

BERKSHIRE CRICKET

YEAR BOOK
2024



Berkshire
Cricket

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Jayne Haines

CHAIR REPORT



I am delighted to share some headlines from the last year, my first year as Chair of Berkshire Cricket Foundation. We have achieved so much and continue to be seen as a high performing National County, across all relevant metrics. 2023 saw Berkshire Cricket successful on the field with trophies for our Mens 1st Team (NCCA 50 over Trophy) and our Boys Under 18 Team (ECB T20 Cup) as well as our Reading Under 16 MCC Foundation Hub team experiencing an amazing day playing at Lords where they won the National Under 16 Trophy. Along with our boys' Emerging Player Programme which has seen many young cricketers progress onto First Class Cricket Academies in the last few years, we have funded an 'Extra Provision Group' for our most talented

and promising female cricketers which has seen 10 of our players in the Southern Vipers Regional system.

Further we watch as a number of players from our pathway continue to their England Career, such as Lauren Bell who was selected and played across the multiple formats of the Ashes during the year and Shoaib Bashir, who recently made his debut. We are committed to and continue to produce great players in our pathway, many who play for local clubs and some who go on to play professional cricket.

Cricket can have a powerful impact on lives. The joy of cricket, of teamwork, of the highs and lows of games, and the adrenaline kick of physical exercise all help us feel happy, healthy and self-assured. As we look forward to next year, and the next five years, the Board are excited to be thinking about how we increase our offer to Women and Girls; increase our disability cricket investment; how we continue to offer recreational cricket to more people and get ready to seize opportunities to play professional cricket if and when the tectonic plates of cricket start to shift.

In light of the ICEC Report and the ECB response we have taken stock across Berkshire and established our action plan. In terms of governance, we have reset the Board's role, re-established the Finance and Audit Committee and established a new People and Nominations Committee ensuring that the Board has the structure and

skills needed to guide and lead the Foundation into new opportunities.

In the last financial year (ending September 2023) income generated by the Charity was close to £1m resulting in a small surplus for the year. Cash reserves remain healthy and gives us the opportunity to continue to invest in the recreational game across the county. The objective for 2024 is to continue to diversify our income streams, in particular, we are looking to fundraise through partnerships with sponsors and also access relevant grant funding where appropriate.

I am satisfied that these arrangements are robust and effective but, we will continue to explore how we can find better ways for the Board and its committees to ensure the success of

Berkshire Cricket Foundation for the benefit of all our stakeholders.

It's a challenging time to be in cricket, as we try to balance all that is great about the game, its history and the people whilst modernising, rethinking, honouring and challenging the past. However, only by leaning into the change, will we create a game that can be our legacy for many generations to come.

This is just the start of my journey with Berkshire Cricket Foundation and I'm looking forward to working with everyone involved, to bring more cricket to more place and more people, making cricket in Berkshire progressive, accessible and inclusive.





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Mark Roche

CEO REPORT



It has been a privilege to have led the work of Berkshire Cricket through 2023. It was another fantastic year for the charity, again delivering growth across all of our programmes and continuing our progress in our mission to deliver More People, More Places, More Cricket.

Across the club network there were nearly 1,300 matches in the Youth Competitions played by nearly 500 teams, including over 200 matches in the Girls competitions. Girls teams now making up over 1/3 of the teams in the youth competitions, a figure which continues to grow year on year showing how much potential there still is to make the game available to all. A huge thank you must go to the army

of volunteers in clubs who put so many hours in to providing opportunities for young people to play the game.

Our talent pathway contested over 400 matches across all age groups – from Under 11 through to our Over 70s team, and our Mens team and Boys Under 18s must be congratulated on once again adding trophies to our cabinet. The highlight for 12 of our Under 16 Reading MCC Foundation Hub players was, of course, not only playing at Lords but winning the national cup in late July – this is just one of the 10 hub teams that we run across the county providing free winter training and summer matchplay for players from state schools who are not in a County team.

The release of the ICEC report midway through 2023 highlighted some areas where the game needs to take action to address the imbalance of opportunities for children, young people and adults to both join the game and to enjoy their experience and feel welcome. We continue to look at how we can support the club network to remove barriers to participation, provide opportunities where these are in short supply, and make the game as inclusive as we can. Our continued work in Reading is a fantastic example of where we have created new 'community hubs' where young people can get their first experience of cricket and participate in regular activity without needing to leave the area and seek a 'traditional' club.

In the past few years it has been

great to see the significant increase in our cricket for good programmes, including providing over 400 children from disadvantaged backgrounds the chance to join All Stars and Dynamos programmes, fully funded through our partnership with Sky Sports and the ECB.

Our disability cricket offer has again grown, with three Super 1s Hubs in partnership with the Lords Taverners, and we have also worked closely with Reading FC Community Trust and other local organisations to deliver SEND festivals of inclusivity. Our next priority in this area is building a county team to play in the national competitions and grow the walking cricket offer for older people.

Street Cricket, supported by Chance to Shine, continued to provide free weekly sessions to children in Slough, Reading and Maidenhead along with competition days in the school holidays.

Through the ECB County Grant Fund we have seen investment of over £100,000 into clubs to enhance their facilities, providing a better experience for thousands of players across Berkshire.

Our focus in 2024 is to continue to support and grow the club game, continue to provide the professional game with players from our highly successful talent programme, and to increase the opportunities for new people to find their role within the game.

There is a huge amount of work that happens both on and off the field to make all of our activities happen, and this is all made possible by our passionate and experienced staff and supported by our board of trustees – I would like to thank each and everyone of them for their support and commitment across the year.





20 YEAR FLASHBACK

BERKSHIRE WINS FIRST EVER ONE-DAY TROPHY

**Berkshire v Northumberland at Lord's
Cricket Ground 6th September 2004**

(Northumberland 237 all out v
Berkshire 240 for 3 - Berkshire
won by 7 wkts)

Berkshire won the toss and elected to field, not uncommon in September finals at Lord's. They stuck to their task well and restricted Northumberland to 237, a manageable target.

Captain, Julian Wood commented, "We bowled and fielded superbly throughout and picked up wickets at crucial stages to keep them down to 237 in 50 overs. This was a great effort considering the short boundary on the Tavern side."

In reply, Tom Fray and Johnny Perkins provided a solid start before Fray was caught behind for 21. Bjorn Mordt joined Perkins who was next out at 116-2. Perkins had played superbly for 73, an innings that earned him the man of the match award.

