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Beyond the Boundaries is published by the Professional Cricketers' Association, however the views expressed in contributed articles are not necessarily those of the PCA, its members, officers, employees or group companies.

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DESIGN

BUILDING A VISION

Welcome to Issue 36 of Beyond the Boundaries and following a very busy start to 2025 I am eager to see how the best professional system in the world unfolds this summer.

The off-season growth of the women's game now sees us at over 150 current professionals and it was very rewarding visiting their new environments, now embedded within the county ecosystem at pre-season meetings.

As an Association, we have worked so hard to provide equal opportunities and it was so positive to see 100 per cent of our women's players say the transition into counties has been positive, while acknowledging some teething problems.

The meetings were the first in my permanent position as Chief Executive, a role I was honoured to accept in January after a period as interim.

While we have a number of immediate matters like the men's domestic schedule and negotiations around the player elements of the County Partnership Agreement for 2026-28, the game is about to enter a phase of longer-term planning and through member feedback, we're spending this summer building a strategy to advance the services we offer our membership.

A key individual to support this is my new boss, Olly Hannon-Dalby after his election as Chair following a vote from the Players' Committee. I'd like to welcome Olly and say thank you to James Harris for his outstanding four years of service. I know from my time in the role how demanding this position can be and Olly sets out his agenda on page eight after a strong opening few months.

Ahead of Olly taking up his post, a big success of the winter was the agreement of the new maternity provisions for domestic women's players to a vastly improved standardised rights.

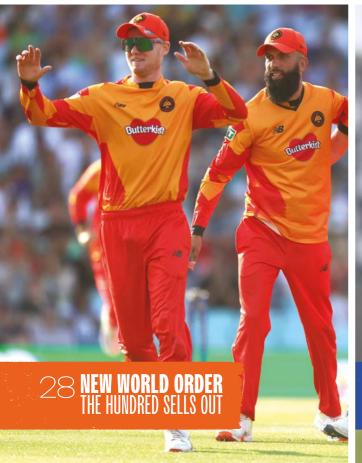
Our cover story leads with Katherine and Nat Sciver-Brunt who welcomed their son Theo into the world in March and their inspirational story and the new policies is supported by the views of Kathryn Bryce is a must read.

In a packed magazine, we also explore the journey of The Hundred sales, what it means for county cricket and we hear from former Glamorgan player turned sustainability expert Joe Cooke. Where possible, we always look to engage with former players to help the PCA and he explains how he is helping the PCA on its journey to be carbon neutral from page 48.

Enjoy your magazine.









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A LASTING IMPACT

A key driver behind the transformation of the women's game, **EMMA REID** looks to the future following the success highlighted in the PCA's Women's Cricket Impact Report.

The women's game continues to go from strength to strength. The Women's Cricket Impact Report reviewed the progress and the role the PCA played in Project Darwin, and it felt like the right time to publish it ahead of the summer due to the huge shift in the professionalisation of the women's game.

It is always important to evaluate what has been achieved and to take a step back to plan where we want to take the game moving forward.

Written in 2021, the Fairer Future paper highlighted the discrepancies between the men's and the women's game and ever since the document was used to start closing the equity gap.

Working closely with the players,

receiving their inputs at various pre-season meetings and understanding their priorities have helped us dictate the direction of travel in creating meaningful change.

Together with the ECB we have made such a huge amount of progress in a relatively short space of time. It fills me with great pride to see more than 150 female members with professional contracts holding an opportunity to inspire a new generation of girls to take up the sport, knowing playing cricket is a viable career option.

The minimum salaries of the women's players now align with their male counterparts at £28,000, which is a £10,000 increase from 2021. The

England Women salaries have also seen a staggering 236 per cent rise over the past four years.

We now want to reflect back on this as a key report that celebrates the successes but also highlights where further improvements are needed in the game. There is already a roadmap to grow the professional structure with two new Tier 1 teams set to join by 2028.

However, we need to make sure that things are not moving too quickly because the game needs to maintain its high-performance standards.

More than ever, I am motivated to continue to narrow the equity gap in the sport. For now, we want to support the growth of the women's game becoming commercially viable by keeping players at the forefront. It is our role to work closely with the players to determine the next steps and understand what is required to improve employment standards and salaries.





EMMA REID

Director of Player Rights
and Women's Cricket





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OLLY'S AT THE WHEFI

Newly elected as the 16th Chair of the PCA, Warwickshire seamer **OLLY HANNON-DALBY** sets out his vision for the future of the players' voice.

Being elected as Chair of the Professional Cricketers' Association is a huge honour – and one I'm incredibly proud and excited to take on.

Having gone through the election process, built my manifesto, and received the backing of the professional playing group after a decade as a PCA Rep, it's now my responsibility to represent my peers to the highest possible standard. A big focus in my first month has been getting out there, speaking to players, and hearing what matters most to them. Writing a manifesto is one thing, but listening to current needs and views is vital.

One issue that's been front and centre for a while is scheduling – and it still is. Around 80 per cent of players have told us they want to see change. We've been in productive meetings with the ECB, and for the first time in a long time, there feels a genuine appetite for change. From county chairs to players, there seems to be alignment around the idea of easing the current schedule just slightly. We're not talking about cutting huge amounts of cricket, but rather creating



breathing room between matches.

Cricket is an entertainment business, and we understand that members want value for money. But there's a tipping point, where playing four-day games with just a single day off, or T2Os with barely a night's sleep in between, becomes a welfare issue. That's when the conversation shifts from performance to player safety – and is where we must do better.

And whilst it isn't a widely voiced opinion yet, it's important we set those basic standards for the women's game too. Setting a baseline – like a day off between T2Os and two between 50-over games – is important. These are the standards that could shape the game for the next generation.

And these are massively exciting times for the women's game, by all accounts. Yes, there are teething issues – around facilities, ground sharing, and sharing access with the men – but

the feedback from pre-season meetings has been overwhelmingly positive. And the new Tier 1 county season is off to a great start. AVAILABLE?

As for the £500m investment in The Hundred, being talked about as a game-changer, for counties struggling with debt this could prove vital support. While the sale process continues, it's clear that the resulting pay-outs could offer vital support to non-host counties. And even if you're not directly involved in The Hundred, working for a financially healthy, sustainable club benefits everyone.

Those four weeks in August have become a major part of our summer. Players are right to ask how that success – and the revenue it generates – will benefit them. There are discussions happening now around insurance, rookie contracts, and the Futures Fund. These are areas where we can, and must, improve. For the



Those four weeks in August have become a major part of our summer. Players are right to ask how The Hundred success will benefit them.

Warwickshire's Olly Hannon-Dalby is congratulated by team mates after taking the wicket of Rob Jones in 2024.

betterment of our future.

Of course, some difficult conversations lie ahead around investment and how it's distributed. We can't ignore the growing pay gap in The Hundred. While total pay is up, the disparity between men's and women's salaries has widened. As Heather Knight rightly said at the AGM, "It doesn't look great that the top band in the men's game has disproportionately gone up from the rest of the pack." The women's Hundred has been a huge success – free-to-air coverage, double-header matchdays, and all-round brilliant cricket – but the pay gap must be addressed.

The new County Partnership
Agreement – which will determine how invested money is shared across the game – comes into effect in February 2026. That's why we've surveyed every player, to ask: What matters most to you? Now that we have that data, we can go to the ECB and the counties

with clarity, and push for the changes players want to see.

As for me, since the start of my career, the PCA has supported me brilliantly. Becoming a Rep at Warwickshire was my first step into this world. Becoming Chair now feels like a natural continuation – just on a bigger scale. And my aim is to stay in touch with all the Reps, to understand what's happening in every dressing room. What matters in front of me at Warwickshire might be different to what matters at Lancashire, or elsewhere – and we need to reflect that.

Over the course of my tenure, I want to help improve the lives of professional cricketers – now, and over the next decade. This is a big moment for the game. If we can take action in the areas players have highlighted – rookie deals, minimum standards, welfare, equality – we can make a meaningful difference.

Finally, I'd like to thank the two Chairs who preceded me. Daryl Mitchell did an outstanding job guiding the PCA through Covid, one of the most turbulent periods in our sport. And James Harris has been simply exceptional. The fact he did all this while continuing to perform as a top-level cricketer says everything about the man.

I already think that this is the best time to be a professional cricketer. And I'd like to leave the game in a better place than I've found it. There's a lot to do – but I'm ready to get stuck in.

0 D-04

OLLY **HANNON-DALBY**PCA Chair



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mara Carr ended the regional era of women's cricket in the best way possible. The wicketkeeperbatter formed part of the Sunrisers squad which lifted the 2024 Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy ahead of the new Tier 1 system.

With professional women's cricket now embedded within the county setup, the role of a PCA Representative is even more important with a sharp increase in professional players, meaning more diverse challenges. Following a successful stint as Sunrisers' Rep, Carr's position was carried forward when the team integrated with Essex ahead of the 2025 season.

As part of the original group of domestic women's professionals to be awarded contracts ahead of the 2021 season, the 31-year-old who hails from Devon expressed the importance of continuity to enable a seamless transition. "It is vital that these roles have stability as it

involves working closely with the PCA on various changes and issues within the game," said Carr. "As a Rep, it is valuable to have those player insights which has benefitted the transition over to Essex.

"The county has been really welcoming and supportive of us. It has been a smooth transition in terms of staff appointments and facilities, and it was a wonderful experience to play my first game at Chelmsford under the Essex badge."

Carr was present at the PCA's #AccelerateAction event in March which championed the rapid rise of women's cricket in the country over the past five years. The Women's Cricket Impact Report was launched during the event, highlighting the continuous rise in standards for female professional cricketers.

The right-hander emphasised its importance: "It is absolutely essential to make the most of the added insights and voices as it would impact the decisions which are going to directly affect us. So, the more voices we can get feeding back to the decision makers, the more it will help our game move forward."





Eyes down as two opposing players recall the onset of The Hundred...

Batting first, Lizelle Lee's 42 from 39 balls anchored the Originals' innings. Tash Farrant was the standout bowler for the Invincibles, taking 3-25. Some middle-order cameos saw the visitors to 135-6.

The chase began disastrously for the Invincibles when reduced to 12-3 by Manchester captain Kate Cross. It would take opposite number Dane van Niekerk's player-of-the-match performance (56 not out from 38 balls) – supported by fellow South African Marizanne Kapp's 38 (27 balls) and Mady Villiers 16 (8 balls) – to see the

home side over the line with two balls to spare. All played out in front of 7,000 spectators in south London for what was a standalone pipe opener.

KATE CROSS: It was a boiling hot day – the Oval is always 10 degrees hotter than anywhere else.

MADY VILLIERS:

It was so hot...

KC: We'd played maybe one or two warm-up games going into it. I remember telling people since that there were 15,000 people in the ground because they were so loud. I've since read that wasn't the case, numbers-wise...

MV: It felt so different to anything I'd ever played before. It was all



Top Oval Invincibles celebrate taking the wicket of Emma Lamb for a duck in the inaugural match of the new format. ABOVE Kate Cross celebrates taking her first wicket in The Hundred for Manchester Originals.

brand-new. The branding felt like it was everywhere in London. There hasn't been a standalone game since. I look forward to it starting every year.

KC: I hit the competition's first 6. Which makes for a good bit of trivia. I was also on a hat-trick, which the BBC's Mark Chapman had said would be the case during the build-up. He said I'd actually take a hat-trick, but it was a pretty good shout all the same.

MV: The fireworks as we walked out to field were pretty crazy.

KC: When we batted, I did feel we took a bit of momentum into the field with us. But we had no real idea what a par score would be.

MV: I can't really remember anything about bowling, but I can remember waiting to go in to bat and the coaches telling me to get Dane on strike, which I remember sounded like a good plan to me at the time.

