



SUSSEX CRICKET SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

FOUNDED: 1965

CHAIR: DAVID BOWDEN MBE

APRIL 2023 ISSUE 662

www.sussexcricketsociety.org

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Future events

As and when dates and speakers are known they will appear here. Please note that this year we are to intending to hold a summer event.

Annual Renewals

Thanks to those members who have renewed so far. For those who have not yet and wish to do so please see the renewal form and information with the March newsletter Replies to Chris Scovell.

Raffles

Barbara Eagles wants to thank those members and / guests who donated raffle prizes at the various Society events in the past winter. And also to thank those who helped sell tickets or purchased tickets. Thank you for your help.

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

About 80 members / guests gathered in the Pavilion Long Room for our final event of the 2022/3 winter season – “Afternoon Tea with Derek Pringle” which like the previous events this winter was much appreciated.



A surprise and welcome addition on the day was Alistair Orr, our player of the year for 2022, being in attendance to receive the trophy. (See picture with Derek Pringle doing the honours with our chairman David Bowden watching on.) Alistair again thanked the members for the award, and after looking at the names of previous winners engraved on the trophy expressed his honour at joining such a list.

So to the main event of the afternoon, Derek Pringle’s talk which David Bowden introduced giving a brief resume of Derek’s cricketing career touching on both his playing days and also his spell as a respected journalist. Derek spoke about various players he played with, and in some cases, against, accompanied by photographs (hence the screen in the background of the photo above). First Graham Gooch, who Derek described as not only an outstanding cricketer but also a severe fitness fanatic which was not always to the liking of some colleagues. Gooch, he thought played the finest innings he saw, 154 not out against West Indies at Leeds in 1991. This took Derek’s vote marginally over Ben Stokes match winning innings against Australia in 2019 due to the difficult pitch Gooch encountered, plus the superior quality of West Indies bowling attack that day. We heard more stories for instance Jack Russell who seemed to make one tea bag last for far more than one cup! Then various stories with slides from England tours not least to Pakistan and India, for instance shots of Phil Tufnell and David Gower in India and from a different tour David Lloyd in Pakistan. I got the impression that Derek enjoyed these tours as much for the countries visited as for the cricket played.

Then followed our tea interval, and this year the offerings provided by the caterers Sodexo were both ample and enjoyable, a combination of varied sandwiches, scones, and cakes. A fine tea which was well appreciated by all I spoke to.

Resuming post the interval Derek faced a series of questions from members. Among them he was asked for his opinions on Imran Khan and Javed Miandad, he thought Javed was outstanding, indeed great batter, Imran when the mood took an exceptionally quick bowler as well as a fine batter. Both played important roles in Pakistan’s 1992 World Cup final win over England in Melbourne, a game Derek played in. An early memory he had of Imran was watching from the then side on players viewing area at Hove and in awe of his pace bowling down the hill. Keith Fletcher he thought was the arguably best captain he played with or against. University cricket is not as strong as when he was playing – not a “it was better in my day” thought but based on tougher admissions policies. Asked about grounds and in particular Hove, Derek said he enjoyed playing at Hove other than possibly when bowling long spells up the hill. Two favourite grounds were Edgbaston and overseas Melbourne (though Bay 13 could be a bit wild!). The reason for these two being that the grounds were level. Then to general agreement Derek said he was a firm believer in the County game, and ideally remain with fourteen games.

To conclude, warm and appreciative applause for an excellent afternoon. Thanks to David Harrison for booking Derek Pringle and of course to Barbara Eagles for again organising the event.

The 2023 English County season it's almost upon us indeed preseason friendlies have already been arranged, and in Sussex's case five days were abandoned due to rain before some play in the match with Exeter University. This in advance of the Championship season due to start on 6th of April which to me seems very early but then we've had that debate about scheduling for the last few years. What about 2023? Well come 6th May we'll see the Coronation of King Charles III, this casts my mind back 70 years to his mother, the late Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation. That was a year of many sporting highlights not least England regaining the Ashes after long periods of Australian dominance, and the Stanley Matthews FA Cup Final. Seventy years on can Ben Stokes's side repeat the achievement? As normal for Ashes series this will consist of five Tests, a rarity in modern times whether due to split tours, financial concerns from the host country, international white ball series and possibly more so the encroaching franchise competitions that have sprung up in recent years.