Captain Wood then blasted his way to 51 to put the Royal County in sight of victory. His partnership with Mordt effectively sealed the game. Former Essex batsman, Paul Pritchard then joined Mordt to see us home with Mordt hitting the winning runs to finish on 72 not out.

That then set off great scenes of celebration in front of the famous pavilion as Wood was presented with the trophy with hundreds of Berkshire supporters gathered on the outfield.

Julian Wood summed up the day, “that feeling when we had won will stay with me forever; a real sense of achievement. I feel honoured to have been part of a squad that has made history”.

On his winning the Man-of-the-match award, Johnny Perkins recently said, “Looking back I was incredibly nervous to start with, but the feeling of being ‘in’ at Lord’s was fantastic and then I treated it like any other innings. It was an experience that I will never forget”.

Bjorn Mordt had been equally nervous before batting, “I was puffing on a cigarette when I knew I was the next man in. When Tom Fray was out I quickly grabbed my stuff and got down through the long room and out to the wicket. It was only a couple of balls later I realised that I still had my cigarettes and lighter in my pocket!” His nerves soon went and he finished the game with two big sixes into the Tavern stand!

It was also a fitting result for Berkshire manager, Gordon Child. As a former county wicket-keeper and captain, Gordon had been manager since the late 1980s and was nearing the end of his tenure. As the captain said at the

time, “..... many thanks to Gordon who deserves this as much as anyone”.

Current Berkshire coach, Tom Lambert, remembers the post-match celebrations well, but his day had an anxious start. Uncertain of whether or not he would be playing he was nervous when the captain approached him at the end of the warm-up and began the conversation with “Sorry Lambo....” but quickly followed it up with “.....but you’re not going to take the new ball!” All in that brief moment, Tom went from thinking he wasn’t playing to having it confirmed that he was, albeit in an indirect manner!

But it could all so easily have been different. The first-round game v Cheshire was washed out and Berkshire won a bowl-out 3-1! The bowlers who bowled straight that day would have had no idea how significant their contributions would be!

Subsequent victories against a strong Wales side at Swansea, and then a home semi-final at Finchampstead against Suffolk, showed more than a glimpse of Berkshire’s strength set us up for what would turn out to be a fantastic day at Lord’s.

Berks batsman Paul Pritchard had played at Lord’s numerous times during his years at Essex, including a couple of one-day finals. He famously said in the dressing room after the semi-final that “there is only one thing worse than losing a semi-final and that is losing a final”. Julian Wood remembered those words and then his team went out and made history!

Footnote – in the 20 years since that first one-day win Berkshire has won the trophy eight times.

50 YEAR FLASHBACK

THE HILDA OVERY TROPHY

Berkshire Bantams (U.19s) Win National Trophy – 1974

In 1974 the Berkshire U.19s won the Hilda Overy Trophy which, at the time, was the sole national competition for all U.19 county teams. Arguably, it remains the greatest achievement by a Berkshire youth team in the County's history.

For many years the only representative cricket overseen by Berkshire CCC below the County 1st XI was at under 19 level. There was also a Berkshire Schools set up which had teams at U.15 and U.19 level. Cricketers playing in the U.15 team only had the U.19s to aspire

to, there was no other youth cricket for young players below or above that age group and nor would there be for many years to come.

The competition results table each year was determined by the average points scored per match by each team over the season. Not all counties could play each other, and some teams played more competition fixtures than others.

In 1974 Berkshire played seven matches in the Hilda Overy Trophy, winning four games comprehensively – two by 9 wickets (Hampshire & Warwickshire), one by 7 wickets (Wiltshire) and one by 57 runs (Bucks) in a fairly low scoring game.



In two of the three drawn games the opposition were 9 wickets down. The Gloucestershire game may well have been lost but for the weather.

Our opening batsmen, Mike Hall and Paul Abraham, were the mainstays of the batting with five fifties between them. Hall's 90 not out v Hampshire eased us to a 9 wkt win and he remembers it well, "it was one of my more enjoyable knocks. Hampshire's opening bowler had a reputation and we got on top of him". His innings included twice clipping that same bowler over the wooden seats at the old Hampshire ground for six!

Richard Barker, Mark Simmons and Nevada Phillips also chipped in with valuable knocks, but very often the platform had been set.

Seamers Jonathan Seaver, Lee Ali and Simon Collis were consistent throughout and all contributed a five wicket haul during the summer. Lee Ali took 5 for 74 v Gloucestershire and was invited for a trial the following week. Steve Kingston also chipped in here when available.

Nevada Phillips made an immediate impact with his off-spin and his 5 for 28 v Leicestershire effectively won us the game. Mark Simmons chipped in with two 4 wkt hauls and Nick Teagle (ROS), Steve Kingston and Roger Beaven all played their part.

Our summer success was masterminded by the then Bantams Manager, Phil Dunthorne, who was in his penultimate year in post, and Geoffrey Clift, who was about to begin a long and distinguished period of service to Berkshire Cricket.

It had been a thoroughly enjoyable summer's cricket playing with some

very talented cricketers. It was a privilege to captain the side and to then be presented with the Hilda Overy Trophy by the lady herself at a celebration dinner at Reading CC in January 1975.

A team photo taken with Hilda Overy that night is the only 'evidence' we have of our success; team kits were still a thing of the future! That group of players was never ever together again, but all will have their own memories of the summer. Sadly, one of our stars that summer, John Seaver passed away in his 30s.

At the end of the season, Mike Hall was selected to play for the South XI v North XI and in the following few years six of that squad made their debuts in Minor County cricket.



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2024 - Player Sponsorship



Berkshire Cricket would like to thank these companies and organisations for their support of individual players for the 2024 Season. If you or your company would be interested in sponsoring or supporting a player for the 2024 season we still have opportunities so please scan the code and find out more here.



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MENS 1ST XI

REVIEW OF SEASON 2023

Our senior mens side once again walked away with silverware at the end of the 2023 summer picking up their 8th NCCA trophy title and their 4th in successive years. But their season may well be looked upon, by recent high standards, as an opportunity missed as they relinquished their championship title to Buckinghamshire and were blown away on T20's final day by Staffordshire. Head coach Tom Lambert takes us through the highs and lows of another NCCA summer.

Our T20 campaign was brought to an abrupt end by an amazing innings by Nils Priestley. Up until finals day we had executed what we wanted to exceptionally well and came through a tough group including Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Wales and Bedfordshire. Early season weather meant our opening game with Wales was abandoned a full week before it was to be played and game two and three in the group stage would be determined by conditions as the country endured one of the wettest starts to a memory I could remember.