KC: It definitely felt more of an event than a game of cricket. We had pop star Becky Hill performing, it was hot, there was a big crowd in – it felt like an international rather than a domestic game – I also remember shouting across from extra-cover to the bowler, Alex Hartley, to review an LBW appeal. But she couldn't hear me because of the noise, and we missed our DBS window.

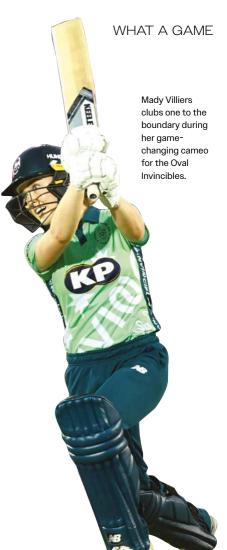
MV: I remember the noise more than anything...

KC: The game changed when I dropped a catch – a difficult one I might add – from Mady Villiers out at long-on. That was when I felt the game went from us. I think it actually went over the line for 6.

MV: Really? I'm sure it sailed over with her nowhere near it...

KC: We lost in the last set, which I bowled, but I remember not being too disappointed, as the game felt bigger than the result. It was great to see how involved the crowd were. The public decided on that day whether they liked it or not. And they definitely turned up to enjoy it. And they did.

MV: It was a nick through the slips that won it for us. And again, all I can remember is the noise. We were shouting at each other in the middle, but neither of us could hear the other.



OVAL INVINCIBLES VS MANCHESTER ORIGINALS

Manchester Originals 135/6 (100 BALLS) **LEE** 42, **FARRANT** 3-25

Oval Invicibles 139/5 (98 BALLS) **VAN NIEKERK (C)** 56*, **CROSS** 3-28

Umpires:

SUE **REDFERN**, TIM **ROBINSON**

OVAL INVINCIBLES WON BY 5 WICKETS

Manchester Originals

LIZELLE LEE
EMMA LAMB
GEORGIE BOYCE
HARMANPREET KAUR
MIGNON DU PREEZ
SOPHIE ECCLESTONE
KATE CROSS (C)
CORDELIA GRIFFITH
ELEANOR THRELKELD (+),
LAURA JACKSON,
ALEX HARTLEY

Oval Invincibles

GEORGIA ADAMS
ALICE CAPSEY
GRACE GIBBS
FRAN WILSON
DANE VAN NIEKERK (C)
MARIZANNE KAPP
MADY VILLIERS
SARAH BRYCE (+)
TASH FARRANT
SHABNIM ISMAIL
DANIELLE GREGORY

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SHORT STORIES AND UPDATES FROM THE WORLD OF CRICKET



UNDER THE LID RETURNS

The popular podcast hosted by Katherine Sciver-Brunt and Jack Brooks is back for a second series.



The joint venture between the PCA and The Cricketer saw the likes of Harry Brook, Heather Knight and Chris Jordan feature in 2024 while the new series kicked off with Nat Sciver-Brunt as each episode gets 'Under The Lid' of a special guest.

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

CHAMPIONING THE ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY

Alice Davidson-Richards has signed up to be an Alzheimer's Society Sport Champion following the death of her cricket-loving dad.

Following Geoff's diagnosis, the Surrey all-rounder found herself helping to care for her idol as he struggled with Alzheimer's and Vascular dementia.

"My entire life dad was my hero. He was fit, active and incredibly wise. Next to cricket, the one thing he and I shared was a passion for tea. So, the day dad forgot where he kept the teabags, I knew something was terribly wrong.

"The most chilling part was

the scared look on his face
- he was so frightened and
confused. I tried to make light
of it but I was terrified.

"It's important to raise awareness and encourage anyone with dementia concerns to seek support and get a diagnosis, it can be a crucial lifeline and unlock a wide range of support."

If you're worried about yourself, or someone close to you, then check your symptoms today using Alzheimer's Society's symptom checklist. Visit alzheimers.org.uk/checklist. The PCA can also refer you directly into their dementia support line by emailing alison.prosser@thepca.co.uk



CALLING ALL FORMER PLAYERS

The PCA is currently looking to its past playing membership for their thoughts to help the Association develop services for the betterment of the next generation.

Surveys will be sent out by email and if you do not receive this or would like a paper copy, please contact Ali Prosser on the PCA freephone number of 0808 1684655.

All those completing will have a chance of winning England tickets for the India Test at Emirates Old Trafford in July.



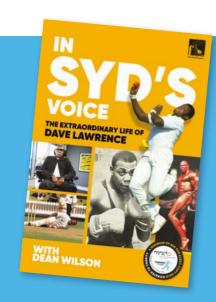


RECORD-BREAKING BOUCHIER

England opener Maia Bouchier formed part of a world record river cleanup in Wales earlier this year.

The member of the PCA Sustainability Working Group was one of the 1,327 volunteers to take part in cleaning the River Taff which was organised by Keep Wales Tidy as part of their Spring Clean Cymru initiative.

Bouchier was taken back by the amount of wastage in our nearby environment and urges everyone to take simple measures to protect our planet like having a compost bin and picking up the smallest piece of litter one can find on the roads.



A REMARKABLE STORY

In Syd's Voice is the story of former England fast bowler and Gloucestershire CCC President Dave 'Syd' Lawrence. From becoming the first British-born Black man to play Test cricket for England, to owning and running a fixture of the Bristol nightclub scene for more than 25 years, whatever Syd has set his mind to achieving, he has usually done so with great skill.

However, in June 2024, he

was forced to accept a fresh challenge, and one that he simply cannot overcome, when he was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND). Before his voice disappeared completely, Syd committed to telling his extraordinary life story, and this is the compelling result.

You can order your copy from fairfieldbooks.co.uk and a minimum of 50p from every book sold will be evenly split between the Cricketers' Trust and the MND Association.

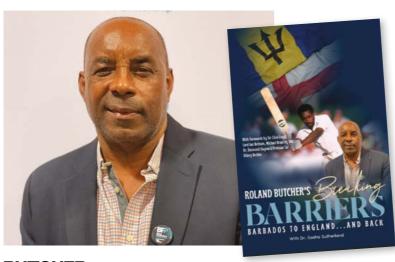


LAMMONBY BREWS SUCCESS

Somerset all-rounder Tom Lammonby, along with rugby union player Sam Maunder have opened their own café named 9|15 Coffee in Taunton.

Just a stones throw away from the Cooper Associates County Ground, the coffee shop was opened in February with club captain Lewis Gregory and Kasey Aldridge in attendance.

A number of the PCA staff were lucky enough to be served by the 24-year-old during their annual visit to South West England for their pre-season meeting.



BUTCHER BREAKING BARRIERS

Former England international Roland Butcher has released his powerful autobiography 'Breaking Barriers -Barbados to England and Back'.

With honesty, warmth and humour, the first Black man to play Test cricket for England opens up about life beyond the pitch and the struggles he had to overcome.

Butcher said: "This book is a blueprint for anyone who might have to break down barriers to achieve what they want, people reading it will see what I had to go through and how I dealt with it and take heart from that. Overall, I want it to be a teaching tool for aspiring individuals to achieve their dreams."



GATTING RETURNS AS CAPTAIN

Former England and Middlesex great Mike Gatting has been named the captain of the County Cricketers Golfing Society for 2025 on the occasion of their 90th anniversary.

Having captained England from 1986-1988, Gatting urges professional cricketers from around the country to join and enjoy one another's company.

The Society is open to all current and former members of the PCA and can be joined by visiting countycricketersgolf.com/join-the-society

ON DAYBOOD 10 JUNE 1989 KENT W NOTTS TRENT BRIDGE

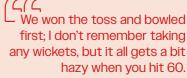
Former Kent all-rounder
MATTHEW FLEMING sheds light
on a blockbuster First-Class
debut after serving the Royal
Green Jackets in the military.

Having represented the army and made my List A debut against Sussex at Maidstone the year prior, my County Championship debut didn't foster any nerves on the day. I was 24, and cricket had been put into perspective by then.

It was a three-day game at Trent Bridge which was a fantastic place to start my career, and a ground I always enjoy visiting.

They had recently won the County Championship in '87 and featured the likes of Chris Cairns, Tim Robinson, and Chris Broad to name a few.

Another wicketless second innings had us chasing 311 on the final day.



Notts set a first innings score of 377, and by the time I went into bat at number six, Chris Cowdrey, our skipper, was nearing his century.

Andy Afford was bowling, and I walloped my first ball for six with a horrendous swipe across the line. Cowdrey told me off for that. The subsequent tentative block – to an Afford long-hop – somehow ended up in his hands. Six and out.

After a second first-ball six, this time putting Kevin Saxelby into the car park, I finished 36 not out, and we won the game.

L(C)
We played Nottinghamshire on the Sunday, which they won, and we lost the Benson & Hedges
Cup semi-final that followed. So they had the last laugh.













A DOMESTIC CHAMPION

Hometown hero and white-ball captain **KIRAN CARLSON** leads Glamorgan's MVP statistics over the last five years.

1,398PCA MVP Points

144.07 T20 Strike-Rate

I love scoring runs and when it leads to a win, it's the best of both worlds.

Total Matches Played

I have played with a lot of great players during the time and to get the most MVP points is something I would never have guessed.

5,552 Total Runs

9 Centuries 8 x First-Class 1 x T20 Win Percentage As Captain
During 2024 One Day Cup

To grow up in Cardiff watching Glamorgan to then lead them out in finals and bring back silverware to Wales is something I am immensely proud of.

Metro Bank One Day Cup Titles as Captain (2021 & 2024)



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- Kate Cross

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CCOL BEANS

England number three in-waiting, **JACOB BETHELL**, speaks to Beyond the Boundaries about life as a modern-day all-format all-rounder and giving life the beans. Coffee or otherwise.

WORDS: Kieran Longworth

uch has been made of Jacob Bethell's journey to the upper echelons of world cricket. The boy from Barbados – who arrived in England aged 12 with a vote of confidence from Brian Lara and Sir Garfield Sobers – has been pencilled in as something special for quite some time.

Good players think Jacob Bethell is good. Could be great, even. And as far as white-ball pedigree goes, a statement 88 from 42 against South Africa in the U19 World Cup set the tone in 2022 and had Warwickshire's lan Bell calling him "the best 17-year-old I've ever seen."

When Jacob Bethell last spoke

to Beyond the Boundaries in the summer of 2022, off the back of that World Cup campaign, his ambitions were grounded and clear, if not a little short-sighted: "I want to force my way into the Warwickshire side through performing well in the second team," he said then as an 18-year-old. Three years is a long time in cricket, and the landscape for this still-young talent has shifted entirely.

One year after that interview, he announced himself to the internet with a viral catch in the Vitality Blast for Birmingham Bears against Yorkshire, and a year after that hit the fastest fifty in Bears' history, making 56 not out from 16 against Northants.

Pretty much every time I've played against better people, I've played better.

This year Bethell made 87 from just 50 for the Melbourne Renegades against Hobart Hurricanes. His list of game-changing impacts is a growing one, and impressive at that.

So what does this mean for the young man now serving a £246,000 IPL contract for Royal Challengers Bengaluru? "I'm pretty chill, to be honest", he says, speaking from his hotel room in Bangalore. "I don't play cricket to get famous or to earn money. I play cricket because it's a sport I've loved for as long as I can remember. I played my first hardball game at six years old, and my dream since then has always been to play for England."

On his second Test match in Christchurch, Bethell scored 96, and despite only having a small sample size, he averages 52.00 with the bat in international red-ball cricket. Nearly twice that of his First-Class average. "Pretty much every time I've played against better people, I've played better," Bethell said after that match. "The step up to The Hundred, played better. Straight into internationals, played better. I didn't really have a doubt in my mind



coming into Test cricket that I'd have done well."

