasurer!) has asked me to mention that in Division 3 West, Worthing courtesy of winning 14 of their 18 games topped their table to earn promotion to Division 2. Buxted Park and Crowhurst Park will also join them as promoted clubs. As with last year, space does not allow mentioning all the division winners – there are 36 divisions around the County.

But not all good news on the League front, from looking at the final tables, three clubs, my local club Pulborough, Cowden and Maresfield withdrew from the League during the season. In addition a small number of clubs running multiple teams in the league withdrew their lower side, possibly unavailability of players. So at the end of the season less clubs and teams in the league, tough on the flip side reports say that the T20 Sussex Slam saw an increase in players.