

AUGUST 2008

ACO 5,000th Member, see page 5



Nick Cousins -ECB ACO Education Manager

Nick Cousins, former Deputy Head at RGS High Wycombe and for 15 years previously the Master i/c Cricket at Dulwich College has been appointed to act as ACO Education Manager. He brings to us a high level of expertise in the Training of Officials from his work as a referee coach for the Rugby Football Union and as the Chairman of Appointments and Grading for the London Society of Referees. Nick is currently operating on a consultancy basis with a contract that runs until 31st December 2008. He is responsible for shaping and planning the delivery of the Officials' Education Programmes whilst advising the Interim Board upon developments and priorities. He will also be in charge of the development of effective strategies to build a widespread workforce of field-based trainers, tutors, internal verifiers and assessors to support these programmes. If you wish to contact Nick his email address is nick.cousinsaco@ecb.co.uk and his mobile is 07827 254 970

Report from the Education Manager

I was asked by the Interim Board to make a Report at its meeting on Thursday 3rd July. In this Report I outlined four principles for the management of change that I regard as essential if new educational processes for the training and coaching of umpires and scorers are to be accepted and respected by at least the majority of stakeholders. They are as follows:

- To have an evolutionary process not a revolutionary process.
- To engage with County ACOs at grass roots level. (There is a clear perception that those responsible for this component of training have been sidelined).
- To fill the vacuum currently existing in the coming close season (autumn/winter/spring 2008/9) with appropriate coaching and training.
- To communicate to the membership more clearly and effectively.

With these principles in mind, I made the following recommendations, which were approved

Level 2 Officials' Courses (Umpires and Scorers) to be 'fast tracked' to completion

A second Pilot Level 2 Officials' (Umpires & Scorers) Course to be delivered in late October.

The first taught Level 2 Officials' Courses to be delivered regionally in March and April 2009. (One course per region).

Level 1 Task Force to be set up immediately to consider all aspects of current and recent practice and produce a coherent Level 1 programme to replace the previously proposed Level 1, and which, in a modified form, could be used as a 'Taster' or Entry Level Course.

Materials produced to be available in October.

Level 3 Task Force to be set up

Membership identified and terms of reference agreed by October.

Representatives of the First Class List of Officials (Scorers and Umpires) to be identified for inclusion in the membership of Level 3 Task Forces (and engagement with Level 2 delivery).

Technical Group set up to produce regular DVDs with footage and appropriate text notes or commentary for use during 'in-season' meetings of officials.

MCC Laws Working Party to be asked to review "Tom Smith's" with a view to producing an updated and accurate book as soon as possible.

ECB web site to be improved by increasing visibility of ACO site on the Home Page and on play-cricket.com.

NB. It should be noted that ECB ACO has no direct control over either the publication of 'Tom Smith's' or ECB web site design.

ECB ACO Courses

'Taster' or Entry Level Course (For Prospective Umpires and Scorers)

This will be an introduction to officiating in cricket. The intention is that this short course can be used by Schools, Clubs, and County Associations – anyone who might be approached for information about how to get involved in officiating at whatever level. It is intended to include an ACO registration pack that would include all appropriate information and papers necessary for joining the local County Association.

Level 1 (Umpiring)

GL6 as a course and a name has gone - but its usefulness and purpose have certainly not gone - in fact we need it more than ever! The purpose of the Level 1 Task Force is to look at GL6 as was; look at new materials produced to support the 'new' Level 1; look at anything else which is currently used which we can acquire before then (local examples of good practice in training) - and come up with a (slightly) amended course which will be Level 1. We will not be reinventing the wheel, but we do want something that will ensure consistency of delivery across the country.

However, until such time as ECB ACO has produced a 'replacement' course with the associated structure for an appropriate exam / outcome, we are very happy for County Associations to continue in 2008/9 exactly as they have done previously - in fact we would want you to do that and positively encourage you so to do. Please be reassured that ECB ACO will recognise all outcomes as notified by the current accredited trainers.

Level 1 (Scoring)

ECB Scorer Correspondence Course

A correspondence course is available immediately.

Anybody may apply to do this course which addresses the basic score book entry information required by any scorer. The primary objective is that all participants will gain an understanding of the Laws of Cricket (2003) and how the application of these laws determines what should be recorded in the score book.

If you would like to enroll for this course, or would like more information, please contact us by email ecbaco@ecb.co.uk or by phone **020 7432 1240**.

A Level 1 taught course (as with the umpiring course) will be available in October.