This is the man who rocked up for his Test debut at the Hagley Oval on an electric scooter with his now-trademark bleached hair, zinc-smeared cheeks and collar turned up. "It does feel like I'm meant to be playing for England. I think that's because I've been dreaming about it for so long, it almost doesn't feel new to me," he says. Bethell joins the interview via Zoom in what looks like a traditional Indian hotel. Colours red and gold, suitably.

"It's my second time in India, my first being with England earlier in the year, so I've got a bit of rhythm here now. And I'm enjoying it. The cricket's good. And the boys are going well, which helps."

One of the things that helps the

top-order bat stay grounded is routine. And coffee - proper coffee - the filter kind. "It's something that the Aussie boys share an interest in," he says, smiling. "There are some decent spots around here, but I prefer to travel with my kit. Zamps (Adam Zampa) showed me a few gems in Melbourne, but if I can make it myself, I can take that part of my life anywhere. My hand luggage in between games is remarkable. I don't take any clothes, just a kettle, coffee beans, a grinder, and scales. It's all part of creating a routine when away from home to get my head in the best place."

He adds that while he is yet to play for RCB at the time of this conversation, being in an environment that exposes him to the varied conditions India has to offer and world-class bowling in the nets is invaluable. The potent RCB attack he reels off includes the likes of Josh Hazelwood and Lungi Ngidi, the latter also yet to feature at the time of writing. "But there's no bigger name in cricket than Virat," Bethell continues, "He's been class around the group as a leader on and off the pitch. He's been letting the bat do the talking, and it's been a pleasure to watch. As much as I'd like to be out there with him."

RCB's first four games that pre-date our conversation have resulted in three wins and one loss, they sit third in the table behind Delhi Capitals who are up next. "It'll definitely be loud," the left-hander says of the anticipated atmosphere. "Before experiencing it, you don't know what to expect. I didn't really know what I was getting into. The crowds are amazing, obviously. They like their team - RCB fans no more than the rest - but you can really tell how we're doing just from listening to the stands. If we're not going well they go guiet, it's eery. And if you get a bit of a run it's deafening, in a good way.

"I've noticed the sheer amount of RCB fandom around India. Playing in Chennai, they'll be chanting 'RCB, RCB, RCB,' and the same in Mumbai. It's unbelievable to experience. And if I get out there, I can't wait to show them what I've got.

"It's frustrating that I didn't get to play here more for England", he says, referring to the hamstring injury picked up in the Three Lions' first ODI fixture against India in February. "That game I'd played pretty well, made an impact," he adds of a battling fifty and 1-18 from three overs in England's four-wicket defeat in Nagpur.

"I look back now and see that

I'd played a lot of cricket without a break. I think that time away from the game will be beneficial in the long run. It meant I missed the Champions Trophy, which was gutting, but selfishly, it was a nice little reset to take stock of the last few months and think about what I wanted to work on. And what I've achieved to date. It's a year-round job now, cricket, so you've got to take those chances where you can."

Bethell had a similar experience with a stress fracture in his back in 2023. "I'm not sure how that

Live been throwing and catching, diving around on the beach at home since I could walk.

happened as a spinner but there you go," he says half-jokingly when asked about that setback. "That time off had the biggest impact on my career so far. It lit a fire in me to grind and come back in the best shape I could, both mentally and physically.

"The toughest part was not playing cricket. I wrapped up what I wanted to work on around my game, and a large part of that meant working closely with Kate Green on psychology at Warwickshire. Going into the summer, I had a real excitement and hunger to do well – that's the best place to be. It made me realise how much I missed cricket. I find the mental

side of the game so interesting; I went searching for it. Searching for answers. You're advised to do that now, but I felt I wasn't getting the best out of myself with the talent I had. I was making stupid mistakes all the time and it was purely down to what I was thinking. Pushing myself on that side of the game is something I'll be proactive with for the rest of my career. It's nice to be able to piece it together."

And despite not playing any cricket since early February – those frosted tips synonymous with the number three's breakthrough now traded for a more sensible natural brown curl – Bethell's continuing IPL non-selection is something, he says, doesn't worry him too much. "I'm facing Bhuvneshwar Kumar in the nets with a new ball, and he's hooping it around corners, so I think that's pretty good prep for red ball cricket. The best I can get here, anyway.

"It's an important mindset shift for me personally. My technique and the way I bat is very much suited to redball cricket, it's a case of becoming more or less expansive depending on the scenario I'm faced with."

For the left-hander - a member of cricket's new generation of ultraaggressors adept in every format - this is simply part of the modern game. While the IPL typically benefits from a window free from international fixtures, England's four-day Test against Zimbabwe at Trent Bridge was set to start right in the middle of the tournament's knockout phase on May 22. The mid-season delay due to political tension with Pakistan caused further complications, although he was not selected for the first Test of the season as England set out to start the summer with the same batting roster as they did in '24.

Selected in the white-ball West



Indies series that starts in May,
Bethell continues, now speaking with
a heavier Bajan influence than when
our interview began. "With the India
series, and then South Africa coming
after. It's a jam-packed summer of
cricket, and I want to do what I can to
take it a step further, like I did in 2024.
That is making an impact on any
given moment, which is what you're
picked for. Whether that be with the
ball, bat, or in the field.

"I pride myself on being one of the best, if not the best fielder in the teams I play for. Especially on the boundary, that's my strength. I'm working on my inner ring presence at the moment, which I'm pretty good at, but there's a long way to go.

"I love fielding. I've been throwing and catching, diving around on the beach at home with my dad since I could walk. You can have such an impact, especially in the shorter form of the game, in those hotspots out on the boundary. If you pull off a great catch or a run out, and never let the batters get two, it almost always influences the result. I'm always asking myself: 'If I don't get runs with the bat, then how am I going to impact the game?"

With that prompting some discussion around his time spent Down Under – he averaged 24.38 with the bat and 19 with the ball in the Big Bash – the conversation turns briefly to the tantalising prospect of an Ashes series in Australia. "The way I played last summer to get into the England side started with wanting to cement my place in the Warwickshire team.

"I never thought my chance at the international level would come at the end of the summer as it did. Doing the same now is what's going to get me into an Ashes side – making sure that I make an impact every time I walk out to bat and showing people what I do best."



тор Friends and family flood to Bridgetown to watch Jacob Bethell play at the Kensington Oval against the West Indies.

On Debut: Joe Root puts an arm around Bethell after winning the First Test match in the series between New Zealand and England at the Hagley Oval in December.







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BUTWHAT'S IN IT FOR US?



Why *The Hundred* really matters. And why getting it right matters most of all.

WORDS: Andy Afford

escribed as cricket's most divisive innovation, The Hundred, has transitioned from ridiculed concept into a global sporting enterprise. In what feels like no time at all.

Launched in 2021 by the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB), the 100-ball competition was set out with the aim to simplifying cricket for new audiences while preserving its core appeal. Up to now it has effectively pitted some of the

world's best batters against some of the world's best bowlers. And had done so for the first time in white-ball cricket in the UK. All happening whilst fitting all of the action and enhanced punditry within the same 'TV window' made available to a game of football.

Now, as it enters its fifth season in 2025, The Hundred appears set fair, having on the face of things secured its future through a reported £975 million franchise sale, attracting billionaire investors, IPL giants, and tech moguls in its wake.

It all began when the ECB first broached the idea of a city-based T20 league as early as 2016. In that, Sanjay Patel, then ECB commercial chief, proposed a 100-ball structure to differentiate it from existing leagues and for it to appeal to time-poor viewers.

As stated previously, matches were capped at two-and-a-half hours viewing time, with supporting rules like the potential for 10-ball 'overs' (renamed as 'sets'), complete with bowling without swapping ends to speed the game up, and an extended – in the context of the format – 25-ball powerplay. Critics called it gimmicky; purists didn't disagree. But it happened. Only after COVID-19. To launch in 2021.

In all of this, the key to the format



finding its identity and its audience has been the notion of inclusivity. Ranging from double-headers - where one ticket secures entry for back-toback men's and women's matches. To equal prize money - all happening despite men earning four times more in salaries. And arguably the most deeply felt change being free-to-air broadcasts. With the BBC selecting and showing selected games, and with Sky Sports streaming all women's matches. This is the first time the Beeb found itself with a long-form part to play in the game's portrayal since first losing the rights to cricket in 1999. This 'hard stop' broke a run of 61 years for the Corporation.

By 2023, the presentation of the 100-ball format had gone from 'crisp-based' shirt sponsors – visually innovative in its own right – to wider collaborations with Marvel Comics, this being a collab that saw the introduction of superhero-themed promotions, targeting ever-younger fans. But despite the innovation – including ticket giveaways, t-shirt canons, and musical performances – financial sustainability remained elusive. With losses reported and prevalent. And substantial ones at that.

To the tune of an initial downside of £9 million (2021–2022), which was in stark contrast to Deloitte's, as it turned out, somewhat optimistic £27

million annual pre-competition profit forecasts. As such, the ECB needed to look for a lifeline. It found it, as sporting bodies often do, in private investment.

As such, everything changed on the 2025 franchise sale. Trailed in 2024, the ECB announced it would sell 49 per cent stakes in each of The Hundred's eight teams, while the same hosting venues retained 51 per cent 'control' of the entity. The overarching goal – on an executive level – was set to inject expertise and capital into clubs, in order to elevate the league's global profile and appeal. As well as to raise much needed funds for the wider game.

With that as the aim, by February 2025 exclusivity agreements had been signed with what read like a who's who of sport and business. Oval Invincibles was sold to the owners of the Mumbai Indians for a £125 million valuation. London Spirit - playing out of Lord's - went at a £295 million price tag to a conglomerate of 'tech titans'. It would be Delhi Capitals owners that claimed the Southern Brave for £98 million. Headingley's Northern Superchargers went all in, selling the whole franchise for a cool £100 million, effectively erasing Yorkshire's long-term debt. Leaving Manchester Originals, Trent Rockets, Welsh Fire and Birmingham Phoenix with new owners of their own. All for figures as yet undisclosed, but believed to be between £18-40 million.



UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT...

The ownership shake-up. At a glance.

TEAM		INVESTOR(S)	VALUATION	KEY DETAILS
SPIRIT	London Spirit	Cricket Investor Holdings	£295m	Tech leaders Sundar Pichai (Google), Satya Nadella (Microsoft), and Silver Lake's Egon Durban. Plus, Adobe's Shantanu Narayen and Times Internet's Satyan Gajwani.
TANDOT BE	Oval Invincibles	Reliance Industries (Ambani family)	£123m	Owners of IPL's Mumbai Indians; with plans to leverage T20 expertise.
	Manchester Originals	RPSG Group	£116m	Owners of IPL's Lucknow Super Giants; eyeing synergies with its SA20 team.
SUPER WARRENS	Northern Superchargers	Sun TV Network	£100m	Backers of IPL's Sunrisers Hyderabad; deal erased Yorkshires £15m debt.
SHE	Southern Brave	GMR Group	£98m	Co-owners of IPL's Delhi Capitals; already majority stakeholdersin Hampshire.
(Welsh Fire	Washington Freedom	£83m	MLS franchise owners diversifying into cricket.
SHINGAP S SAYOE NAT	Birmingham Phoenix	Knighthead Capital Management	£82m	Revitalisation specialists behind Birmingham City FC's takeover
R	Trent Rockets	Cain International & Ares	£79m	Property and private equity firms aiming to expand commercial partnerships.

*Valuations based on varying reports represent a ball-park figure.

In total, the sales – should they go through by the proposed deadline – will have injected over £520 million into English cricket, with that money distributed wider than the franchise holders, and out among counties and grassroots programmes. It all forms part of a now vastly improved context that saw, for example, Oval Invincibles' £125 million valuation dwarfing initial estimates.

More than anything, the job-lot sale reflected confidence in the league's growth outside of these shores, where that may have been otherwise lacking on the home front. Vision, as they say in all of these things, being everything.