At High Wycombe Vs Bucks and Wargrave Vs Bedfordshire we dealt with the conditions better than our opponents and put together four clinical performances to set up a deciding fixture with Oxfordshire at Thame. Knowing one win would get us through to finals day put all our efforts into game one to get the job done at the first opportunity. That opening game was an unbelievable battle which we managed to get over

the line off the final ball chasing 181, guaranteeing us a place at finals day.

Tring Park was the setting for our most disappointing day of the summer. Drawn to play Staffordshire in the first semi-final we were hit by the train that was Nils Priestley. His 160 is the best white ball innings I've seen at this level and created a mountain we were unable to climb in pursuit of a mammoth 250. Whilst you can only doth your cap to Nils, unquestionably there's more we could have done on the day to prevent the carnage that unfolded. Staffordshire went on to secure the T20 crown and underline the strength they'll possess in the years ahead.

With just a week to get over the disappointment of finals day, we were straight back into the swing of things with our first group game on the 50 over competition against Hertfordshire at Henley. The first half of the game went to plan with us dismissing Herts for just 190 but the second half was a disaster from the start with a combination of good bowling and indifferent batting resulting in a comprehensive defeat for the first outing of our trophy defence. Any lost first up puts huge pressure on the remaining 3 games.

Our trip to Devon was a must win and the less said about the game the better. On an incredibly dry wicket we were able to bundle Devon out for a low total with almost exclusively spin before knocking it off as confidently as you can on a beach!

Cornwall were next up and on a



ludicrously hot day we won the toss and amassed 325 with Euan Woods making 110. The heat bought about some incredibly dark clouds and just 5 overs into their reply the heavens opened and the game was abruptly cancelled as the Slough ground turned into a lake. We'd need a miracle to stay in the competition as we travelled to Bedfordshire for the last group game.

And a miracle we got! With help of a poor performance from Cornwall and a resounding victory against our hosts, we'd managed to turn around our net run rate to make it through to the knockout stage.

Our quarter final and semi-final victories against Dorset and Wiltshire were clinical chasing scores of 298 and 170 with few concerns to set up our 3rd consecutive Wormsley date with Cumbria.

The final was a tough watch where

for much of the game we felt on the back foot. Batting first it took a mature innings of 66 from Archie Carter and late heroics from Tom Nugent to set a competitive total on an ok wicket. We'd need to bowl well to retain our crown. With just 47 needed and 7 wickets and plenty of time in hand, Cumbria looked to be cosying to victory until two freakishly good run outs from Andy Rishton turned the game on its head and put pressure on Cumbria they couldn't deal with and a remarkable comeback meant we were once again crowned NCCA trophy champions. Our 8th final at the famous ground had bought us our 8th victory. A home away from home!

The last third of our summer would see our defence of the championship crown. We were unable to do this for a number of reasons we could go into forever but ultimately as coach, we weren't good enough. With 20 minutes

left of the final day of the season we were champions but a late flurry of wickets from Herefordshire meant Devon deservedly took the title and would go on to play against Bucks in the championship final. We will come back stronger from our red ball failings and will push to regain the title we'd win in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021.

So 2023 ended with silverware. Since 2013 we've picked up 17 titles to become the most successful ever national county. But as I write this it's February 2024 and the boys have been working hard since November to right a few wrongs from the summer

of 23. We look forward to getting the opportunity to do that in a few months' time.

Thank you to my captain Dan Lincoln for his support on and off the field for the past two years. We continue to grow as a county under his leadership. Thank you to Eric as our Team Manager who supports me in admin matters and Mark Simmons our chairman for his continued support. To Mark Roche our CEO and Neal Robinson our Head of Performance, a thank you also for your support.

We look forward to seeing you all in 2024.



WOMENS 1ST XI

2023 saw Berkshire Womens 1st Team compete on two fronts. Firstly, the ECB Women County Championship – T20 Competition and the South-Central Regional Cup – a 50 Over Competition organised by the Southern Vipers.

Like with the Mens t20 campaign, poor early season weather saw our first 2 rounds of fixtures cancelled with double headers against Sussex & Bucks. At the 3rd attempt, the season got underway with honours even across the double header's vs a strong Hampshire. The competition then culminates in a group finals day at Hove County Group. Up against Sussex who had significant regional and international experience in their ranks, it was going to be a great opportunity for a young Berkshire side to test themselves against a host of professional players. Despite a strong

bowling performance, restricting Sussex to 136/5, Sussex ran out winners and went on to win the group.

The South-Central Regional Cup sees us play the 5 other counties that make up the Southern Vipers Region (Bucks, Oxfordshire, Sussex, Hants & Dorset). The competition kicked off in June with an away win vs Sussex. Having posted 322/4 (50), a strong bowling display dismissed Sussex for 123ao. The campaign would come to an end with a defeat away to Bucks at Wormsley Estate. This meant the team ended with 2 wins & 3 losses earning a 4th place finish. Reflecting on the season there were some excellent performances with the bat and ball from a very young side that continue to grow as a team and have put in some excellent performances across the campaign.





Ariana Dowse hit the competitions top score of 118* vs Sussex, scoring 176 runs at 88 from her 3 appearances in her debut season for Berkshire. Along with runs for Holly Rider (134 runs - best of 63) and Poppy Tulloch's 112 with a best of 81. Partnerships in 50 over cricket were a key area to develop this season for the batters and this was evident in a 190-run partnership between Ariana Dowse and Ava Lee against eventual title winners Sussex. Dowse again was part of a 91-run partnership with Holly Rider against Dorset.

With the ball Ava Lee finished our top wicket taker and has enjoyed a stellar season, earning a spot in the Southern Vipers team during the Rachel Heyhoe Flint Trophy campaign, including the final. Ava ended with 9 wickets with a best of 4-14 against Sussex in the SC Cup. Poppy Tulloch and Kali-Ann Docherty ended with 6 wickets each.

After a fantastic season, Ava Lee, Poppy Tulloch and Holly Rider have all been selected for the Southern Vipers

Academy squad for 23-24.

Poppy Tulloch claimed six wickets with a best of 3-4 in the South-Central Counties Cup. Her standout performance with the bat came against Oxfordshire as she scored 136 opening the batting in a 50 – over friendly game.

Holly Rider had a fantastic season with the bat as she averaged 29.06 runs which included five half centuries, alongside a sublime 134 against Dorset Cricket. In addition to her batting success, Holly took ten wickets across the season.

Berkshire Cricket would like to congratulate Ava, Poppy and Holly for being selected for the Southern Vipers and wish them every success moving forward.