At this early stage I think England's chances in the Ashes must be good, the brand of aggressive, ambitious attractive crickets played at the behest of Stokes and Brendon McCullum and has seen four Test victories out of five in the past winter with just the one loss at the Basin Reserve in Wellington by the narrowest of margins, one run. Australia on the other hand having breezed through six Test matches at home between November and January, lost a series in India in conditions which politely could be described as "challenging" and likely to be far different to those that they will encounter this English season. Before the Ashes series they play India again this time in the world Test Cricket Championship final at the Ova in early June. It may seem odd based on performances in the Stokes / McCullum era that England are not in the WTC final which is contested by the top two sides based on performances over a 2 year Cycle, in the first of those two years England were floundering with a series of poor results.

Going back to 1953 it was a season in which Sussex finished second in the County Championship with only then mighty Surrey, May, Barrington, Laker, Lock Bedser(s) to the fore ahead of them. Sussex of course cannot come second in the Championship this year being in the second division, but all the messages coming out of Hove indicate serious ambitions about finishing in the two promotion positions this year, which would be a considerable turn a round after the last couple of years, but not totally out of the question. Yorkshire, I imagine, will be favourites to fill one promotion place even allowing for key absences.

Many Sussex players had good winters with various England teams. Robinson and Archer impressed in England's Test and white ball squads respectively. It seems as though Robinson may be available for some of the early Championship games pre the Ashes series and possibly even some of the September games. Archer, currently in the IPL and then possibly with England Test and 50 over commitments could restrict his Sussex appearances, conceivably none at all in 2023 for Sussex though I hope I am wrong on that. Of the younger brigade, Tom Haines and the ever-improving Jack Carter performed admirably for England Lions in Sri Lanka and no doubt will hope that continued progress in 2023 will advance international prospects. A further five, Bertie Foreman, Charlie Tear, Dan Ibrahim, Archie Lenham and James Coles were part of the England under 19 squad in Australia, where in particular Ibrahim and Foreman shone. The performances of the seven with the Lions or the Under 19s recognises the talent that is emerging from the Sussex pathway. Somehow to my surprise Ali Orr has not been recognised yet. The other good recent news was that Brad Currie the left arm opening bowler has re-signed for the coming season.

Cheteshwar Pujara, after an outstanding 2022 and during the winter reached the landmark of 100 Tests, is due to captain the Championship side though he may miss some games to India Test commitments (The WTC Final and a scheduled India tour to West Indies in July / August). Steve Smith will be available for three early games, plus the Australian seam bowler Nathan McAndrew who played some games for Warwickshire last year is due to join for the period April to July.

Sussex will play all of their first team games at Hove so sadly no visits to Arundel, Eastbourne or Horsham which have always been popular venues for Sussex cricket supporters. (I almost wonder if Sussex will use out-grounds for first team cricket again under the current County schedule?) Horsham however will host several second team games having successfully staging a number of such games last year.

In another blow to our out-grounds, Arundel will not host the Second Eleven T20 finals day this year which they have done for many years and has proved popular with many, and not just from within the Sussex boundaries. This year the day is scheduled for the Aegis Bowl, possibly another instance of centralising matches on "major" grounds.

Laurie Claydon RIP – Laurie who passed away about month ago at the age of 90 was an extremely well-known and much admired figure in recreational cricket in Sussex. For over fifty years he worked in a voluntary capacity in local cricket administration. Not least acting as Competition Secretary to the West Sussex Invitation League until it merged with other leagues in Sussex to form the Sussex League. In 2019 Sussex Cricket recognised his contribution making him a Vice President.