Level 2 (Umpiring and Scoring)

As you know, Level 2 will be an accredited QCA qualification with all the ramifications and advantages that this brings. Because it is essential that appropriate support is in place before the 'on going' appraisal of both participants and tutors can be managed effectively, there is no "quick fix" solution for rolling out these courses nationally. Tutors for Level 2 have to undergo specific training and become accredited and it is hoped to facilitate this as soon as is possible and practicable. Members of the Education Task Force are part way through this retraining and will be able to run Level 2 courses this winter.

The first opportunity for other tutors who wish to engage in this accreditation process is at the October Pilot Course. We are therefore looking for 15 prospective Level 2 tutors to act as participants on the course. Following the Pilot, these tutors will be invited to a Level 2 tutor training course and thereafter to assist with the first 5 Regional courses planned for March - April, 2009.

Together with members of the Task Force these tutors will then become the first elements of a 'cascade' system that will facilitate Level 2 training on a local basis from the autumn of 2009.

In the first instance, the new Regional Boards will be responsible for the nomination of both tutors and participants to the first Level 2 courses. Therefore all interested parties should apply to their County Association Representative.

A Level 2 Pilot Course for Scorers in the London and East Region is being held on 13th and 14th September at Lord's. Applicants for this course are asked to contact the Course tutor, Lynn Allen, by e-mail on scorer.aco@ecb.co.uk by 22nd August 2008. There will be ten places available. Individual applicants will not be charged for this course.

Calling All Examiners

One new aspect of the Level 2 course is the need for boundary assessors who will be part of the participants' continued appraisal process. It seems to me that examiners for the old ACU&S courses may be ideally placed to carry out this function and I am very keen to explore this. Formal assessor training, for this role (leading to IAPS qualification) is not extensive and it would seem foolish not to make full use of all the experience that is already 'out there' within our membership. We will be seeking the assistance of the County Boards in recruiting people to assist in this process.

I hope this brief summary gives you an idea of what ECB ACO is doing and where it is going but any comments on this, or any other aspect of education and training would be welcome:

email: ecbaco@ecb.co.uk

Tel: 020 7432 1240

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the coming months and in the meantime I wish you all well in your officiating at whatever level that may be.

Nick Cousins

ECB Statement

The ECB is aware that The Community Cricket Trust (CCT), Institute of Cricket Umpires and Scorers (ICUS) and On-Side Cricket Limited (OSCL) have approached a number of cricket clubs offering advice and access to funding streams.

The email sent offers an opportunity for clubs to visit the websites of OSCL and ICUS to consider the benefit of being affiliated to the scheme.

The ECB provides revenue funding and grants to all eligible cricket clubs and offers advice on Umpires and Scorers via the ECB Association of Cricket Officials (ECB ACO) and does so in a regulated and officially sanctioned environment.

In order to provide an overview of what is available via the ECB, we have set up a page on the ECB website at www.ecb.co.uk/funding where you can find information regarding the sources available and redirect club members to ECB funding opportunities.



ECB ACO is delighted to bring to you the first interview with an elite official. On 22nd May 2008 Chris Kelly (ECB Umpires' Manager) interviewed Darrell Hair.

This will be the start of communications with First Class officials and their endorsement of ECB ACO.

Darrell Hair is an Australian Test match cricket umpire from New South Wales. He stood on the Emirates International panel of umpires from 2002 to 2003, before he, along with fellow Australian Simon Taufel and New Zealander Billy Bowden, were appointed to the ICC Elite umpire panel. Darrell has stood in over 78 Test Matches and 135 ODIs.

Q. Benefits of being part of a National Governing Body (NGB)

A. Being part of an NGB allows an umpires' association and its members to have access to a full range of resources and to support at the appropriate level and in the appropriate context. However, it is also important that an umpires' association retains a certain amount of independence to enable it to contribute to the game in a structured and meaningful way

Such independence though should always be handled in a manner that serves the game for the better in the long term.

Q. The Role of Umpiring bodies

A. An umpiring body's main function is to educate, manage and support its members by being an inclusive organisation as well as providing opportunities for advancement and leadership of its members throughout their career.

It should be able to provide development opportunities for all its members and allow them all to enjoy their hobby and encourage them to officiate at the best level that they are able. There are many rewards within the game for officials and providing access to as many of these as possible is a key role.

Umpiring bodies have a key role in the sharing of good practice throughout their own membership in addition to undertaking comparative exercises with other areas of the country, other countries and even other sports. There is much in common with officials of all sports: the sharing of the commonality can only benefit officiating in general.

Q. The Most Important Attributes for an Umpire

A. Anyone thinking of taking up an officiating role in any sport benefits from a strong affinity for and understanding of the game – this is certainly the case in cricket and it is no coincidence that in all countries the most effective officials have a strong background in the game at some level.

