

COLOURED TROUSERS No 17



BUCKS COUNTY CRICKET CLUB NEWSLETTER

Editor: Bill Scholes

LATE FIXTURE / VENUE AMENDMENT

The Oxfordshire V Bucks T20 double header on this coming Sunday April 16th has been moved from its original venue at Thame to the magnificent setting of Wormsley Cricket Ground. (Postcode: HP14 3YE).



Well its nearly here, the waiting will soon be over and the season starts on Sunday. I think its no exaggeration to say that pre season has not been all that we had hoped for, as both of our friendly warm up games have been cancelled due to awful weather that we have been subjected to. Our thoughts go out to club groundsmen everywhere as all their planned pre season preparation has gone out of the window. However, the only saving grace , if one can call it that, is that virtually all of the other clubs are in the same boat – pun intended - and the websites are awash – another pun intended – with notices of pre season warm up games being cancelled.

After our two warm-up games were cancelled due to the waterlogged grounds, Bucks have named a strong side for this seasons opening match as we aim to do better than last year, when we failed to reach the knock-out stages of the competition.

A big boost for Bucks is that Saif Zaib, the Northants all-rounder, who came up through the age group ranks in the county, is named in the Bucks squad after new regulations were brought in to allow him to play for his original county. Bucks also give a debut to the Buckingham captain Ewan Cox whilst the Gerrards Cross left-arm seamer Jon Denning has returned to Bucks from Wales NC. The exciting teenager Aadi Sharma, who debuted last season in the championship against Hertfordshire, is also in the squad.



Bucks Men's 1st XI vs Oxfordshire CCC

NCCA T20
11:00 Sunday 16th April
@ Wormsley Estate

T Hampton (H Wycombe) capt E Bragg (Halesowen)
 A Kervezee (Halesowen) J Rodnight (Great Brickhill)
 S Zaib (Northants) M Payne (Amersham)
 E Cox (Buckingham) C Haddow (High Wycombe)
 A Sharma (Great Brickhill) T Weymes (Tring Park)
 R Richardson (Blackheath) J Denning (Gerrards Cross)
 E Casterton (High Wycombe)

National Counties T20 - All Group 4 Fixtures

Sunday April 16

Falkland CC: Berkshire v Wales NC, **Wormsley: Oxfordshire v Bucks**

Sunday April 23

.Dunstable: Bedfordshire v Oxfordshire, **High Wycombe: Bucks v Berkshire.**

Sunday April 30

Wargrave: Berkshire v Bedfordshire, **Lisvane: Wales NC v Bucks**

Monday May 1

Amptill: Bedfordshire v Wales NC, Thame: Oxfordshire v Berkshire.

Sunday May 7

High Wycombe: Bucks v Bedfordshire, Pontarddulais: Wales NC v Oxfordshire

A BRIEF LOOK AHEAD TO THE GROUP STAGES IN THE T20 COMPETITION

All fixtures are double headers

Oxfordshire will begin their defence of their National Counties T20 title with a double-header against **Buckinghamshire** at Wormsley on Sunday April 16. Oxfordshire lifted the trophy for the first time last season when they beat Cambridgeshire in a tense final at Tring Park.

The opening round of T20 matches on April 16 will also see **Staffordshire** break new ground by taking a county match to Moddershall's Barnfields ground. **Cumbria** will be the visitors for the historic fixture, a double-header.

Sale's Rookwood ground will be used by **Cheshire** for the first time since 1909 for their double-header with **Northumberland** on April 16. Cheshire's only previous match at the ground was a three-day game against Yorkshire Second XI in the old Minor Counties Championship.

Devon will take senior county cricket to another new venue, Cornwood's Oak Park, where **Cornwall** will be the visitors on May 7.

Cornwall will also be the opposition when **Dorset** take county cricket to Milton Abbey School near Blandford Forum for the first time on April 30.

County cricket returns to Hitchin's Lucas Lane ground for the first time in 25 years when **Hertfordshire** host Lincolnshire in a Group Three double-header on April 23.

The four group winners will progress to T20 Finals Day which will again be held at Tring Park on May 21.