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SHOWCASE MATCH 2024

MENS SHOWCASE MATCH

**Berkshire vs Sussex -
Tuesday July 23rd, 2024**

Berkshire will this year be hosting Sussex CCC in the annual Showcase Match -The match will be held at Slough CC on Tuesday July the 23rd.

Following our two fixtures with Middlesex CCC in 2022 and 2023 highlighted by our brilliant victory in Berkshire's first ever 'Showcase Game' the fixture returns for 2024 as we host Sussex CCC at Slough CC on Tuesday July 23rd. The Showcase Games are a fantastic opportunity for the National Counties to test themselves against the best players in the country.

With every County hosting a First-

Class team these fixtures will not only showcase the huge pool of talent within the National Counties, but the hundreds of people that put such huge amounts of effort into recreational cricket across the UK.

This year's match will once again be free to attend, and you can register your attendance by following the QR code opposite - all of those who register, and attend will be entered into a draw to win a signed Sussex CCC shirt.

On the day there will be food and drink available around the ground, with a fully licensed bar in the Cricket Club, plus lots more as well!

Gates open at 9.30am with the match starting at 11am.

SOUTHERN VIPERS 2024

The graphic features a woman in an orange patterned cricket shirt holding a trophy. The background is orange with white splatters. Text includes the Southern Vipers logo, match details, and a QR code.

SOUTHERN VIPERS

SOUTHERN VIPERS
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RACHAEL HEYHOE FLINT TROPHY

Berkshire Cricket

Southern Vipers' 2024 schedule is now confirmed and Georgia Adams' reigning champions will again return to Falkland CC in Berkshire to take on the South East Stars in the 50 Over Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy.

Its great to be welcoming the Vipers back to Berkshire, and we're opening the gates for FREE! You can register your attendance here and should you feel able, can make a voluntary

donation to the Friends of Berkshire Cricket to support its work on their charitable programmes across the County. In addition each ticket purchased will also be entered into a free draw to win a signed 2024 Vipers Shirt which will be announced between innings on the day of the game.

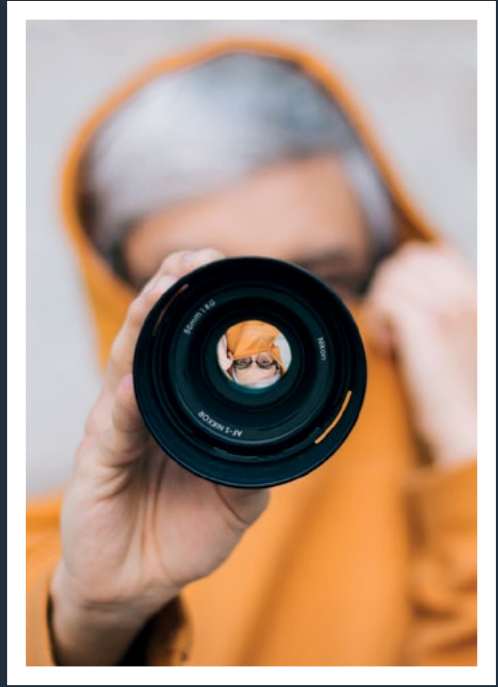
Thank you and we look forward to a great day on the 10th of July!

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Toby Greatwood bowling for Berkshire in the NCCA Trophy final against Cumbria at Wormsley Cricket Ground on August 27th, 2023. Photo by Roger Byrne.

Many of the photographs you'll see across this handbook and featuring on the Berkshire Cricket Social Media Accounts and Website throughout the season are kindly provided by the brilliantly talented Roger Byrne - Roger has a website with a vast bank of cricket images from across the country featuring many more Berkshire players in action from the last few seasons so we'd encourage you to check it out! Thanks again Roger for your fantastic images and support of Berkshire Cricket.

www.rogerbphotos.co.uk



CELEBRATIONS

2023/24 has brought about some outstanding individual accolades for members of our senior squad. Shoaib Bashir's meteoric rise has seen him leave our pathway and join Somerset as a full time professional, get called up to the England Lions squad, get called up to England's tour of India and make his debut in the second test of the tour. He becomes the counties first test cricketer since Aftab Habib who debuted for England back in 1995.

In domestic cricket, former pathway, EPP and current 1st XI squad member Tom Scriven won the metro bank trophy with Leicestershire as they beat Hampshire in the domestic cup final. Middlesex's Jack Davies and Hampshire's Toby Albert continue to develop in the professional game playing regular parts in their county's championship, Blast and Metro Bank campaigns. Both Jack and Toby signed



long term deals to remain with their counties last summer. Finally, Jafer Chohan played regularly in The Blast with his county Yorkshire and was awarded a wild card pick with the Southern Braves to become our first Hundred selected player. Tom, Toby, Jack and Jafer all played for the county during last summer's NCCA campaign.

Finally, Dan Lincoln captained The England XI to European cup glory in October as the side regained their trophy against the Netherlands in Spain. Andy Rishton and Toby Greatwood were also part of that victorious squad. Our head coach Tom Lambert led the side once again as they picked up their second European Trophy in three years.



MORE CELEBRATIONS

Freya Johnson and Ashleigh Muttitt who made their 50th first team appearance this summer and each were presented with a cap to mark this achievement. Freya and Ashleigh also played a huge roll in introducing young Shristi Patil to the side as she made her Berkshire 1st team debut at just 14 against Hampshire. The growing number of players in the women and girl's pathway system is providing such opportunities for players to burst through and get a taste of Womens 1st Team cricket at a younger age.

At a dinner to celebrate our 2023 successes the Player of the Year trophy was shared between two players, Luke Beaven and Toby Greatwood. Toby Greatwood took the award on his and

Bevo's behalf as Luke Beaven was in New Zealand.

The Emerging Player of the Year went to Rhodri Lewis, one of those to be interesting first-class counties and whose left arm spin helped turn the NCCA final v Cumbria

The David Burden Shield, for the Young Pathway Player of the Year, was awarded to Abdullah Iqbal. A young leg-spinner, Abdullah had an outstanding summer which included him being awarded the Player of the Tournament award at this year's Bunbury Festival, a national tournament at U.15 level. No Berkshire youngster has ever won this accolade previously.





SHOWCASE MATCH 2024

WOMENS SHOWCASE MATCH

**Berkshire v Sussex v Buckinghamshire
Falkland CC – Sunday May 26th 2024**

Berkshire will once again be hosting a showcase day for Womens Cricket at Falkland CC as The Berkshire Womens First Team take on their Sussex and Buckinghamshire counterparts in a T20 double headers as part of the ECB's T20 County championship.