A strong sense of fairness goes without saying, although at times, due to perceptions of others, this will become a challenge for all umpires at whatever level that they operate. It is when this fairness is challenged that the essential communication and management skills are needed and the most successful officials will be the most effective in allowing the players to be able to enjoy a fair game of cricket.

Q. Key Skills for progressing

A. In order to optimise one's contribution to officiating, and also to reap the benefits, it is important to buy into the system in which you are working and to accept it, even though you may at times find parts of that system frustrating and at the time perhaps unjust. For the benefit of the game as a whole, and your overall progression and development as an umpire, the structure should be respected and maintained.

Being honest with others and yourself are key skills for progressing in officiating in addition to always looking to improve and to be the best you can possibly be. This goes hand in hand with having complete respect for all your colleagues and being prepared to work selflessly with them in a team environment for the benefit of the game.

Q. The Difference between Test and the Playground

A. The game is the same at whatever level it is played, although the key to coping with the different levels is adapting quickly to the different environments and responding effectively in the right context to events. Being alert and having strong awareness skills are helpful together with empathy for the game as a whole.

To feel part of the event a successful official requires self confidence and the ability to enjoy the role. Enjoyment comes not always at the moment of making key decisions but often when reflecting on the day's work and getting that inner feeling of satisfaction when you have done a good job.

Not being afraid of failure is a key asset for any official and is present at all levels of the game. Officials who are afraid of making incorrect decisions will not attempt to make decisions at all and therefore run the risk of being wrong more often than not.

Q. What to look for from an Education Programme

A. A good education programme should produce officials who feel confident to be able to manage a cricket match and to inspire confidence in that ability from players and spectators. It should provide a safe environment for officials to practise and develop their skills and allow them to fail safely as part of their learning curve.

An education programme should motivate and enthuse people about officiating and should spark a desire in them to understand the Laws of the Game in the correct context and continue their education after the programme has ended through self education and experience in umpiring out in the field.

Finally, an education programme should provide a programme of support for all umpires, through their local and national officials' networks, as they develop along the officiating pathway.

5,000th ECB ACO Member Celebrates at Lord's

Mike Sparks from Carlisle celebrated becoming the 5,000th member of the new ECB ACO at Lord's on Thursday 10th July, enjoying an all-expenses-paid trip to the npower Test match.

As well as enjoying the match, Mike met the npower Test officials Darryl Harper, Billy Bowden and Jeff Crowe and took a tour around the historic venue.

Giles Clarke, Chairman of the ECB, said "This is a great sign to show the success of the new organisation. We must now build on this hard work, tied in with the Spirit of Cricket, to keep improving officiating in today's game in England and Wales."



Paul Bedford Head of Non-First Class Cricket and ACO 5,000th Member Michael Sparks at the Tea Interval

Mike started scoring for Lancaster CC 3rd XI at age 11, and soon got the odd game for them. He then played in local leagues around Lancaster for over 30 years including Lancaster & District League, South Lakeland League, Palace Shield and a handful of games in the Northern League Division 2, as a wicketkeeper-batsman.

Mike then joined Gregson CC until a shoulder injury stopped him playing about four years ago. Mike watched 28-year-old Kevin Pietersen score a magnificent century at Lord's on Friday, and recalled making his only "ton" for Gregson CC at the age of 50!

Moving to Carlisle in October 2004, Mike decided to take up umpiring with a desire to give something back to a game that had given him so much enjoyment. Mike joined the North Lancashire & Cumbria Federation of Cricket Umpires and the ACU&S before joining the new ECB ACO.

In his first 2 seasons he umpired in the N Lancs & Cumbria League and passed his GL6 before gaining more practical experience and then taking GL5. This season Mike has joined a small panel of umpires officiating in the Eden Valley League, trying to help improve the League's standards.



Lynn Allen – Scorer Representative on the Interim Board

Lynn's determination to develop her skills further as a scorer led her to search for ways to be a credible scorer, which in turn would allow her to score at a professional level.

Lynn started at the Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers (ACU&S) becoming a qualified scorer. The exams came thick and fast with Lynn becoming an Affiliate Member in November 1998; a Qualified Scorer Member in November 1999 and lastly an Advanced Scorer in October 2000. These qualifications enabled her to score for a number of teams including England U.15, U.19, the Lord's Taverners, MCC, British Universities (including the winter tour to South Africa), the Army and Royal Navy teams, Stowe School, as well as local clubs involved in the ECB Northants Premier League and her son's county age groups from U.11 to U.17.