So why did these overseas investors buy in so readily, and why – as importantly – in such a big way? Four key factors clearly influenced decision-making. Them being that there is an inescapable set of IPL synergies. Links that clearly align Reliance (Oval Invincibles) and GMR (Southern Brave) with The Hundred, in the process creating a gateway from which to further globalise their T20 portfolios.

This would also go as far as 'The Ambanis' at the Oval – the family worth a reported \$119.5 billion – and planning to integrate Mumbai Indians' overt high-impact branding into team and scouting networks, also influencing player selection at every stage. Thirdly, there is an undeniable tech influence. One that aligns the London Spirit's Silicon Valley consortium of owners with its aims to enhance digital engagement. In doing so, leveraging Al wherever possible, and then streaming any innovations globally.

Also, the general advancement of women's cricket is another calling card. With equal prize money and rising viewership, the women's competition offers untapped commercial potential. The gap in the market seeing Northern Superchargers' Sun TV owners planning to broadcast matches across India.

And finally, there is also the opportunity for venue upgrades. With Knighthead's investment in Birmingham Phoenix, and the city generally, aligning with their proposed redevelopment of Edgbaston. With all of the above ideas being underpinned by the sentiment that, in terms of the global sports market, there is 'value' to be had for investors – shorter-term or long-term – in cricket.

But in all of these things there remains significant challenges in making the most of the opportunities. The least of which will be getting the deals over the line in the first place. As

This is the first time that clubs will have a real chance to plan a longer-term future.

is always the case with any business transaction. And should the cashflow... flow, there still remains questions to be answered. Firstly, around the management of the competition calendar. Seeing a hectic schedule with the Vitality Blast and international fixtures risking player burnout and a downturn in lustre on both the county and international game. The sense of 'culture fit' also needs managing sensitively. Despite purists dismissing the 100-ball format, attendances rose by 12 per cent in 2024. And any global expansion that is planned needs to be managed carefully. With that prospect happening in the context of Reliance

and GMR already pushing for franchise friendlies in India or the UAE. From the outside, things already seem at an advanced stage of discussion, if not done and dusted.

Outside of the above there needs to be firm handling of the competition rules, particularly around player recruitment and retention.

Competitiveness is key in all sporting competitions. Retaining this might mean that the big IPL star names are made unavailable to their 'owners' when on duty in the UK. Mindfully protecting the sentiment that it is this parity of drafting players that makes The Hundred, according to coaches and team management, the most level playing field in all of the cricketing world.

Looking ahead, and with Sky Sports' broadcast deal locked in until 2028, the 2025 season opener is a London derby at Lord's. Not only will it feature defending men's champions Oval Invincibles and women's titleholders London Spirit, but it also pits the IPL against the 'tech bros'. And if this doesn't herald a new dawn for cricket in the UK, then what does?

Simplistically, The Hundred's reinvention and refinancing mirrors football's Premier League model. It being a world where private investment drives commercial growth, under the guiding principle of global rather than local popularity.

For England's cricketing landscape, it is slightly more complicated than its footballing counterparts. Counties of all sizes benefit financially, but in doing so cede some level of control to external stakeholders, largely for the first time. With 'member-owned' clubs likely to feel this shift the most keenly, keeping everyone happy – the players, the owners, the clubs and the members – means world-class management is required, to create a world-leading league. But it isn't a world away.



ASHLEY GILES
CEO, Worcestershire

A storied England playing career – Ashes winner, 54 Tests, 62 ODIs – the 52-year-old now steers a club outside of the 'big eight' venues by drawing on years as a player, coach, director, and ECB chief.

"I know that the deals aren't done yet, but there is the potential for the money to be transformative. For the two years I've been involved at Worcestershire we've pretty much been living hand-to-mouth. And this is the first time, I think, that clubs like ours will have a real chance to plan a longer-term future, where there were no guarantees previously – the opposite, in fact.

"We know that the money is a one-hit opportunity, and with that comes great responsibility, but it will be a means of securing the club's future.

"Whether that means clearing the existing debt, or finding a back-up option of a second ground, should New Road be unavailable for the reasons we regularly face around flooding. But we definitely can't go down the road

of chasing Surrey, in terms of signing players. That's a dangerous path.

"Cricket-wise, we only lose one player to The Hundred. And as far as that part of the season goes, I know that our members love the 50-over competition – it remains, what I like to call, a good day at the cricket. And it's the opportunity to play and watch young players perform.

"T20 cricket remains our biggest vehicle for generating revenue and we need to make sure that happens on the right days and at the right time. But more than anything, the money from The Hundred gives us the chance – taking an analogy from football – to put our foot on the ball. Where previously we've been playing whack-a-mole."



RICHARD GOULD CEO, ECB

This former British Army tank commander turned sports chief, has led Somerset and Surrey before taking the top job at Bristol City. Since 2023 he has headed up England cricket.

"It's undeniably a very exciting time for the sport, although contracts are yet to be signed, but discussions are going in the right direction. From an ECB perspective, all of the money from the sale, as and when it goes ahead, will go out to the network. Of it, 10 per cent will go directly to the recreational game, a good chunk to the non-host counties, and then the rest sits with the eight franchise holders.

"Money has been assigned for use in three areas. Paying off existing, expensive debt. This applies particularly pertinently to the likes of Yorkshire and Worcestershire, as examples. Some cash might go towards what we are calling cash reserves, ensuring that clubs have some 'rainy day' security. And then, finally, against investment in anything that drives the businesses forward; that's alongside the cricket. I know that, for example, Surrey are looking at building a new academy as a home for their boys and girls programmes, and that Durham are planning a hotel. Adding capacity looks important for the likes of

Essex and Somerset, but we're not really interested in just adding plastic seats. It's definitely more about improving experiences and improving facilities more generally.

"Outside of that, we are trying to avoid overly hamstringing what are potentially huge partners and players in the world of sports ownership. They have got to be encouraged in that regard to play their part. In whatever form.

"But more widely still, the window for the competition is set at 27 days – with a five-day warm-up period. That isn't changing. There has been discussions around the 100-ball format, but it isn't high on anyone's agenda. And the players' draft is another area of discussion; and what that might look like in the future. But as of now it's more about keeping things moving forward. That's a priority."



DARYL MITCHELL CEO, PCA

A former Worcestershire captain and prolific batter with 39 First-Class hundreds, Mitchell became PCA Chief Executive in 2025 after roles as Chair, Director of Cricket Operations, and COO.

"The competition came in during my last year playing at Worcester and I was in the draft but didn't get picked up. More than anything, from a player's perspective – and on behalf of the PCA members – with salaries static over the ensuing years, it's an added opportunity to earn income. As is franchise cricket abroad generally. For players and coaches alike.

"It has definitely been good for the profile of the game and for the players, with it being on terrestrial TV for the first time proper since 2005. And it has really done wonders for the women's game – in fact I'd go as far as saying it has turbo-charged it. This has been a huge positive.

"The players that have played it tell me it's the closest, in terms of standards, to international cricket.
Everything from how players are looked after, to coaching, to quality of cricket.
And those that have had a taste of it and have dropped out want to get back.
And those yet to get their chance want to be part of it. It is, by every account, fun to be part of.

"In terms of an environment, it's something every player I've spoken to wants to experience. It is also a truly family-friendly competition. And for those that aren't involved, the 50-over competition has been great for younger PCA members to gain development opportunities.

"If there is a downside, it has meant that we now have to fit four competitions into a five-month schedule and not six. So, workload for the players will need looking at. But as a membership we are committed to the 18 county system, the money it will bring into the game not only makes that setup viable, it makes it sustainable too."

Originals at the Kia Oval to a new crowd in 2021.

BELOW London Spirit's Charlie Dean celebrates with The Hundred trophy after bettering Welsh Fire in the 2024 final.



AND BABY MAKES THREE

New maternity changes in the domestic and international game have been brought in to support new mothers in England and Wales, improving the opportunity for cricketers to have a baby and return to play. Ollie Collins caught up with new mums KATHERINE and NAT SCIVER-BRUNT and baby Theo.

n experience, life changing, my life is not as it was."
The first six weeks of motherhood summed up by England women's all-time leading wicket-taker Katherine Sciver-Brunt. Admitting to feeling like an international athlete just five minutes ago, life has changed indefinitely in the Sciver-Brunt household.

Sat in the living room, dogs Bella and Bonnie resting in their beds, baby Theo asleep in Nat's arms, "He's behaving great for you but that means he won't sleep tonight," the new England captain jokes. "The main thing is that he's happy and healthy, but I've been struggling to stay awake."

Two of England's greatest ever women's cricketers and recent mums,

Katherine and Nat Sciver-Brunt, kindly invited Beyond the Boundaries to their home to talk about the pregnancy, the first few weeks of being mothers, the England captaincy and everything in between.

Another reason for the visit was to discuss the new maternity provisions in the game, which the PCA has lobbied hard for, in domestic and international cricket to support players that become mothers, providing them with the best possible opportunity to return to playing cricket.

A topic that has seemed somewhat taboo in the not-too-distant past, a women's player at the highest level has yet to return to play after giving birth in the professional era. Only once in recent memory has this happened,





the former England and Lancashire allrounder Arran Brindle in 2011.

Unlike most pregnancies, Katherine Sciver-Brunt had to endure tours around the world to Dubai, Australia and South Africa alongside breathlessness, carpal tunnel in her hands and sleep deprivation.

"It's a unique situation with Nat's job to be travelling the world, pregnancy was an experience, fortunately I didn't get the morning sickness but I had other issues. When Nat wasn't there I found it difficult even with simple things like putting socks on or getting out of bed," said the 39-year-old.

Being a mother wasn't always in Katherine's plans however, suggesting that coaching, mentoring, managing and commentary - despite having to be careful not to swear - were all on the agenda after retiring from all forms of cricket in August 2023.

"This is me now but I didn't want to get pregnant or carry the baby, so it's been bizarre. Nat knew she wanted to continue playing and I didn't want to be any older than I already am, apparently I'm a geriatric mother.

"It's a journey for everyone, we're not saying freeze your eggs, it's harder than society makes it out to be. It's all a bit terrifying really but it's important people talk about it," said the former England bowler.

"Missing appointments wasn't very nice at all and I felt very guilty," admitted Nat. "We then discovered you couldn't do a facetime whilst having an ultrasound scan which was a shame. Watching Katherine go through the pregnancy when she didn't think she wanted that in her life, she did amazingly and I'm proud of her."

Nat announced last year that she had undergone fertility treatment in the most streamed episode of the Under The Lid podcast in 2024. The



- I found it difficult even with simple things like putting socks on or getting out of bed. England star now has five healthy embryos for when she decides the time is right to be a carrier.

"I definitely want to carry in the future, despite how Katherine has described it. That was always the plan and that's why I froze my embryos so that the pressure is off age wise, it meant I could continue playing and Katherine sacrificed for us to start a family now," said the 32-year-old.

The couple have run a growing property business alongside playing for many years with Katherine admitting it affected the end of her playing career but that it's important not just financially but for one's mental health to have interests outside the game.

"We've been very entrepreneurial, you can't rely on cricket for everything, I had a bad injury about 10 years ago and it really made me think about the future. It's good to be diverse and invest smart, I can't stress that enough to the younger players," asserted Katherine.

Nat agrees, "We've always had something else going, it has taken over at times but just like with Theo I find it a nice distraction from cricket, it gives you perspective."

Another significant change with the Sciver-Brunts is that after 259 international matches, 7,483 runs and 181 wickets, Nat has accepted the offer of England captaincy with a big series against India on the horizon and a World Cup in October to add to the pressure, not to mention the fact the two previous skippers had nine and 10 years in the job, but it was always something that Nat saw in her life.