We look forward to welcoming as many supporters as possible for a top quality day of cricket - full details of the day are available on the Berkshire Cricket website so please scan the QR Code above or head over to WWW.

BERKSHIRECRICKET.ORG for full details and to find out the latest activities planned for the day plus your chance to enter an exclusive competition on the day



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ECB COACH AWARDS 2023

And the winners are...

The ECB's annual awards says thank you to people that have made a significant contribution to coaching cricket. This year 117 coaches were recognised up and down the country and the Berkshire Winners were as follows



YOUNG COACH OF THE YEAR

A young person who is already making a difference and is passing on their enthusiasm for the game by inspiring the next generation of players.

MICHAEL LONGRIDGE – Sonning CC

For his tireless voluntary contributions to coaching across the Womens and Juniors sections at Sonning CC -
“Michael is purely a volunteer and even with his exams, revision etc over the past few years, he has still supported us with our coaching. I would like to hold Michael up as a real demonstration of a young coach who is there for the teams, celebrating the success, working on what can be learned”

COACH OF THE YEAR

A coach who goes the extra mile and is a true hero at their club or in their community.

ASIF IQBAL ASAD ALI – Slough CC

“Asif has truly revolutionized our club's approach to junior cricket. With a focus on both individual skill development and team strategy, Asif has helped create a well-rounded team that excels in all department of the game. Under Asif's leadership, our Girls and Boys section has seen consistent improvement, with players becoming more technically sound and tactically intelligent. We have Received overwhelmingly positive feedback from parents regarding the quality and impact of his training sessions.”



OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION – SERVICES TO COACHING

This person is the life and soul at your club or in your community. They have dedicated a significant amount of time to coaching and growing the game.

IFFY WAIN – Wraysbury CC

“Iffy is the literal heart and soul of Wraysbury Cricket Club. Every Colts parent, even those from all the opposition, know Iffy for his infectious enthusiasm and love for the game of cricket. In addition to that, there is hardly a player in the Thames Valley League that doesn't know Iffy, he is always either playing, coaching,

watching or merely scouting for talent.

Iffy has engendered a love for the sport of cricket and outdoor life in general. At a time when we compete with machines to keep our children entertained, Iffy is a beacon of light that gets children away from their screens and in to sport. We are very blessed and honoured to have such a great club man in our ranks.

If you know anyone who you think deserves recognition for their outstanding contribution to coaching in Berkshire, keep a look out for the 2024 ECB Coach Awards and how you can nominate that special person.





SCHOOLS AND STREET CRICKET

Chance to Shine in Schools brings cricket to thousands of children in Schools during their curriculum PE lessons. It uses cricket as a vessel to teach teamwork, resilience, determination and other key life lessons, alongside general sporting skills such as hand-eye coordination and catching.

We deliver sessions in schools all across Berkshire, from Slough to the villages of West Berks to mostly Primary Schools, whilst also offering a Secondary Girls Leadership Programme.

These sessions are completely free to schools, with Berkshire Coaches providing the equipment.

Chance to Shine Street brings cricket

to thousands of young people in urban areas. It uses the game to increase aspiration, promote social cohesion and create opportunities in diverse communities.

We are currently running Street sessions across the county, with Boys and Girls sessions across Slough, Reading & Maidenhead.

The sessions are all completely free, and Berkshire Cricket provide all the equipment.

As ever, we also had some success at Chance to Shine's regional competition, with our Chalvey Boys winning the South West competition, and making it through to the National Finals, held at the University of Nottingham in the Summer Holidays.

MCC FOUNDATION HUB FINAL



The MCC Foundation Hubs are a nationwide network of cricket Hubs that provide free-to-access training and match play to more than 5,000 state-educated young cricketers at 126 sites across the UK.

In Berkshire, we run 4 Hubs: Reading, Slough, Bracknell and West Berkshire. These operate as a layer below the Berkshire County squads and have Boys & Girls squads at U14 and U16 age groups, with a total of 272 places available for 2024.

Berkshire Cricket first took on running the MCC Foundation Hub in Slough in 2019 and have seen 5

years of uninterrupted growth in the programme since then.

In 2021, MCC Foundation launched a National Cup Competition, which excitingly includes a showpiece Final played on the main ground at Lord's. In 2021, our Slough Boys reached this Final, but ended up losing a nail-biting low scoring match to Manchester off the final ball.

Remarkably, last summer one of our teams again managed to reach the Final. This time it was the Reading Boys, who had managed to see off Slough, Guildford, Bristol, Brighton, Norwich and Wembley, setting up a

Final against Bradford at Lord's, on Saturday 29th July.

The boys had the full Lord's experience laid on for them, with a tour, lunch in the players' dining room, their families watching on from the pavilion and even a go at Real Tennis!

Continuing with their successful formula throughout the competition, Reading elected to bat first having won the toss. With a short boundary down the slope, and 13 runs coming from the first 7 balls, it appeared that there might be a very high score in the offing. However, wickets then tumbled quickly, leaving us 17-3 after 3 overs. Savir Sharma and Jake Wilson managed an impressive 50 partnership, at better than a run a ball, to put the innings back on track. However, just when Reading appeared to be ready to accelerate at the death, the introduction of the fast wrist

spin of Abdullah Hussain, who took 5 wickets, kept a lid on the final score. A total of 128 all out felt well short.

However, Reading produced an exceptionally disciplined bowling and fielding effort upfront, which combined with a very timid approach from the Bradford batters meant they had only managed to crawl to 20-1 after 8 overs. The one wicket to fall being an exceptional caught and bowled by Dan Fox. Bradford belatedly started to accelerate and were probably slight favourites when they needed 40 off 4 overs with 8 wickets still in hand. But Reading kept their composure and didn't concede a single boundary in the final 3 overs, and Bradford fell 12 runs short, on 116-5. Remarkably, Reading conceded just 3 extras (and only 1 wide), an incredible effort from an U16 team in the most high-pressure games of their lives.



SENIORS CRICKET REPORT

The 2023 season was our most successful year of Seniors cricket to date in terms of matches played and players representing the county seniors' section. The section continues to offer diverse midweek cricket opportunities for all seniors (aged 49+) who wish to be involved in the beautiful game.

Whilst enjoyment and participation are key, we do like our league teams to be competitive. We also have a principle that we make sure we are good guests to the clubs who host us throughout the season, to whom we are very grateful.