NCCA T20 COMPETITION (2 matches per day)

Date	Opposition	Venue
Apr 16	Oxfordshire	Wormsley
April 23	BERKSHIRE	HIGH WYCOMBE
April 30	Wales NC	Lisvane
May 7	BEDFORDSHIRE	HIGH WYCOMBE

T20 Finals Day

Sunday 21 May @ Tring Park

OTHER ADDITIONAL FIXTURE

Tues Aug 1

Sussex

Showcase Match

50 overs

@ Hove

BUCKS SECOND ELEVEN FIXTURES

Date	Opposition	Venue
June 29	Berkshire	Cookham
July 4, 5, & 6	SUFFOLK	HIGH WYCOMBE
July 12	BERKSHIRE	MARLOW
July 17, 18 & 19	Northamptonshire	Away
August 19	OXFORDSHIRE	AMERSHAM
August 23	Benyon Cup	Bishops Stortford
August 29, 30 & 31	Suffolk	Away

NEW GROUNDS TO VISIT

One interesting fact that emerges from the brief preview of the T20 competition this season is that there will be 5 grounds used for the first time, as County clubs visit hitherto uncharted parts of their counties. If one then moves on to the 18 National Counties showcase matches against the First Class Counties, there are a further 5 grounds being used for the first time, making 10 in total, as National Counties use the opportunity to show off their wares to a wider audience and therefore potentially gain new supporters and/ or members.

CROSS BORDER RAIDS

Possibly counter balancing the above, and whilst perusing my newly arrived 2023 Playfair Cricket Annual, I discovered that Buckinghamshire was being invaded on three separate occasions. The north of our county will see Northants second XI play Glamorgan at Campbell Park, Milton Keynes, in a 4 day championship match, and also play the same opponents in the T20 competition at Stowe School. Oxfordshire will use Wormsley for a T20, a Trophy match, and for their prestigious showcase match against Sussex.

INTERVIEW WITH BUCKS SKIPPER TOM HAMPTON

Bucks Cricket Men's 1st XI captain Tom Hampton has spoken to Sports Shots Andy Bone as his side prepare to face the current NCCA T20 Champions Oxfordshire at Wormsley on Sunday. The former Middlesex and Gloucestershire seamer starts his sixth season at the helm after taking over from Michael Payne back in 2018.



How has your winter preparation gone?

The 2023 campaign's preparation started last year and has been going well, thus far. Fitness being such a key part of playing NCCA on so many levels. Winter training has been pretty successful and we changed things up a little this year to freshen it up.

Pre Christmas we ran some fitness sessions every other week to kick start guys physical prep for the winter. This carried on into the new year, but it wasn't until March that we got together as a squad for some cricket. The idea was that with 3 sessions we could keep the intensity high and aim for quality over quantity.

Unfortunately like many sides outdoor preparations have been hampered by the weather, both pre season fixtures had to be cancelled due to grounds being under prepared with such a wet March. We have been able to train as a squad outside though and I must commend the lads for how well they have got on with it and got the most out of each session. It's frustrating when games get cancelled but given the circumstances I don't think we could have done anymore.

With the season's first game this Sunday (16th April), the skipper believes they must hit the ground running with the challenges Group 4 brings.

Given the strength of our group its really important that we start well. We saw last year that a slow start makes it really tricky to get going in the competition and momentum plays a huge part. So I think the main target is to get up to speed quickly and play some exciting cricket. Last year we blooded a few youngsters so we're hoping for a few of those guys to step up and put in some performances after gaining some experience last year. Getting into Finals day is definitely a target for the group but it is one of those competitions that you have to take match by match.

There is a new dawn for Bucks Cricket as the County Board and Club merge, something that Hampton believes will be good for the organisation.

It's a really exciting time for County, with the merger and Jason Harrison's new role I think there are going to be some real positives. Jason over seeing the 2nd XI and developing an even closer link between the pathway players and 1st team can only be positive. Becoming one organisation will lead to further improvements and development as a County, it's an exciting time for Bucks cricket.

The loss of Jason Rance as the Bucks Cricket's Head of Pathway is something Hampton wanted to acknowledge.

It's a great shame to see Jason leave his role with the County. He came through the pathway, represented the 1st team, became a county coach before working his way up to the become Head of the pathway which in itself is hugely impressive and shows his drive and dedication to the County. Being the same age I got to witness his progression as a player and then as a coach first hand and its safe to say that he has left the County in a far better place than when he started. I wish him further success in his new chapter and look forward to catching up with him during the summer.