"To be asked to captain your country is incredible and something I wanted but the timing of it meant I felt a bit shellshocked. I can't wait to be captain and see what it's like with Katherine and Theo on tour, it will be a different summer but important to figure out what works best for our family," said Nat.



Previously, international players were on the same maternity cover as ECB employees, which fell decidedly short of being appropriate for international athletes.

"The new international changes look good," said Katherine. "It's not necessarily something we're going to massively benefit from because I had the baby not Nat but it means that other England players could totally make use of it. There have been lots of discussions with the PCA and on the Women's Health group and we've been fighting for improved maternity. Australia set a great precedent with creche facilities and nannies years ago, it's good to see we're catching up.

"I think when we were considering starting a family," continued Nat. "It wasn't necessarily 'oh great they've brought in the maternity changes, let's do it.' We're sort of like the guinea pigs C/C
- With the new changes I think players could come back now - having contractual security will take the pressure off, certainly.

MI SCIVER-BRUNT



for this at the moment."

The domestic game has followed the example set by England and brought in changes too with the PCA working on the inclusion of maternity provisions in domestic cricket as part of the new employment terms. The introduced cover a stark improvement to previous where nothing was standardised.

Nat concedes that the domestic game is still finding its feet and that people are only now just earning enough money to only play cricket but the new provisions could change that. "Players weren't able to think about becoming a mum financially but with the new changes I think players could come back now. I haven't given birth and I don't know what it would be like to try and get yourself back to that standard again but I think it's possible. Having that contractual security there will take the pressure off, certainly."

NEW MATERNITY PROVISIONS

ENGLAND

- 12 months fully paid maternity leave
- Automatic contract extension up to 12 months at same level as before maternity leave
- ECB will fund a support person to help with childcare
- Travel costs at home and abroad covered
- · Appropriate breastfeeding facilities
- ECB providing assistance with personal circumstances to suit family needs
- Provision for players' other children until legal school age

DOMESTIC

- Six months paid maternity leave
- Automatic contract extension for a minimum of 12 months
- Providing support based on personal circumstances on match days and training camps
- Ensuring appropriate facilities for breastfeeding and private family time
- Providing support person to help player with childcare for 12 months
- Cover travel and accommodation costs of other children under the age of three

Light-heartedly suggesting she would rather be in bed eating chocolate than having this conversation, and suggesting she's not as comfortable as she was with her pre-pregnancy body, Katherine offers her opinion as to why we haven't seen many mothers return to playing cricket.

"You don't look like an athlete anymore, I've seen interviews with Olympians who've come back after giving birth and thought how the bloody hell have they done that, but it's great to see them do it to show others it's possible.

"I've known many players leave the game to become a mum with no intention of returning. When we didn't get paid properly you had to get another job and provide for your family. With the changes and the incentives there now, I think it would encourage players to have children and return to the professional game."

A player who may well benefit from the new provisions in the future and is currently at the top of the domestic game, having won the PCA Women's Player of the Year and the PCA Women's Domestic Overall MVP last season, is The Blaze's Kathryn Bryce.

The all-rounder sees motherhood in her future and hopes that the maternity changes will enable her to return to cricket afterwards.

"The biggest positives are the support that you'll receive after the pregnancy, dealing with having a child in the professional cricket environment is quite an alien thing so having the support whilst travelling around the country is great.

"We've seen it happen more in Australia in the WBBL, and it's a lot easier in the men's game to come back after having a child but looking to the future and being able to start a family and extend your career is fantastic," said Bryce. - With the incentives, I think it would encourage players to have children and return to the professional game.

Katherine Sciver-Brunt celebrates a wicket in New Zealand, 2022 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup.

LEFT PAGE Nat Sciver-Brunt was one of Mumbai Indians' star performers in the WPL.

The 27-year-old is also positive about the facility changes that need to be adhered to, to make life as easy as possible for a new mother coming back to the game.

"It's vital having somewhere that you feel comfortable with breastfeeding and knowing that will be there for you when you return. It's going to be a ropey start but having those minimum standards in place as an expectation means that you can fully focus on your cricket," said the Scotland all-rounder.

The Player Working Group committee is exploring how to improve secondary carer and shared parental leave policies, which remain on their agenda as there is a general acceptance in the cricket world that there needs to be better game wide support for players looking to start families. Bryce is optimistic that counties won't just look at the new domestic changes as minimum standards.

"It's a great starting point from the ECB and PCA but I don't want it to be a tick box, as those domestic changes need moving more in line with the international ones. We need to continue to evolve and hopefully counties will go beyond the minimums, that will make players feel valued.

"It's a big unknown for the counties because it's probably something they haven't had to deal with before but as long as people are talking about it and being open and honest that will be best for the players," concluded Bryce.

Katherine and Nat agree that improvements are still needed and are eagerly anticipating what the support will be like once out on tour in another country.

Nat admits that some players have attended seminars on starting families and that increased conversations have opened up deeper discussions on the topic.

"There have been optional



Kathryn Bryce in action for The Blaze at Trent Bridge.

education sessions for starting families and fertility treatment discussions but then you don't get the 18-year-olds turning up to those sessions. But us doing the treatment has opened the door to a lot of conversations in the dressing room and people are talking about it which is great," said the new England skipper.

Theo stirs and the conversation reverts to the little human sitting in on the interview. Might a change of celebration be in order for Nat after scoring her first hundred as a mother?

"My average went up when we got married, so maybe it will go up again as a mother. I'll have a think of a new celebration for Theo."

"I'll make him do a little baby clap from the sidelines," Katherine quipped.

The best gift parents can give a child is a loving relationship and a

loving household, both of which seem abundant in the warmth of the Sciver-Brunt's home. Theo is certainly a lucky little boy and maybe a potential England star of the future? He certainly has the right role models.

Dealing with having a child in the professional cricket environment is quite an alien thing so having the support whilst travelling around the country is great.

KATHRYN **BRYCE**







ALL-ROUNDER

www.meplusu.co.uk





THE DARKLY HUMOURED AND CHILLIAN CHILL CHI

SIR JAMES ANDERSON;
THE TITLE FITS AS
SNUGLY AS HIS RIGHT
HAND ON A NEW RED BALL.
ANDY AFFORD WRITES
ABOUT THE SPORT'S
NEWEST HONOUREE.



AMES ANDERSON'S knighthood was by no stretch of the imagination a coronation of celebrity. But the marking of two decades of near-peerless performance in an England shirt.

The numbers, even for those of us who haven't lived every over, are sweat inducing. A shoulder-tearing 40,037 balls bowled in Tests alone, 704 Test wickets taken at an average of 26.46 apiece, in 188 matches played. It's the most wickets taken by any pace bowler in history and the fourth highest balls bowled tally in taking them. It makes Anderson the highest 'content creator' – to take from the modern vernacular – for any pace bowler. Anywhere. Ever.

The details, as such, run as follows. 32 five-wicket hauls, three 10-wicket matches, and the rare distinction of being the first fast bowler to take 50 wickets against all seven major Test nations. Which clearly is not just a mere bagatelle. And these figures only ones that relate to Test cricket.

In the white-ball game – very much the right-armer's number one suit at one time – saw him play 194 ODIs, taking 269 wickets at an average of 29.22, and at an economy rate just under five runs per over. With best figures of 5-23 against South Africa at St George's Park, Port Elizabeth, in November 2009. Easily forgotten is that Anderson was also part of England's squad that won the ICC T20 World Cup in 2010 in the Caribbean.

Famously Burnley born, Anderson's early promise was clear. But what now appears inevitable, his rise was anything but. He debuted for England in 2003 as a whippet-thin cove, all ice-cream-like mop of hair on top of 20-year-old shoulders. Then, his action was lithe and deceptively pacy. His run was long and fast. His stock-in-trade was, at that time, as a bowler of 'miracle balls' rather than the performer he became.

Injuries and tinkering with technique – sometimes at the behest of coaches – looked to have consigned him, again at one stage, to a



'normal' category of England players. But 'normal' wasn't Anderson's destiny.

A reinstated action and more control of both inswingers and out, he became what must be regarded as the complete fast bowler. In that he could move the ball both ways in the air – and via mastering 'wobbled seam' deliveries – both ways off the pitch. He could sustain his pace – quick enough to take the edge on any surface when optimised at 78-88mph – all of which depended on the surface.

In terms of career highs, his 500th

fast bowler in Test history.

Test wicket came at Lord's in 2017.
West Indies' Kraigg Brathwaite
providing the moment for Anderson
to reach the milestone, placing him
alongside Australia's Glenn McGrath and Windies'
Courtney Walsh. He would surpass McGrath's 563
wickets in 2018 to become the most successful

From an inauspicious start during the 2006-07 tour to Australia, he would go on to win the Ashes on four different occasions. The team's 3-1 win Down Under in 2010-11 – the first win there since 1986-87 – realised him 24 wickets. All playing a part in wins in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney.



James Anderson celebrates a catch in front of the Barmy Army Down Under in 2011; Coach Jimmy shows Olly Stone the ropes in 2024.



He could sustain long spells. Could set a batter up over multiple deliveries. Was patient when needed...

No bowler has taken more wickets at Lord's. His miserly 5-20 against India there in 2018, saw him take his 100th wicket at the ground. Unmatched by any other seamer.

Away from the field, he has carved out something of a second career as a broadcaster and recent hugely-popular author. His podcast, "Tailenders," co-hosted with Greg James and Felix White, has become something more than a cult favourite.

His influence also extends to the dressing room, where he is already earmarked as a mentor to younger bowlers, a sounding board for captains, and a standard-bearer for the levels of professionalism he has become synonymous with over his career.

His approach to preparation, to constant evolution – and to remaining 'relevant' as the game's skillsets and expectations rattle forward ever-faster – sees him remain the template for England's next generation. As well as the last.

And that's without factoring in his personality. Competitive. Often prickly. Competitive. One for

his fair share of 'verbal sparring'. And did anyone mention the word 'COMPETITIVE'. It's especially disconcerting for someone who is normally a quietly spoken person. And for all of his northern reserve, he's certainly not shy when it comes to fighting his team's corner. To the point where he remains respected by all opposition's without ever feeling like he's anyone's flavour of the month.

The numbers will endure. Of course they will. But so will the memories. Which doesn't always prove the case. For a master craftsman, at times he made it look easy without it ever being the case. His mastery of fast-bowling's classic three-card trick – two away swingers then a third 'back in' – found as many smiles from team-mates as it did pad or stump. It's one thing knowing it's coming, it's a whole different kettle of fish to stop it from happening. Or to make it happen in the first place. In short, we are talking about James Anderson's unstoppable greatness.

With the King of Swing now into his 24th season, the hope is that his calf – the same one that unkindly ended his 2019 Ashes campaign – recovers and holds firm. Anderson once again takes his place in the Lancashire dressing room, ever the steadying presence, ever the professional. Helping steer his county back to Division One would be a red-rosy opening act in what promises to be a quietly compelling final chapter. However long it might last.

UNDERSTATED ANDERSON TEST MAGIC.



ENGLAND
DEBUT (2003)
Against Zimbabwe
at Lord's,
showcasing the
raw potential of
the 20-year-old
Lancastrian,
claiming a firstinnings 5-73.



A CAREER-BEST (2008) Claimed 7-43 v New Zealand at Trent Bridge, removing all seven top-order batters.



PLAYER OF THE SERIES V SRI LANKA (2014) Took 12 wickets, nearly saving the Headingley Test with the bat. Demonstrating resilience and pluck.



500TH TEST WICKET (2017) Reached milestone at Lord's, dismissing Kraigg Brathwaite.



A PLAYER OF ENDURING INFLUENCE (2021) Anderson's 6-40 v Sri Lanka in Galle, leads to a landmark 2-0 away win for England.



OVER AND OUT (2024) Four wickets during his final England appearance at Lord's that included a second-innings 3-32 against West Indies at the Home of Cricket.