If any player or official would like more details or any club would like to host any of our (thirsty) teams please contact Richard West, our secretary by email rwestr@aol.com

Preseason nets are in full swing on Saturday mornings for the over 50's and there will be sessions open to all at The Piggott School on the first three Sundays in April at 11am, with outdoor nets to follow at Wargrave in late April/early May weather allowing.

Prior to the league season commencing the MCC will be sending a team to play our Seniors section Over 50's 1st XI at Henley CC on Bank Holiday May 6th. All are invited to attend.

THE 50+ 1ST XI qualified for the National last 16, where they lost to a strong Cambridge side, in a replayed match. The team was wisely captained by Gary Loveday, who was also player

of the year. Hopes are high to go one or two rounds further in 2024.

THE 50+ 2ND XI was the success story of the season. They reached their National final, losing a close contest to Essex. Sean Taylor captained the team shrewdly and Steve Clark was a very popular player of the season. The aim now is to build on this success and go one step further this season.

THE 50+ 3RD XI played several friendly matches and are improving. With ever increasing availability we hope to schedule more fixtures in 2024.

THE 60+ 1ST XI, captained by Jim Warren, who was also their player of the year, lost to Cornwall in the Bowl. The 2024 season will see them moving to a newly created South East Midlands Division, with opportunities to play a longer season against new opponents and visit new grounds.

THE 60+ 2ND XI had a competitive season, with Ronnie Brock their player of the year. They will remain in the strong South East Division for the coming season.

THE 60+ 3RD XI, with Mike Walton as captain and player of the year, played an extended fixture list of friendly matches and will enter the league for the first-time next season.

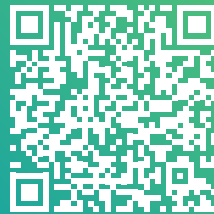
THE 70+ 1ST XI, a combined team with Bucks, lost in the final of the Vase against Hertfordshire, with Ian Harvey the player of the year. This successful joint venture has come to a natural end, so in 2024 we have agreed to form a joint team with Oxfordshire. We look

forward to this being as successful and harmonious as our previous relationship with Bucks. For anyone not selected in the first XI there will be W league fixtures on Mondays.

Colin Ainger, very deservedly, won the Graham Roberts award, which was presented at the successful end of season dinner, organised by John McDonald, attended by over 50 people, at Bearwood Golf Club.

I would like to thank all those who have made contributions in 2023, whether small or large, which have helped with the smooth running of BSC, and wish everyone an enjoyable 2024 season.
Andrew Davis – Section Chair

Become a Friend of Berkshire Cricket





YOUTH COMPETITIONS, CLUBS, GRANT FUNDS REPORT

The Berkshire Youth Cricket League competitions saw continued growth in 2023. Entries climbed to circa 400 teams across Mixed & Girls-only competitions. The league which is managed by Berkshire Cricket provides organised cricket across six age groups - U9s/U11s/U13s/U15s/U17s/U19s. It provides competitive, Division 1 cricket known as 'Blast' competitions which culminates in a Finals Day. This year all 5 Finals Day matches were live streamed on Youtube through Frogbox. Slough CC won both the U13 & U15 County Cups which meant they went on to represent the county in the regional rounds.

WINNERS:

U19s Blast – Reading CC

U17s Blast – Wargrave CC

U15s Blast – Peppard Stoke Row CC

U13s Blast – Crown Taverners CC

U11s Blast – Wargrave CC

U15 County Cup – Slough CC

U13 County Cup – Slough CC

FUNDING

£102,000 worth of funding was invested through the County Grant Fund in 2023 bringing the running total to £225,000 since September 2021. A further 13 projects were supported in 2023, to create more welcoming environments, provide enhanced

facilities or tackle climate change.

Over £11,000 worth of bursary funds were provided to support coaches attending Foundation (Level 1) or Core (Level 2) coaching qualification in 2023. This supported 103 individuals including 49 new female coaches.

WOMEN & GIRLS CRICKET

Women & Girls Club Cricket continued to go from strength to strength in 2023. The Slough CC U15 Girls enjoyed an amazing experience playing in the National Final at The Home of Cricket – Lords. Meanwhile, 8 years on from when Girls cricket was established at the club at U10s, Falkland CC Womens 1st XI finished as champions of the Premier Division of the Home Counties Womens Cricket League. 2023 saw 78 Girls-only teams participating in Girls competitions from U9 to U18 across Hardball & Softball Cricket. Open age Womens Cricket also continues to grow with 18 Softball & 14 Hardball teams.

WSB Winner – Slough CC

U18 Blast – Slough CC

U15 Blast – Slough CC

U13 Blast – Slough CC

U11 Blast – Finchampstead CC

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DISABILITY CRICKET

Disability Cricket in Berkshire continues to go from strength to strength. June 2023 saw us run our first showcase event at Holyport Cricket Club, with 6 teams joining us for the day. Throughout the year, players had further opportunities to play in festivals at Slough CC and Buckinghamshire. When we weren't at festivals, we were meeting at our weekly Lords Taverners Super 1's sessions at Bulmershe, Slough and Holyport. These sessions provide our participants with the perfect opportunity to meet new friends, develop new life skills and take part in regular sport.

Our schools programme allows us to bring inclusive cricket to young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). 2023 saw us deliver both soft ball and table cricket to 15 SEND schools across the county. Our annual Table Cricket event formed

part of the Berkshire School Games and was held at Braywick Leisure Centre in March. This provided an amazing chance for young people with a disability the chance to be involved in a mainstream school's event. It was our best supported Table Cricket tournament to date with 8 schools taking part.

We have formed strong partnerships with numerous clubs and organisations to help ensure more opportunities for disability cricket are available within the whole of Berkshire.

CURRENT SUPER 1S HUBS

MONDAY - West Reading @ Cotswold Sports Centre

TUESDAY - Holyport @ St Piran's School

WEDNESDAY - East Reading @ Bulmershe Leisure Centre





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TALENT PATHWAY REPORT

The 2023 season followed on from an impressive 2022 season for the boy's pathway, and the players and teams went from strength to strength. Our success is often defined by who isn't playing rather than who is, and both Andrew MacEwan and Isaac Humphrey spent most of their summer with Hampshire and Middlesex respectively, earning their places on their Academy programmes for the 2023/24 season. Isaac plays his club cricket for Binfield CC and Andrew came through the ranks at Sulhamstead & Ufton CC before joining Wargrave CC last year. The boys join other Berkshire graduates Nilesh Bhandari, Navya Sharma, Ben Salter, Eddie Campion, James Isbell on First Class Academies for the next season. On the pitch Andrew was part of our successful U18 side who retained their National T20 title at Kibworth CC in September under the guidance of our Head Coach Tom Lambert.