In closing though, Hampton believes Sunday's game is a perfect way to start the campaign.

Playing the current champions at the stunning Wormsley Estate first game of the season is a pretty decent way to start the summer. Oxfordshire are a very strong side and we are going to have to be at our best to get a positive result. The lads are looking forward to getting started and really up for the tough challenge that Oxfordshire present.

Coloured Trousers would like to thank to both Tom and Andy for the above interview.



BUCKS WOMEN'S FIXTURES

ECB T20 COMPETITION (2 matches per day)

Date	Opposition	Venue
Apr 16	CANCELLED	Berkshire Sonning Lane, Sonning
April 23	HAMPSHIRE	DINTON
May 8	SUSSEX	DINTON
May 14	FINALS DAY	

50 OVERS ECB SOUTH CENTRAL CUP

Date	Opposition	Venue
Fri 2 June	HAMPSHIRE	HOME
Wed 26 July	Dorset	Away
Fri 4 Aug	Sussex	Away
Fri 11 Aug	OXFORDSHIRE	MARLOW
Thur 17 Aug	Berkshire	Away
Wed 23 Aug	Friendly	MCC XI CHESHAM

ADVANCE NOTICE

BUCKS C.C.C. ANNUAL GOLF DAY & DINNER

Thursday 27th September 2023

Burnham Beeches Golf Club

HOT OFF THE PRESS

This season all of Bucks 1st XI games will be shown live on our YouTube channel.



Highlights will also be created. Hopefully the T20 double header against Oxfordshire at Wormsley this Sunday will be our debut, without too many teething issues

NATIONAL COUNTIES CRICKET UPDATES

The NCCA annual Player ID Day took place on Friday 3rd March at the ECB National Performance Centre in Loughborough. Player ID Days have been created to give the first-class counties an opportunity to come along and witness some of the top talent from across the NCCA county sides. The NCCA were joined by representatives from 7 first-class counties: Leicestershire CCC, Essex CCC, Yorkshire CCC, Middlesex CCC, Northants CCC, Glamorgan CCC and Durham CCC. Not only was this a fantastic opportunity for the NCCA players to train at a world-leading facility, but it is also a great initiative that supports the talent pathway into the first-class game.

A county scout commented "A brilliant initiative to get a group of players all together in one place to showcase their skills in front of first-class county coaches".

Players were nominated from each of the 20 National Counties Cricket sides, leading to a number of promising young players taking part in this experience.

The nominated Buckinghamshire player was Ross Richardson

BACK IN THE DAY.....

A long long time ago, in a galaxy far far away, the major One Day K.O. competition , under various sponsorship titles, offered an opportunity for the Minor Counties side to play against the First Class counties. In the last edition of Coloured Trousers we reported on the Bucks v Essex match at Beaconsfield in 1997, but six years later we entertained Gloucestershire in the 3rd Round of the C&G Trophy in the magnificent tree lined surroundings of Ascott Park Wing. The sun shone on a substantial crowd as the picture below shows off Ascott Park in all its splendour on Wednesday 7th May 2003. Gloucestershire came to us as current holders of the C&G Trophy,



and they took full advantage of an excellent pitch prepared by Ascott Park cricket manager Vic Demain as they raced to a score 401 -7 in their allotted 50 overs. Tim Hancock top scored with 135, with substantial support from New Zealander Craig Spearman(76) and South African Test star Jonty Rhodes(75). Faced with such a large total (I think it's called scoreboard pressure these days) it was no surprise that Bucks struggled in the face of excellent bowling for seamers Mike Smith and James Averis, and were eventually shot out for 77. A certain Simon Stanway contributed 2 runs, which was actually the 5th highest score of the innings! In the Gloucester side that day was Mike Hardinges who six years later became an integral part in Bucks championship winning side of 2009.

BUCKS SAY GOODBYE TO JASON RANCE



Bucks Cricket's Head of Pathway, Jason Rance is to leave the organisation on Thursday 20th April, after 8 years on the staff and 4.5 years in his current role.

Message from Jason Rance:

After much deliberation I have decided to leave Bucks Cricket. Since having my 2 daughters working evenings and weekends has been challenging for family life. Although Bucks Cricket have been brilliant in supporting me, I haven't been able to find the right balance and therefore I have come to this difficult decision.