The category winners from 2024 urge fellow cricketers to celebrate their off-field achievements as Lodders mark half a decade of backing players as the sponsors of the PCA Futures Awards.

The Blaze batter Marie Kelly receives her certificate of achievement as Overall Winner after topping the Business Impact category.

he 2025 PCA Futures Awards, in association with Lodders, will be the fifth straight year of the award-winning law firm's partnership with the Association in supporting past and present member's victories away from the cricketing field. It will also see the biggest prize pot ever seen with candidates competing for £10,000.

First launched in 2013 as the Transition Awards, the Futures Awards has continued to reward proactive members for their personal development success across three new and refreshed categories, providing opportunity for all to apply based on their successes over the previous 12 months.

Over the course of its 12-year history, the Futures Awards has continued to grow and evolve into a bigger and better spectacle. The awards had a renewed format in 2024 which saw the six finalists come together to present their personal development journeys at Lodders'

Birmingham office.

With the continuing evolution of the event, 2025 will also see an adaptation of the Academic Progression category. Evolving to the Lifelong Learning category to celebrate an individual's journey of being a curious and a keen learner over the past 12 months.

With the applications for the 2025 PCA Futures Awards opening in September, the reigning champions across the three categories share their experiences and encourage others to sign up to display their progress outside of the game.

The Blaze batter Marie Kelly came out victorious in 2024 for her innovative apparel venture, Versatail – a company she founded to make caps for all female athletes regardless of their hairstyle.

The partnership between Lodders and the PCA provides members a stage to display their development away from the field, something the 29-year-old is extremely grateful for. "Lodders have



Lodders gets a huge amount out of partnering with the PCA and the Futures Awards, it is mutually beneficial and a blossoming relationship. We really value supporting past and present players.

HILARY **CAMPTON**Lodders Marketing Director

been fantastic and a great business to work with. Their staff made us feel very welcomed and were genuinely interested in our work and

how they could help us grow in our respective fields," said Kelly.

Hampshire all-rounder Nancy Harman, meanwhile, won the Academic Progression category, after impressing the judging panel with her services to the Royal Navy whilst pursuing a master's degree in leadership.

"Preparing the application in itself is really helpful in boiling down what you have achieved in the past year. It helped me add them on the CV which is a useful practice for future interviews," she said whilst expressing the importance of making a strong application.

"I would definitely recommend anyone who can to apply for what is a very beneficial process. I'm very glad that I applied, and I would encourage anyone who has made any progression outside of cricket to apply for one of the categories," Harman added.

Former Yorkshire seamer Moin Ashraf, the owner of MACC Academy and the winner of the Community Spirit category echoes Harman and motivates his fellow cricketing peers to apply for the 2025 PCA Futures Awards.

"Sometimes it is difficult to reflect on what you are achieving but occasions like the Futures Awards allow you to reflect on what you have achieved and receive credit for those achievements," he said.







aving spent his professional cricketing life with bat in hand trying to avoid zero, Joe Cooke is now actively searching for it... Net

In the 2021 One Day Cup semi-final, Cooke produced a phenomenal match winning performance with figures of 5-61 and an unbeaten 66 to help his side beat Essex and progress in the competition.

The final at Trent Bridge against Durham when Glamorgan lifted the trophy was Cooke's "favourite day on a cricket pitch" but in just a couple of years he would be out of the professional game and fully engaged in following his other passion: sustainability.

The 27-year-old realised his enthusiasm for sustainability whilst doing his Natural Sciences degree at Durham University and then explored the impact that climate change could have on cricket for his dissertation.

"I was fascinated by how climate could affect results around the world, such as England doing well in cloudy conditions and the financial impact on the sport with the more erratic weather conditions affecting play. I developed a realisation that we should be doing more as a sport because I love cricket and want it to continue but climate change could seriously harm it."

Whilst still a player at Glamorgan, Cooke undertook multiple opportunities to explore this new passion working with Friends of the Earth on campaigns to help supermarkets become more efficient, Sport Wales on helping local clubs save energy, alongside developing Glamorgan's own sustainability strategy. Cooke was even invited to speak at COP26 in Glasgow.

"I featured on two panels at COP26 which was a great experience. I sat on an athlete panel with Sky Sports about how sport can kick carbon and then spoke with the British Association

for Sustainability in Sport about how sport can be a good tool for influencing change in society."

The Climate Change Committee recently declared cricket as the summer sport most affected by the weather and Cooke wants governing bodies to think of the impact on player welfare and make smarter environmental decisions to help cricket reduce its global carbon footprint.

"There's places in Asia where cricket is played that the World Health Organisation have deemed unsafe to do outdoor exercise. Recently an Australian amateur player sadly died in the heat, and we saw Joe Root go to hospital after a game a few years ago. The ICC and ECB need to think about player safety. Another frustration is when the schedules don't make sense and cause extra unnecessary flying like the T2O World Cup in America and the Caribbean and the Champions Trophy in Pakistan and the UAE, there should be smarter planning involved here."

The all-rounders' transition from cricket into his new role was a gradual one and after trialling to get back into the game didn't go to plan, he landed a job with Net Zero Group as a Carbon Consultant in October 2023.

"It's quite a new job and it's constantly evolving with regulation changes. I was interested in Net Zero Group because they had been working with

Players should ensure they're using ethical banks and not ones that use their money to invest in fossil fuels.

There's places in Asia where cricket is played that the World Health Organisation have deemed unsafe to do outdoor exercise.

the MCC. The Premier League has released a sustainability strategy, and all clubs have to have a carbon reduction plan, I think cricket should follow suit considering our reliance on the climate. Ultimately the more erratic the weather, the less cricket will be played."

Cooke is thankful to the PCA and his Personal Development Manager, Martin Cropper, for helping provide support and assistance during the transition period out of cricket and into his new job. "It's a difficult time when you're leaving the game, Martin was fantastic at teaching me how to utilise LinkedIn, how to network professionally and ultimately, he helped me get the job that I wanted. That support you get is vital while you're transitioning and the Cricketers' Trust are there to support your mental health as well which is fantastic."

In his role as a Carbon Consultant, Cooke has been giving back to the Players' Association by helping to develop the union's sustainability strategy and working out how to reduce the company's carbon footprint with the PCA's Director of People, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Donna Fraser OBE.

"The PCA can have a massive impact on educating players on sustainability



and climate change. The working group has been great to get involved in alongside current players like Maia Bouchier and Emma Corney and hopefully we can get more players to talk about it and promote messages about environmental issues." Admitting he's not suggesting players stop flying around the world to play in tournaments, that comes with the current cricketing landscape, Cooke has however suggested a few ways that players can reduce their carbon footprint by making small changes in their daily lives to help benefit the planet and be more sustainability friendly.

"Making meat a treat is a big thing, it shouldn't be in every meal as it's environmentally damaging. Travelling greener by taking trains and sharing lifts is another positive change to make but the most topical is ensuring that your money is in the right place. Players should ensure they're using ethical banks and not ones that use their money to invest in fossil fuels, you can reduce your overall environmental impact significantly by banking ethically."





FROM TOP Olly Hannon-Dalby, Andrew Salter, and Joe Cooke attend Rookie Camp at Edgbaston in 2022; Joe Cooke presents at Rookie Camp; Former Glamorgan man in his role with Net Zero.



ENGAGING EDUCATION

PCA Futures Conference is evolving in 2025 with the Association's official education partner GEDU Global Education elevating the highly anticipated two-day event at St. George's Park.



An opportunity for past and present players to explore what the future could hold for them, the PCA Futures Conference in association with GEDU Global Education is always well received by members.

Each year, the Association organises the Conference to help players with their personal development to assist them in evolving their careers after finishing playing or alongside being a professional cricketer.

The two-day event held on 4 and 5 November 2025 at St. George's Park, home to the England Football team's training facility, is free to PCA members, includes hotel and expenses at the venue and comprises a host of seminars and workshops which allow the attendees to indulge in learning and helps them to find the areas of interest for their future careers, be that outside of cricket or roles within the game.

Personal Development Manager, Jas Singh, facilitated the event last year and is encouraging players to dive head-first into the sessions for their benefit in 2025: "The more the players engage with the sessions, the more they will get out of the conference and historically players have always engaged with the content really positively and learnt a lot.

"The players should understand that their transferable skills from cricket will stand them in good stead for the world of work after playing professional cricket," said Singh.

Having suffered from injury last season, Kent left-arm seam bowler Fred Klaassen attended last year's conference and wanted to explore what options were available to him once he finishes playing.

"The conference gave a great oversight into what the future could look like for us players. Exceptional experts delivered a breadth of knowledge and I'm grateful to the PCA for putting on the event, I'd encourage every player that is thinking about their future to attend this year," said Klaassen.

The partnership between the PCA

THERE ARE FOUR KEY CORNERSTONES TO THE CONFERENCE WHICH WE WILL LOOK TO DELIVER:

1/ CONFIDENCE

2/ SKILLS

3/ KNOWLEDGE

4/ ACTION PLANNING

and GEDU will ensure PCA members are supported from an educational perspective during and after their professional playing careers.

GEDU Group CFO, Petros Neocleous, is delighted to be supporting the PCA with such an important educational event. "We at GEDU are really excited to be on board with the Futures Conference seeing as it's a flagship event of the PCA's Personal Development and Welfare Programme. We can't wait to see how our diverse course offering through our partner institutions can benefit players both past and present."



After a winter that saw Personal Development Managers on the ground at overseas franchise tournaments, Senior PDM TOM JONES reflects on time well spent...

In the ever-changing global landscape of franchise cricket, the PCA has had to work hard to adapt the methods in which current players are communicated with and supported.

During the winter period we have members playing in multiple tournaments around the globe and subsequently these players spend very little time in their county environments. Committed to delivering the Personal Development and Welfare Programme (PDWP) to the whole membership, the PDM team have adapted their approach to make sure that PCA members feel that sense of belonging and support wherever they are plying their trade. During the 2023/24 winter, the

PDM team developed a bank of digital resources to promote positive wellbeing and communicated with the players frequently via group messaging and individual touchpoints. Although this created a connection for each player, it was clear that supporting player wellbeing remotely was not the personable and practical provision that forms the foundation of the PDWP.

After feedback, reflection, and planning, the '24/'25 programme looked very different. There was a focus on investment in our members via evidence-based wellbeing tools and crucially, on the ground PDM support in selected tournaments. The PCA engaged the services of Live Brave, an online pilates provider founded by Louise Buttler, the wife of Jos. This collaboration offered members unlimited winter access to a specialised pilates programme that would not only promote positive mental wellbeing of players but help them

ABOVE Alice Capsey celebrates the wicket of Smriti Mandhana whilst playing for Delhi Capitals in 2023.



Being able to connect with a familiar face independent of the Delhi Capitals helped me process my winter to that point.

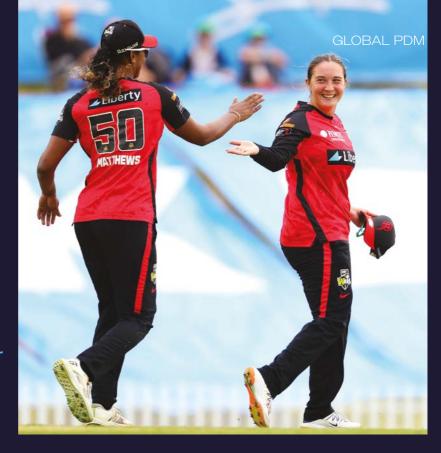
ALICE CAPSEY

prepare and recover while they were in competitive action.

The face-to-face element of our global support programme was piloted this winter via two tournaments, the men's ILT20 tournament in Dubai, which was attended by Senior PDM, Martin Cropper and the Women's Premier League Tournament in India where I spent time meeting our members away from their demanding team environments.