Abdullah Iqbal (Finchampstead CC) and Oscar Moore (Thatcham CC) kept up Berkshire's recent tradition of players at the U15 Bunbury Festival and both performed well, with Abdullah picking up the most wickets and walking away with the Player of the Week award. Tom Wellings (U14) another of our Emerging Player Programme was originally selected in the squad but had to withdraw through injury.

Our U14 and U16 sides, led by James Woodford and Mark Guest respectively, competed in ECB competitions over the course of the season, putting in some good performances both as a team and individually. Notable mention to Jago Edsberg (Henley CC) who scored 3 hundreds in the ECB competition for the U16 side. The U13 and U15 sides played friendly fixtures across the season, getting experience of playing a range of formats and working on how they apply the skills

they've been developing over the winter.

In the younger age groups, there was a large focus on Internal Match Play. Jon Stewart returned to lead on our U10 programme and picked up where he left off a few years ago, providing energy to programme and establishing the world class basics at the start of the players Berkshire journey. The U11 and U12 age groups had a combination of regional Hub cricket and some friendly fixtures against other counties. The regional cricket was well received and provided lots of varied playing opportunities to a wide group of players. A huge thanks goes out to James Woodford, Hammad Ali, Euan Woods, Osman Mahmood, Mike Smith, Matt Walmsley and again to Jon Stewart who inspired our youngest cricketers with huge energy and dedication.

The Girls Pathway had an equally successful 2023 as players continue to develop a love and understanding of the game. Our U11 & U13 squads participated in a series of internal fixtures with 75 players across the two age groups. The U13s squad also participated in several external fixtures against local counties.

The U15 & U18 squads are the two age groups that participate in ECB Competitions. The U15s compete in a 40 over competition playing Home & Away against 4 other counties. The side continued to develop throughout the season, bowling out every opposition they faced and posting 200+ scores whenever batting first. The side finished top of their group winning 6 out of the 7 games. The U18s also competed in a 40 over competition, in which they finished top of their group and progressed onto the National quarter finals. The side lost to the eventual finalists (Devon) by just two wickets. The U18s also competed in a

T20 competition against 8 other sides and finished this competition as runners-up to Essex.

Seven current pathway players represented the 1st XI in 2023 with U14 Shristi Patil making her debut for the senior team. The strength of the pathway was also highlighted with the

Southern Vipers announcements for Regional Academy & Emerging Player Programme (EPPs) groups for 23/24. Three players were selected to form part of a 12 player Vipers Academy Squad with Holly Rider (Falkland CC) & Ava Lee (Falkland CC) retaining their places while Poppy Tulloch (Binfield CC) joined the Academy. A further eight players were selected to join the Vipers EPP; Mary Briscoe (Henley CC), Molly Bulteel (Finchampstead CC), Poppy Camplin, Kat Collie & Izzy Storrar (Falkland CC), Kali-Ann Docherty (Binfield CC), Shristi Patil & Phebe Salter (Slough CC).

Another cohort of players were also selected to form part of the 23/24 Berkshire Extra Provision Group (EPG). The success of this programme to support players moving from County Age Group Squads to Emerging Players Programme was demonstrated with Kat Collie & Poppy Camplin progressing onto the Vipers EPP. Seven players form part of the 23/24 Berkshire EPG cohort; Lily Bowlby (Henley CC), Srishaa Ganagabalan (Reading CC), Ava Hewetson & Immi Storrar (Falkland CC), Fiza Asif Iqbal, Naaz Asif Iqbal & Tanvi Ravikumar (Slough CC).

We also had Berkshire representation at England U19 level with Rhys Lewis playing for the Men's side against Ireland and Australia. Ava Lee meanwhile represented the U19 England Women's side this winter on a tour to Sri Lanka playing the hosts & Australia. James Isbell and Nilesh Bhandari were selected in an Internal England U16/17 match play programme last September after exceptional seasons.

A big thanks to all those players, parents, coaches, administrators, clubs, grounds managers, umpires, scorers etc, etc that help to make our programme flourish!

BERKSHIRE CCC CHAIRS

The 2023 summer served up more outstanding cricket and saw the 1st XI qualify for the finals day of the NCCA T20 competition and then retain the NCCA Trophy (50 over cup) with a fourth successive victory over Cumbria in the final at Wormsley.

Our successes were down to the sheer will and determination of a young group who would never give up. They succeeded at times through strength of character, a collective will and leadership that always managed to 'find a way'!

In this regard, both on and off the field, Tom Lambert (coach) and Dan Lincoln (captain) set the right environment to maximise potential and give the team every opportunity to thrive. The pair oversaw a review of the summer in September/October before the squad came together again in the late Autumn. They then immediately began working on how we will do better in 2024.

There's no need for me to go into the cricket in any more detail here but we should share some collective pride in the fact that we fielded a team of home-grown players on a regular basis. I want to stress this because the 1st XI is at the pinnacle of a very solid, well run and forward-thinking cricket pyramid. A key part of that pyramid is our pathway programme, that produces the young players who we are able to keep feeding into our 1st XI. With us producing so many young players good enough for 1st class county academies and our senior team, the different phases of Berkshire Cricket are more interwoven than ever.

Now a fully integrated body, Berkshire Cricket is a high performing organisation helping to move the game forward and always prepared to adapt to new ways of working. We have helped influence the

operations of other counties and we are also more than in the sights of the ECB for our methods, our structure and our success.

In January, our Board chair, Jayne Haines, was elected onto the ECB's Recreational Game Board and in February, she and Berkshire CEO, Mark Roche, were invited to present at the full ECB Board Meeting. This only served to cement the view that Berkshire Cricket is at the forefront of National Counties cricket and its governance is on a par with many first-class counties.

As our successes and processes are recognised at national level, we must strive to maintain our standards at all levels. The full integration of Berkshire Cricket has allowed all cricket in the County to be planned and delivered from a position of strength and, at grass roots level, will ensure the expansion of opportunities for boys and girls to play cricket and feed into our age group teams. We will continue to advocate integration at every level and maintain open access to all for our cricket, on and off the field.

This is a good time to focus on what Berkshire Cricket has achieved.

Richard Thompson, ECB Chair, has made it clear that the role of first-class counties is to win trophies and produce players for England. By definition, any remit for Berkshire is to win trophies and produce players for the first-class game.