I will be putting the tracksuit away and moving into a completely different industry as Account Manager for an AV distribution company.

There are so many thank you's I would like to make but for the sake of page space I've narrowed it down to the following. Firstly, the Bucks staff for making the job so enjoyable. I believe they are a great team and will continue to grow the game in all areas. Parents, I appreciate all your support and the sacrifices you make in getting your sons and daughters up and down the county/country! Players, you've made my job so much fun and I will really miss coaching you. There's so much talent in the county and I will follow your progress with great interest. Finally, Rich Hudson for believing in me to take Bucks Pathway Cricket forward, I have been very lucky to have you as a boss and I've made a great mate through the game.

From entering the pathway at u14 and playing up to the 1st team to working full time in various roles for the past 8 years I've loved every minute. It's fantastic to see how far the pathway and organisation has come over those years. I leave knowing that Bucks Cricket is in a great place and I really appreciate all of your efforts. Most of all I will cherish the friendships I've made in the role and I hope to bump into you around a boundary somewhere in the future. All the best, Jase

Before announcing his departure, Jason praised the Bucks Cricket pathway after five players were named in the 2023 Northants CCC Academy. They are Aadi Sharma, Aatish Anthathi and Raphael Weatherall, who are products of the Bucks Cricket pathway, as are young fast bowlers Sai Boorghu and Yashas Kochar, both capable of bowling express pace. In addition, George Weldon has been awarded a rookie contract. Rance told the Northants CCC website:

I'm delighted that Sai and Yash have progressed onto Northamptonshire's Academy. They have been exceptional this winter and it's no surprise to me that they have been given this opportunity. It's another great step in building our partnership as they follow in Aadi [Sharma], Aatish [Anthathi], Raphy [Raphael Weatherall] & George [Weldon]'s footsteps making it six Bucks players in the last

couple of years. It's another great day for Bucks Cricket. Our talent pool is getting better and better and it's brilliant that there is a clear pathway for players to join a 1st class county. Northants have a track record of giving younger players an opportunity and with George Weldon signing his rookie contract, these 5 have every chance of following his footsteps. It's a proud day and we will follow their development with great interest.

AN INTERESTING SNIPPET

The Northants Academy Director is Kevin Innes, who played first class cricket for both Northants and Sussex. Whilst at Sussex, Innes scored a century against Nottinghamshire but instead of celebrating with a few drinks, he ended up carrying them! On a topsy-turvy day at Horsham, Innes scored 103 not out and then had to make way in the XI for James Kirtley, who was returning from Lord's after being left out of the England side for the first Test. I know this is true as I was there! This bizarre situation occurred as a result of rule changes brought in that season to ensure that players who are included in the England squad and then not used do not miss out on a game for their county. Under the new regulation, a county can nominate a player who can be replaced by a team-mate released from England duty, providing he arrives before the start of the third day's play.

It is many a club cricketer's dream - bat, and then allow others to do all the running around. Innes certainly saw it that way. "Someone in the dressingroom said you could get a hundred and then put your feet up, which sounded great," he explained. "I never thought it would happen, and now I'm quite happy to let James go and have a bowl."

INTERVIEW WITH OXFORDSHIRE SKIPPER JONNY CATER

Oxfordshire's skipper Jonny Cater has spoken to Sports Shots Andy Bone as they start their defence of their NCCA T20 title against Buckinghamshire at Wormsley this Sunday.



- Despite standing down as the red ball captain over the winter, Cater has still been heavily involved in Oxfordshire Cricket's Men's side.
- ***Not a huge amount has changed. April is always a busy time when it comes to being a captain in NCCA cricket. Selecting teams, particularly when pre season has effectively been washed out, has been a huge challenge. There has been some difficult phone calls to make to players on the fringes of the side, but this shows the strength in-depth the county possesses currently.***