Lynn was elected to the Northamptonshire branch of the ACU&S in November 2000 and was involved in conducting seminars explaining the implications of the new laws and running scorers' courses at standard level for the ACU&S. During this time she completed the Scorers' Teaching course and has been a correspondence course teacher for the ACU&S. Lynn moved to the ECB ACO in 2007 and was appointed to the Interim Board at its commencement.

All Out Cricket (AOC)

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Bartercard

Australian-based company, Bartercard, is transferring its support of the ECBOA to the ECB ACO in 2008.

The three-year deal, signed last year and worth £100,000, is designed to raise the standard of umpiring and scoring in the game from grassroots club level through to minor county standard by providing equipment and training through the County Associations of ECB ACO.

Bartercard spokesman, John Attridge, himself an Australian and an experienced umpire, hopes more youngsters will get involved as officials.

"It might seem strange to some people that an Australian company should be looking to raise the standards of English cricket - but a healthy level of competition is in the interests of both countries," he said.

"We believe this will not only benefit the game as a whole, but also it will encourage more young people to get into cricket umpiring, either as well as or instead of playing, and we are delighted to be able to help the ECB ACO work towards this aim.

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Structure of ECB ACO

ACO Board

At the first Interim Board meeting it was agreed that the ACO Board would consist of the following:

Chairman - to be elected by Interim Board

Six regional representatives - to be elected by ECB ACO members (See below)

MCC representative - to be appointed

Education Director - to be appointed

Representative of scorers - to be appointed

Independent director - Nick Cousins was appointed to this position for the Interim Board

ECB Finance Director

ECB Managing Director Cricket Partnerships

Regional Representatives

Members of the Interim Board have been given the task of contacting the County Associations to request the nomination of individuals to be put forward to become the ACO Regional Representatives.

The Regional Representatives do not have to be the County Representatives but do have to be nominated by their County Association in order to run for office. Please contact your ACO County Association Representative if you wish to be considered for the role.

After its meeting in October the Interim Board will publish a shortlist of officials for each of the regions, in preparation for the members to vote for their preference for one of 5 regional representatives for the ECB ACO Board from 1st January 2009. The other representative will come from ICC Europe.

ACO County Representatives

The full list of Representatives can be found on our website. This list will also be published in the next newsletter.

Membership Services

We are aware that there have been some problems in the processing of registrations. Membership cards and packs should have been sent to all members for whom we have received a CRB clearance and whose subscription has been received. If you have not received a pack, have CRB clearance and paid a subscription please call **0207 432 1240**.

Each pack contains: cloth badges, pin badge, key ring, team sheet card and a card detailing our four ECB directives.

We are at an advanced stage in negotiations with a leading manufacturer regarding ECB ACO merchandise, which will be available well in advance of the 2009 season.

Ties are an exception. The Membership Services Committee has agreed two tie designs. If you wish to purchase either of the ties (pictured) or further cloth badges please either go to the website www.store.ecb.co.uk/aco or call **0845 075 0101**. Ties cost £12.50 and cloth badges are £3 plus postage and packing.



ACU&S Refunds

The ACU&S has informed the ACO that refunds will be paid to members soon. The ECB ACO would also like to inform members that this is not the responsibility of the ACO but we have offered our services to ACU&S to assist them speed up this process.

ACO National Meeting

On 22nd April 2008 36 of the 38 County Boards sent a member of their ACO and a representative from their County Board to a meeting at Edgbaston. The agenda is shown below:

Welcome and Introduction – Mike Gatting
Election and Budget – Paul Bedford
Membership Services – Sam Greaves
Education Update – Chris Kelly

Officiating in Rugby Union – Nick Cousins RFU
Managing the Transition – Richard Holdsworth ICC Europe
Questions

The slides shown at this meeting are available on our website www.ecb.co.uk/ecbaco

Regional Meetings

Regional Forums will take place during September and will be held at venues within the 5 ECB cricket regions with the details of the date, venue and time published below. Each meeting will be chaired by a member of the Interim Board. The agenda for the meetings will be to discuss the election of Regional Representatives and for officials to ask questions or voice any issues they may have. The meetings will start at 7:00pm and finish no later than 10.00pm. A buffet will be available at each venue from 6:30pm.

Each County Association will be responsible for inviting a maximum of 10 members to the Regional Forum. Individuals should contact their County Association Representative before the deadline of 29th August 2008 if they wish to attend.

Date	Region	Venue
Wednesday 10th September	London and East	Brit Oval
Thursday 11th September	Midlands	The County Ground, Derby
Tuesday 16th September	Wales	SWALEC Stadium, Cardiff
Wednesday 17th September	South and West	The Cricket Ground, Taunton
Wednesday 24th September	North	Headingley Carnegie