We have an excellent record in winning trophies but equally important is our contribution to the development of players.

Since 2012, we have had 13 players awarded contracts with first class counties of whom eight are currently contracted. Twenty-one of our younger players have moved into EPPs or Academies with seven or eight current at the end of 2023.

Thirty-one young players from our Pathway programme and Academy have played 1st XI cricket for Berkshire and 29

of the 36 players in the 2024 squad have come through our county age group programme.

In recent years, of the players who have moved from National Counties cricket into the first class game just over 20% have come from Berkshire!

In addition, in the Womens game, ten players have been integrated into the regional structure with Southern Vipers in the last couple of years. Our relationship with them will only grow and there should be some exciting news in the coming months on the development and expansion of Women & Girls cricket going forward.

For the second successive year our Under 18s won the ECB T20 Cup, defeating Staffordshire in the final.

Finally, we took a historic step at our AGM in December to close the County's membership and encourage our members to become 'Friends of Berkshire Cricket'. We did this because membership of the old County club was, by definition, membership of an elite group (our NCCA team) and so only offered 'inclusion' in a very small part of Berkshire Cricket as a whole; the tip of the triangle I referred to earlier.

'Friends of Berkshire Cricket' offers a more inclusive association with our cricket at all levels and is open to everyone. We believe that, in time, this will increase engagement as it enables individuals to support all of cricket in the county. Just as importantly, from a wider community perspective, in promoting the concept of 'Friends of Berkshire Cricket' we will be opening up and encouraging interest and engagement to a much wider audience.

As a final message here I would urge you, please, to become a Friend of Berkshire Cricket. It's a very simple process made easier if you follow the link on page 46.

MENS & WOMENS FIXTURES

The Berkshire Cricket 1st XI can look forward to the cricket season as their fixtures have been announced.

MENS FIXTURES

PRE-SEASON FIXTURES

April 7th	Cardiff UCCE @ Newport CC
April 14th	Middlesex CCC XI @ Wormsley Estate
April 21st	Wiltshire CCC @ Westbury CC

NCCA T20 COMPETITION FIXTURES

April 28th	Hertfordshire (h) @ Wargrave CC
May 5th	Buckinghamshire (h) @ Falkland CC
May 6th	Bedfordshire (a) @ Ampthill Town CC
May 26th	T20 Finals Day @ TBC
May 27th	T20 Finals Day RESERVE DAY

NCCA 50 OVER TROPHY FIXTURES

May 12th	Devon CCC (a) @ TBC
June 2nd	Cornwall CCC (a) @ St Austell CC
June 16th	Oxfordshire CCC (h) @ TBC
June 23rd	Buckinghamshire CCC (a) @ Chesham CC
June 30th	Trophy Quarter - Final @ TBC
August 4th	Trophy Semi - Final @ TBC
August 5th	Trophy Semi Final RESERVE DAY
August 25th	Trophy Final @ TBC

THE SHOWCASE GAME VS SUSSEX CCC

July 23rd	Showcase Game @ Slough CC
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NCCA CHAMPIONSHIP FIXTURES

7th - 9th July	Devon CCC (a) @ North Devon CC
14th - 16th July	Cornwall CCC (h) @ Wargrave CC
28th - 30th July	Cheshire CCC (a) @ Nantwich CC
11th - 13th August	Oxfordshire CCC (h) @ Falkland CC
1st - 4th September	Championship Final

WOMENS FIXTURES

ECB WOMENS COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP, T20

26th May, 10:30am	Sussex Womens 1st XI (h) @ Falkland CC
26th May, 4:30pm	Buckinghamshire Womens 1st XI (h) @ Falkland CC
16th June, 1:30pm	Essex Womens 1st XI (a) @ TBC
16th June, 4:30pm	Middlesex Womens 1st XI (a) @ TBC
28th July, 1:30pm	Suffolk Womens 1st XI (a) @ Chipstead Coulsdon & Walcountians CC
28th July, 4:30pm	Surrey Womens 1st XI (a) @ Chipstead Coulsdon & Walcountians CC
11th August, 10:30am	Kent Womens 1st XI (h) @ Cookham Dean CC
11th August, 4:30pm	Hertfordshire Womens 1st XI (h) @ Cookham Dean CC

WOMENS 1ST XI 50 OVER COMPETITION

21st April	Buckinghamshire (h) @ Sulhamstead & Ufton CC
6th May	Northamptonshire (a) @ Geddington CC
30th June	Hertfordshire (h) @ Finchampstead CC
14th July	Huntingdonshire (a) @ Ramsey CC



BERSHIRE OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

Berkshire Cricket Officials Association (BCOA) is committed to the development and support of Umpires and Scorers in Berkshire.

Umpires and Scorers who officiate for their own Club in the County and who wish to develop and progress through the League structure, can look to BCOA for training in their chosen discipline. In the run-up to a new season and at times during the season as well, BCOA's Education Team runs a series of CPD courses with the aim of improving the skills of umpires as they progress to becoming a panel umpire in the Berkshire, Thames Valley or Home Counties Leagues and perhaps even going all the way to the National League and beyond. The BCOA programmes also help umpires to be the best they can be for their Club should they not wish to progress to a league panel.

BCOA fully supports and implements the ECB ACO training programme leading to the Officials Pathway and many of the training and mentoring initiatives developed by BCOA have been adopted by our National body.

BCOA meets regularly throughout the year, usually on the second Monday of each month and at Wokingham CC. Our programmes include Laws Training, quizzes, debates on the things that go on during the playing season, and social get-togethers. We often have a guest speaker joining us and in recent years we have welcomed Neil Bainton, Ian Gould and John Barclay amongst others. Our meetings provide an opportunity for cricket

officials within the County to discuss all aspects of the game and share their experiences with their colleagues. Annual Membership of the Association is only £10 and our Monthly Meetings are free.

Contact details for all the Officers of BCOA can be found on the BCOA website at <http://www.berkscoa.co.uk/index.html> Why don't you come along to one of our meetings – the dates of which appear on our website – to see what we have to offer? I look forward to seeing you.

Colin A Mercer

Vice Chairman & Secretary –
Berkshire Cricket Officials Assoc.

Become
a Friend
of Berkshire
Cricket



CONTACTS

CHAIR

Jayne Haines (jayne.haines@berkshirecricketfoundation.org)

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Head of Participation – Mark Foster (mark.foster@berkshirecricketfoundation.org)

Head of Performance – Neal Robinson (neal.robinson@berkshirecricketfoundation.org)

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