The aim of the these visits was to pilot face-to-face support in the franchise cricket environments. Previous feedback from players has highlighted that players report varying wellbeing levels while away at franchise tournaments with various environmental factors impacting that wellbeing.

The factors out of players control such as accommodation, player support, ownership pressures and team selection can have a negative



Hayley Matthews congratulates
Alice Capsey after claiming the
wicket of Katie Mack in the WBBL.

impact on wellbeing on top of being away from home and the isolation and loneliness that comes with that.

Player feedback has been positive with regards to PCA franchise support, when asked for feedback via short surveys, the players particularly enjoyed the resources that helped them maximise their wellbeing in particular the Live Brave Pilates offer and practical resources such as links to online meditation sessions or recommended podcasts.

One player who benefited from the face-to-face visits was Alice Capsey who after a long winter away with England at the Ashes, travelled directly to India for the WPL. "Having a PDM travel out to the WPL was really beneficial for me," she said. "Being able to connect with a familiar face independent of the Delhi Capitals helped me process my winter to that point. With the WPL being quite an intense period of cricket, it was so

helpful to have Tom come out and have conversations that took the focus away from the tournament and back towards my wider career."

In addition to the wellbeing focus of the franchise support programme, the PCA is able to provide operational and safety information to players travelling to tournaments across the globe. The increased communication via WhatsApp allows the PCA to update players with instant information should there be a need and allow for group communications where in tournament support is required.

As the sport becomes increasingly globalised the PCA will continue to evolve the approach to player support ensuring our members needs are met regardless of their location.

JOSH BAKER'S LEGACY

The JB33 Foundation set up in memory of former Worcestershire spinner **JOSH BAKER** by his parents is aiming to help everyone involved in cricket from budding future professionals in the county pathways to umpires and scorers at local clubs.

The lives of Lisa and Paul Baker changed forever on Thursday 2
May 2024. Their only child Josh, passed away from sudden arrhythmic death syndrome, transforming their world irreparably.

Penned in the last edition of BtB, former teammate Joe Leach composed an emotional tribute to the young spinner highlighting the huge impact Baker had on the Worcestershire squad.

A tribute his parents thought was befitting of their son, since his passing the couple have been committed to setting up a foundation in Josh's name to help as many people as they can in the game of cricket.

"The JB33 Foundation is for us to remember Josh, as a family we got so much out of cricket, having seen the opportunities it gave him, we want to give back to the sport in any way we can," said Paul.

And these are sentiments replicated by Lisa, by all accounts: "It was totally unexpected and completely floored us, we knew we wanted to do something to keep his memory alive and if we can help others along the way then that's a real positive." The couple remember the friendships they've seen prosper through the game, and how cricket gave Josh discipline and developed his character as a young person into the adult he became. All part of the driving force for wanting to help everyone in the game.

"Clubs don't exist without those volunteers and seeing their teams do well enriches their lives, we'd love to be able to support people through scoring or umpiring courses, that's just as important as trying to help a young player through the pathways," continued dad, Paul.

Lisa has a passion for wanting to help local clubs with first-aid after an off duty paramedic at Baker's club, Astwood Bank, volunteered to look through the first-aid kit and found it to be out-dated and of little use.

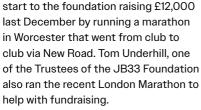
"Every club has a first-aid kit, but does it function and is it in date? Ours wasn't. Most clubs now have defibrillators, which is great, but they're also expensive to maintain with batteries and pads that expire. If that's happening at one club, it could be happening around the country and I think we could help change that," said mum, Lisa.

Some of Josh's friends made a great









The couple have been overwhelmed by the support from the cricketing world especially from Worcestershire and the players with little messages to check-in meaning the most to the parents.

"Most people's lives go back to normal quite quickly but ours will never be the same again. The messages mean so much because it means people are thinking about him at that moment in time," Paul explained.

"It's the little things like wearing his number on the shirts last year and then retiring the number 33 at Worcestershire that mean a lot, it's tough but it's also comforting," admitted Lisa.

Anniversaries are a difficult time for the couple with the year of Josh's passing on 2 May having recently occurred, Paul acknowledged that days like that are tough because of how much support they receive: "The day isn't any different to the other 364 because it's still the first thing that comes into our heads and that breaks our hearts every single day."

Josh was a big character and a 'real joker' according to his mum, in just three short years in the Worcestershire changing room he was already a well-loved member of the side leaving a void with teammates that adored him.

"His legacy is the sheer amount of good wishes we hear from people. It makes me proud knowing he had an impact on people and I'm proud of the person he became, the hurt is not seeing that person fulfil their life," concluded Paul.

"We just want to thank everybody for the support, if his legacy is that someone gets to enjoy cricket that maybe wouldn't have had the opportunity to previously through the help of the foundation then





that would be wonderful for us," expressed Lisa.

Whilst still in the initial fundraising process the couple are looking forward to releasing the foundations' plans on how they will be helping people across the game.

Josh's former club, Astwood Bank, where the spinner started as a seven-year-old, wrote to Paul and Lisa to rename the ground at Sambourne Lane in their son's honour. An honour they duly accepted deciding on the Josh Baker Oval to keep the memory of their son Josh Oliver Baker going strong for years to come.

A RAY OF POSITIVITY

Vatsal Vora sat down with the Yorkshire batter AMI CAMPBELL to discuss her ADHD journey, the players' charity, and how she put a positive spin on the situation in order to take her career to new heights.

n a bright sunny afternoon in early May, Ami Campbell is in her happy place, back wearing the White Rose after a strong start in Tier 2 of the women's game. A transitional year for the county ahead of joining the top division in 2026, the left-hander has made an immediate impression with the Yorkshire faithful, highlighted by an unbeaten 165 off 105 deliveries against Derbyshire Falcons.

In 2023, however, Campbell was at a crossroad in her cricketing career. In only the second year as a professional, she suffered with long lasting low moods and emotional dysregulation which led to repeated cycles of depression.

This was when she decided to get in touch with the PCA, who referred the then Central Sparks player to the Cricketers' Trust. As is often the case, the players' charity secured a therapist the very next day with the support of Sporting Chance – the Trust's official partner for mental health treatment.

"When I started experiencing these fluctuating emotions and they started to worsen, that's when I began to struggle in a professional environment and focus on my game. It got to a point where I couldn't leave my house and started to have some really dark thoughts. That is when I reached out to Lynsey Williams, my then Personal Development Manager. I felt very comfortable in opening up to her about how I was feeling. She is like a second mum to me and honestly, I don't know if I would still be here if it wasn't for her."

Campbell had eight sessions with a therapist and was put on medication to curb her depression. However, following an initial phase of feeling more stable, she later learned that she had dual type Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), where

I just want to help and try and raise awareness in neurodivergence, which is becoming increasingly common in sport.





the patient exhibits characteristics of both inattention and hyperactivity though her symptoms were more internalised as a woman is able to mask them in a much better manner.

It's something she says went undiagnosed during her childhood, so learning about the disorder was a welcome validation for her to understand why she felt different compared to people around her and found some areas more challenging when growing up. "This was something raised by my teachers but a lack of exposure and education from my parents meant this was overlooked. However, it was also a eureka moment and confirmation of the struggles I had been having. Without the support from Sporting Chance and the Cricketers' Trust, it would have been extremely difficult to carry on playing professional cricket," she added.

Now with full understanding of her ADHD, the Newcastle-born player

remains extremely open and honest about her situation and has spoken about it on various platforms and podcasts. Being upfront about her struggles is something Campbell sees as a positive. The former Manchester Originals star said, "I just want to help others. I was diagnosed very late on in my career, and it was a pretty big uphill battle before. So, for anyone else, I just want to help and try and raise awareness in neurodivergence, which is becoming increasingly common in sport."

Be it on the pitch or off it, Campbell continues to remain positive and firmly believes in the mantra of things always happening for a greater good. She proudly suggested that the disorder has helped her in her cricketing career, increased resilience and has made her an even better player than before. Using ADHD as her strength, the 33-year-old said, "I am now old enough to know how

A playful Ami Campbell settles in at Yorkshire – with Cricketers' Trust support.





to manage myself on a daily basis. But it is still important for people to know that yes, it is a disorder but there's nothing wrong in being different and seeing things in a more unique way.

"Without the neurodivergence I wouldn't be where I am now. I am grateful that I have it, because without it I wouldn't have been such a perfectionist and creative whilst performing at such a high-performance level in sports. I have started to perform at my potential because I have learned to regulate myself in high performance situations. It is not an easy fix. I still have to manage myself on a daily basis, but I have now learned to use my neurodivergence to my advantage."

The Cricketers' Trust continues to provide lifechanging support

to past and present cricketers and their immediate families in England and Wales. Being one of the leading charities in sport, it supported 91 mental health cases in 2024 alone.

"It is massively important for us to keep on supporting the Cricketers' Trust," voiced Campbell. "It is a lifeline when life gets challenging, and you can always rely on the charity to help you through. It is timeless and something we should be investing in all the time."

Urging fellow cricketing peers to back their own charitable organisation, Campbell's advice to anyone going through the same situation is simple - there is more to life outside of cricket so learn to switch off and explore your life and interests away from the pitch.









This summer, the Cricketers' Trust is rewarding club cricket across the UK with exclusive prizes and once in a lifetime experiences up for grabs each month.

Register your club

Sign up your club and become eligible to win iconic prizes worth thousands of pounds each month.

Annual membership

Make a donation of £100 to the Cricketers' Trust just once a year. 100% of your donation is supporting UK cricketers and their families at times of extreme hardship.

Win for your club

Once registered, your club gains access to the monthly prize draw. With Gold, Silver and Bronze tiers there is a variety that will support and enhance your club.



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FULL TEAM



NOTICES FOR MEMBERS

CONFIDENTIAL HELPLINE

A free helpline funded by the Cricketers' Trust is available 24/7 – and there is no such thing as a time waster. Whatever your problem please do reach out.

Call: **07780 008 877**

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Education Funding Forms should be completed online via the website attaching relevant receipts. Log-in to **thepca.co.uk** to process your claim.

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

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There is no place for any form of discrimination at any level of our game.

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Email: diversity.matters@cricketregulator.co.ukor: equality@thepca.co.uk

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

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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 Call: 07375 414694

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25% off for PCA members in Gaucho and M Restaurants. You must pre-book by calling **0207 9253 900** or emailing **centres@gauchorestaurants.com**.

*This offer is on food only when dining from A La Carte and offer is not usable with any other promotions, set menus and brunch. Offer not valid in December.

*Terms and conditions apply

PAST PLAYER DAY 2025

Taking place on 29 July at Visit Worcestershire New Road, call **Ali Prosser** on the freephone number of **0808 1684655** to book your place and reconnect with former opponents and teammates at Worcestershire Vs Hampshire.

STAY CONNECTED...





OBITS

Remembering those who have graced this great game.

1939 - 2025 PETER EYRE Derbyshire

One of the great stalwarts of Derbyshire cricket, Peter Eyre played for the county from 1959 until 1972. A forceful left-handed batter and a right-arm fast-medium bowler he was a producer of match-winning performances on his day. Sadly, his career was regularly handicapped by bad luck – glandular fever, a cartilage operation, brief doubts about his bowling action and a scalp disease that left him permanently and prematurely bald.

Born in Brough, Thomas John
Peter 'Pierre' Eyre, first came to
prominence when playing club
cricket for Hathersage while a pupil
at New Mills Grammar School. After
teenage appearances for the Second
XI, he made his First-Class debut
for Derbyshire against Cambridge
University in May 1959. Taking time to
establish himself, in 1965 doubts arose,
happily resolved, about his action.

