



SUSSEX CRICKET SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

FOUNDED: 1965

CHAIR: DAVID BOWDEN MBE

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website:

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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
Speaker, -
**Martin Richards, Vice
Chair, Sussex Cricket**

Mar 22 2.15 –
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.

Our January lunch was by all accounts a highly successful and entertaining afternoon (well with John Barclay as the speaker that was always likely to be the case). My thanks to Malcolm Griffin for the following two photos and to Ivor Evans for his review of the event which appears on page 2.



Looking ahead, our final lunch this winter comes on 15th February, the speaker will be Martin Richards, Vice Chair Sussex Cricket, who will no doubt be able to update us on Sussex playing news for 2023, plus any off-field matters for instance the ongoing ground development and possibly even any news re the County schedule going forward. A booking form is supplied. Please contact Barbara Eagles to book, the cut-off date for application is Monday 6th February.

Then on 22nd March our winter season ends with an “afternoon tea with Derek Pringle”, the former Essex and England bowling all-rounder who later became a respected journalist. So again there should be much of interest to enjoy. The event will start at 2.15 with Derek giving his talk then followed by a “tea” with sandwiches, cake, scones with a choice of tea or coffee. The price for all attending will be £10.00 per person (the Society is partly subsidizing part of the caterer’s original cost price). Pre booking is required, to book and pay (cheque or transfer – for transfer see details on the lunch booking form and include Tea as the reference) please contact Barbara Eagles by 14th March (4 Champions Row, Wilbury Ave, Hove, BN3 6AZ, Email eagles202@btinternet.com Phone 01273 778988).

The venue for both of these events will be the Pavilion Long Room. And a reminder that if coming by car and aim to park in the ground, please call in at reception on arrival to collect a parking permit and display it in your vehicle.

Sussex News – the big news this month is the announcement that Steve Smith will play three Championship games for Sussex this coming season (Worcestershire away, Leicestershire away and Glamorgan at home) all in advance of this year’s Ashes series in England, and possibly also the World Test Championship Final where currently Australia and India head the table to decide the finalists. While to some this has been a controversial choice, I doubt that these three games will significantly benefit Australia, or Smith, even if he scores a stack of runs, after all he has considerable experience of English conditions. These three games and the time around them should also benefit the younger Sussex players.

Also joining is Pakistan leg spinning allrounder Shadab Khan for the T20 Blast, he has recent considerable pedigree in this format. On the downside opening bowler Jayden Seales will not be available due to a serious knee injury which will keep him out of the game for some months. In my view the seam bowling may remain an area of potential concern which hopefully Sussex will look to address in the coming weeks / months. And congratulations to both Tom Haines and Jack Carson on being selected for the England Lions “Test” tour to Sri Lanka in late January and February.

January Lunch Event – Review

A new year and a change of venue moving from Third Man to the Covers or in other words from Cow Corner to the Spen Cama Pavilion. Pre-lunch there were two main cricket topics. One was England's tour of Pakistan, not only the 3-0 win but also the spirit in which the series was played. The second and far closer to home was the previous day's news. After eighteen months injured, Jofra Archer was back playing competitive cricket for Mumbai Indians Cape Town in South Africa's new franchise T20 competition. Jofra's figures were impressive, taking 3-27 in four overs which included one maiden. All things being equal, things should be exciting for both Sussex and England in 2023.

After lunch, which was enjoyed by seventy plus Society members, our Chairman, David Bowden rose to introduce John Barclay or rather as he said John didn't need any introduction. He was Sussex cricket, and limited himself to reminding everyone that John was President of Sussex Cricket, the Sussex Cricket Foundation, Sussex Cricket League and also of our own Society. John thanked David for his kind words and in return acknowledged David's work in all aspects of cricket in Sussex in the previous twenty-five years.

Without a microphone, over the next forty minutes, John, in his inimitable style, walked non-stop up and down the pavilion looking back at his time in cricket since becoming a junior member aged seven back in 1961.

Back then and for several years to follow cricket was about the professional game and the men's team. Women's and disabled cricket were way down the agenda. As a seven-year-old to get any training with the club you had to be a member. Facilities then were pretty basic. If it was raining, the training took place in the Pavilion using airflow balls. Much of John's tuition came from a sixteen-year-old Peter Graves! John had brought along some of his artifacts. His first bat: a size three, Gray Nicholls Ted Dexter Autograph, the ball from a wicket taking winning match and a bat he used in Championship games. (see pic on page 1)

John's first game watching was Sussex v Middlesex in 1962, bringing back memories for many of the wooden bench seats and the associated threat of splinters – a 6d cushion was an essential item for many.

John talked about the start of one-day cricket in 1963 and the 65 over Knockout Cup which Ted Dexter and Sussex embraced. He thought that with current over rates a one hundred and thirty over match would probably finish at about two the following morning. He was at the 1964 semi-final Sussex v Surrey. It was a full house, standing room only. He was in the south-east corner (look at the cover of the excellent Field Of Dreams – John was there somewhere).

John made his debut as a sixteen-year-old for Sussex against Jamaica. He was selected for Sussex next game against Glamorgan at Swansea. The journey and the game are lodged in John's memory. He was driven by Ken Suttle in his Ford Corsair. Suttle always travelled with George Washer the Sussex scorer who in turn travelled with a milk bottle (as to the reason why; we will leave the rest to your imagination!) A stop in Bristol was required to watch the Albion lose to Bristol Rovers 1-0, and via Gloucester finally arrived in Swansea at 2.00a.m for an 11.00a.m start. John came in at No. 10 facing Malcolm Nash. John missed the first ball and was out to the second. It was to be two years before he played for Sussex again.

John talked about Sussex being perpetually short of money for decades. The Club's safety and security was only assured with the beneficence of Spen Cama. His love of Sussex cricket both the County and Preston Nomads could not be overstated.

John moved on to talk about mental health and well-being. In his playing days the subject and the condition were hidden. It is both a scourge and a mystery. Thankfully much had changed since his playing days. He reflected that personally he was not afraid of fast bowling, but rather the fear of failure. John thought that the approach of England, Brendon McCullum and Ben Stokes was truly wonderful. It had cast out fear and allow players to play without fear. It gave people confidence. So what thinking and foresight to allow Rehan Ahmed, England's eighteen-year-old debutant spinner to bat at No. 3 in the second innings in the Karachi Test to gain experience. A similar approach in Sussex will give our young side the freedom to dream and develop.

One question from the floor was how it was it to manage Imran Khan. John responded by saying it was easy because Imran was such a committed player. However, he could not help but reflect on one John Player League game against Somerset at Taunton. Brian Rose was out and Viv Richards came in. Imran suggested that John put himself on as early on Viv was suspectable to slow and joke bowlers. John duly took the advice and promptly went for twenty-eight in the over including a number of balls going splosh in the River Tone – he was not certain which of Imran's categories applied to him!

John thought that the future for Sussex Cricket was bright. History balanced with progress. With Sussex exciting young players things were moving in the right direction, a good note to end on with those present showing their appreciation for an excellent afternoon.

Ivor Evans