His best year with the ball was 1967 when he took 64 wickets. Eyre's top season overall proved to be 1969 when he recorded his best First-Class figures, 8-65 against Somerset, registered his sole First-Class century,



102 against Leicestershire, and again at Chesterfield, in front of 10,000 spectators, turned in a match-winning return of 6-18 to defeat Sussex in the semi-final of the Gillette Cup. Sadly, Derbyshire lost to Yorkshire in the final by 69 runs. Making 238 appearances in all formats, he scored 3,661 runs and claimed 418 wickets.

Returning to play club cricket for Hathersage, he later served as President of the club. A builder by trade, he went on to become Clerk of Works at the National Trust's High Peak estate. A renowned breeder of shire horses, his animals were in demand for weddings and funerals. He was 85.

ALAN CASTELL

HAMPSHIRE

From Oxfordshire, Alan Terry Castell joined Hampshire in 1960, made his First-Class debut the following year, and took 229 wickets in 112 appearances for the county club.

Having begun as a leg-break and googly bowler, from 1966 onwards his medium-pace seam bowling became an increasingly vital component in the county's armoury.

A competitive lower-order batter, he came to the wicket against Surrey at Southampton in 1962 with his side 128-8 and proceeded to assist teammate Danny Livingstone in a new ninth-wicket record stand of 230.

Livingstone made 200 and Castell 76 – both men's highest scores.

He toured West Indies with the International Cavaliers in 1963-64, with a best bowling return of 6-22 against Somerset at Bath in 1969.

It would be a shoulder injury that forced his retirement two years later, leading to three years spent in the Minor Counties with Berkshire. The right-hander went on to enjoy a successful career outside of cricket with The Distillers Company.

1933-2024 Brian **Jackson**

DERBYSHIRE

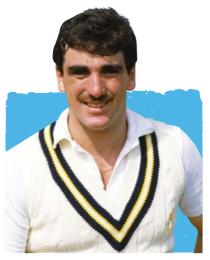
Once famously described by commentator John Arlott as "bowling a grudging length," Albert Brian Jackson was, upon his death, Derbyshire's oldest former player.

Born in Kettleshulme on the Cheshire border, this right-handed fast-medium bowler initially honed his considerable skills in local league cricket before refining his talents while in the Royal Air Force on National Service.

Between 1956 and 1960 he cut his teeth playing Minor Counties cricket for Cheshire.

A First-Class debut for
Derbyshire in 1963 brought 71
wickets in that season and a county
cap. Tall and broad shouldered,
persistent, accurate, and with a
strong engine, in 1965 he and his
fellow opening partner, Harold
Rhodes, topped the national
averages. Amid 149 First-Class
games, his final tally of 457 victims
includes a best return of 8-18
against Warwickshire in 1966.

Released two years later, he returned to Minor Counties cricket with Cheshire, where he remained a formidable performer in local league cricket. In 1969 he helped the North Staffs and South Cheshire League to defeat the Northern League in the final of the League Cricket Conference Rothman's Cup. He later spent some years with the Buxton club. Later still, he turned to umpiring, while his weekdays were spent as a volunteer driver for the NHS. He was 91.



1961-2025 CHRIS LETHBRIDGE WARWICKSHIRE

The start of Chris Lethbridge's First-Class career could hardly have been more propitious. Making his debut for Warwickshire in 1981 against his native county, Yorkshire, with the first ball he bowled he had Geoff Boycott caught in the slips. He also went on to make 69 with the bat. Making a further 49 appearances in his five seasons with the county, he claimed 77 wickets with a best return of 5-68 against Glamorgan at Cardiff in 1982.

Born in Normanton and educated at Normanton County Secondary School, having successfully progressed through the Yorkshire youth sides, this right-arm mediumpace bowler and combative lower-order batter then served his apprenticeship on the Lord's groundstaff. After his release by Warwickshire, he became an electrician in the Yorkshire coalfields, enjoying success in Minor Counties cricket for Cambridgeshire. He played league cricket for Hanging Heaton and Altofts.

1944-2025 ROBIN **MATTHEWS** LEICESTERSHIRE

Born in Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham, Robin Birkby Matthews was a right-handed middle-order batter and right-arm medium-pace bowler who first made his mark during the 1960s representing Oxfordshire in the Minor Counties Championship. Between 1971 and 1973, he went on to make 25 appearances for Leicestershire taking 48 wickets and scoring 89 runs.

Subsequently playing for both Leicester Nomads and Lutterworth, as his playing days wound down, he undertook a number of administrative roles within the management of Leicestershire cricket. Also a member of the Leicester and Rutland Cricket Board, his input and expertise proved pivotal in the development of the Leicestershire and Rutland Cricket Foundation.

1942-2025 GILES DANIELS GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Born in Birmingham and educated at Winchester College, John Giles Upton Daniels played once for Gloucestershire in 1964, after a single First-Class appearance with the Combined Services the same year.

A lieutenant in the Royal Armoured Corps, he would go on to run financial planning company, Edgbarne Trust, in Cheltenham alongside brother, Rupert, who all played First-Class cricket for Oxford University. He was 83.



Amid a successful business career advising sports clubs, he took charge of Kenya during the 1999 World Cup, later working with the Italy squad.

1940 - 2025 PETER **LEVER** LANCASHIRE

Peter Lever, universally known as Plank, was a wholehearted competitor, an aggressive right-arm fast bowler, and a more than useful right-handed lower-order batter. Possessing a dangerous outswinger, he was at his best when pitching the ball up and using the seam. He was said to have restricted his use of the bouncer after hitting New Zealand tailender Ewan Chatfield with a short ball in 1975.

A Yorkshireman, the son of an engineer, both Peter and his brother Colin first made their mark with Todmorden Cricket Club in the Lancashire League. Peter – a Yorkshire junior triple jump champion – made his league debut while a pupil at Todmorden Grammar School. He first appeared for Lancashire in 1960 and over the course of his First-Class career made 301 appearances. He claimed 796 wickets with a best analysis of 7-70 against Glamorgan in 1972.

After 10 years as a widely respected county bowler – notably when in partnership with Ken Shuttleworth – he was picked for England against the Rest of the World in 1970 and took 7-83. He was aged 30 by the time he toured Australia for the first time in 1970, but proved ideal support for fellow bowler, John Snow. Claiming 41 wickets in 17 Test appearances, his batting at this level included a career best 88 not out against India at Old Trafford in 1971.

Back trouble hastened his retirement as a player, but he would later return to Old Trafford for a not altogether happy period as coach. Amid a successful business career advising sports clubs, he took charge of Kenya during the 1999 World Cup, later working with the Italy squad.

DAVID **HUGHES** SOMERSET

Wicketkeeper David Garfield Hughes was one of a number of players who, during the 1950s made just a single appearance for Somerset.

Called up at the last moment in May 1955, following the sudden death of regular keeper Harold Stephenson's father, Hughes had the initial problem of trying to convince the gateman that he was playing. During the closely fought encounter with Nottinghamshire at Taunton, he kept tidily, claiming a catch and a stumping, while also scoring two runs.

Born in Taunton and educated at Taunton School, despite overtures from Glamorgan and Gloucestershire, Hughes became a chartered surveyor with Somerset County Council. Playing club cricket for both Staplegrove and Taunton throughout this era, he became a regular stalwart of Somerset Second XI, then competing in the Minor Counties Championship. Between 1965 and 1968 this neat practitioner also represented Wiltshire in that competition.

CLOSE OF PLAY

gettyimages

THESTOF

Revisiting some of the most memorable moments from one of cricket's great fixtures. England vs India.

PHOTO BY CENTRAL PRESS

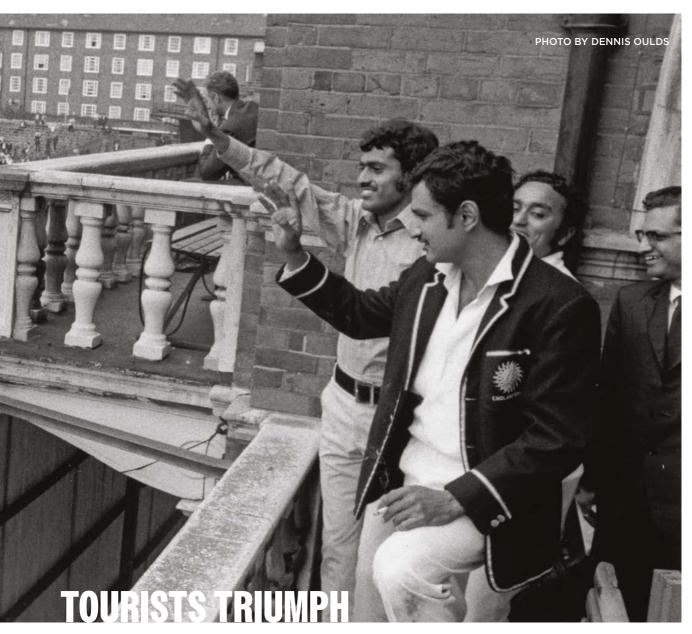
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† **DOUBLE FIGURE**

KENNINGTON OVAL, 14 AUGUST 1952 326/6D **ENG V IND** 98

PREVIOUS PAGE England and India captains Len Hutton and Vijay Samuel Hazare toss-up during the final Test match of the series. On the fourth day India were





kennington oval, 24 august 1971 $355\ \&\ 101\ \text{ENG V IND}\ 284\ \&\ 174/6$

Captain Ajit Wadekar and leg-spinner Bhagwat Chandrasekhar wave from the pavilion balcony at the Oval after beating England by four wickets. It was India's first-ever Test victory in England and – with the first two matches ending in rain-affected draws – their first series victory too, a success still celebrated as one of the country's greatest.

LITTLE MASTER

old trafford, 14 august 1990 519 & 320/40 Eng V IND 432 & 343/6

When Sachin Tendulkar scored his maiden Test century at Old Trafford in 1990, he became the youngest player to make a hundred in England. Just 17 years old, he batted under pressure against an otherwise dominant England side chasing a third straight win, their first-innings total boosted by centuries from Michael Atherton and Graham Gooch. Chasing 408, India were in trouble until Tendulkar's unbeaten 119, part of a 160-run stand for the seventh wicket which guided the tourists to 343 for six – and safety.

PHOTO BY BEN RADFORD





HAT-TRICK HERO

TRENT BRIDGE, 30 JULY 2011 221 & 544 **ENG V IND** 288 & 158

A Stuart Broad hat-trick transformed this match, with India cruising at 274-4 in the first innings. Knees pumping, the Nottingham-born quick's five wickets in 16 balls without conceding a run saw England through to the innings break, trailing India by 67. Praveen Kumar was beaten all ends up by a quick straight one to crown the hat-trick, making Broad the first Englishman to take one since Ryan Sidebottom in New Zealand in 2008.



YORKSHIRE GRIN

This marked two remarkable purple patches in form for England's Jonny Bairstow and Joe Root. Bairstow's unbeaten 114 was his fourth century in five innings; Root's 142 not out was his 11th in 18 months. A sevenwicket win crowned the high point of Ben Stokes' and Brendon McCullum's first summer in charge.



MY FAVOURITE

Fulfilling dreams in India and a love of chocolate, England's **DANNI WYATT-HODGE** treats you to her top three kits.



RCB WPL 2025

The Royal Challengers
Bengaluru kit this year was fire
and Puma is a great sponsor.
It was genuinely a dream to
play for RCB so putting their
kit on and walking out to bat
was amazing. Sharing a 107run partnership with Smriti
Mandhana was a real highlight.



MELBOURNE RENEGADES WOMEN'S BIG BASH 2018

This was by far the best Renegades shirt. I have great memories making the finals for the first time and I love Mars bars. We all received a big box which I didn't even get through.

ENGLAND T20 2017 - 2018

This is my number one as I scored my first T20 hundred to help draw the Ashes. I dedicated that to my grandad who passed away just before the series so this meant a lot. I then scored another hundred in this kit a few months later with my dad there watching.