- Cater believes Oxfordshire are in a good place after a positive close season.
- ***Winter preparation has been good, with Rupert (Evans) and Paul (White) leading these sessions at Radley College every Sunday since the middle of January. It's provided the players with a strong base to work from moving into the season.***
- Poor weather has hampered time in the middle, but Cater accepts every side is facing the same issues.
- ***We have been unfortunate to have all our outdoor pre-season dates completely washed out. This is clearly not ideal but I imagine most counties are in a similar position moving into this weekends first round of games.***
- After tasting success in 2022, the Oxfordshire captain and his squad are keen to experience those feelings again.
- ***Winning last year's competition has given the players a real belief that anything is possible moving forward into 2023. We of course would love to challenge again for the title, but knowing the strength of the group, we must take each game as it comes. Being at our best is the only way we will progress through the group stage, so standards and expectations will be set incredibly high to try and achieve this goal. We have a great team spirit, and have players who can produce individual brilliance when it really matters. It will no doubt be another exciting season to be a part of.***
- In the first game of their defence, Cater recognises a tough encounter lays ahead.
- ***Bucks have always been incredibly competitive in white ball cricket. Looking at their side for this weekend, it's filled with talented players, both young and experienced. We expect a real contest, and it will give us an idea of where we are as a group moving into the remainder of the competition.***
- In closing, Cater wanted to acknowledge the support his squad continue to receive.
- ***As always, I want to thank our supporters for their continued support moving into 2023. I hope to see some make the trip to Wormsley on Sunday. And of course it will be good to see Sports Shots this weekend.***

ENGLAND CRICKET SENIORS 70+ TOUR OF AUSTRALIA

ENGLAND OVER 70S RETAINED THE 'GREY ASHES' WITH A MEMORABLE VICTORY

The following article has been kindly written by one of the England team - John Hall, who plays for Surrey O-70's. As reported in the last Newsletter, the Australia O70s are touring over here this summer and amongst other matches, they are playing Berks/Bucks O70s at Taplow on Friday 18th August and the third ODI (and last match of the tour) at Maidenhead & Bray two days later.

CRICKETING ADVENTURES DOWN UNDER

I have often dreamed of being part of a team that wins the 'Ashes' in Australia. It usually ends with a kick in the shins and someone telling me to stop falling asleep on the sofa and come up to bed. So I was excited, but not overconfident, when in Spring 2022 I was asked if I would like to be considered for an England cricket tour to Australia in 2023. OK, it was an over 70 team so an element of 'last man standing' but nevertheless, I would be representing my country! Trial games took place throughout 2022 and these went well as I scored a few runs and took wickets, including 3 in a victory over Wales in Newport. I was worried I might have damaged my chances by being in the Surrey side that beat England in one of the practice

matches (Surrey had been the 70+ County Champions in 2021) but no, the selection letter came through in August. I was in! Or at least I was in the squad of 17 from which the England team would be selected. There would be 11 games altogether, 8 against State and District sides from Brisbane, New South Wales, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne) and 3 One-Day Internationals (ODIs) against Australia. Management would try and rotate the squad to give everyone roughly the same number of games, but selection for the ODIs would be on performance and not guaranteed. So far so good. Clothing measurements were submitted, flights booked and the called-for programme of fitness training commenced. Most of our kit was free although the bulk of the trip was self-funding. Luckily, Lesley's brother is a personal trainer so the pilgrimage to the gym at Chichester College took place most Wednesdays. The main party planned to fly London to Perth direct (17 hours) with another 5-hour flight to Brisbane almost immediately – no stopover. This did not strike me as a great plan with the first game just 2 days after our arrival in Australia. The change in climate between UK and Brisbane in late January would be enough to contend with without compounding it with excessive jet lag. Our preferred route was via Dubai and Bali, giving us flight durations of 7, 8.5 and 5 hours with two nights in Bali to soften the jet lag. I have been able to visit Bali several times, even working there for a month. It's a magical place with beaches, scenery and a unique culture. Relaxing in the peace of a traditional village setting was just what was required, together with an early introduction to the heat and humidity we were about to encounter. The squad came together in the breakfast room of the Novotel Brisbane Airport on Friday January 27th, some looking slightly less sleepy than others. We then had a 1-hour coach journey to Mooloolaba on the Sunshine Coast, our base for the first 10 days. This was a great place to be based – a beautiful beach and a large selection of restaurants and shops (plus an Irish bar!) nearby.

A brief indoor practice session on the Saturday and we were into our first game against a Sunshine Coast Regional XI at Gympie on the Sunday. Southern Queensland is sub-tropical so the light fades rapidly after 6pm. This means a 10am start with breakfast at 6:30am – normally an imposition but now not really an issue as none of us knew what time of day it was anyway. A warm welcome from the local team and a 'First Nation' representative from the Gubbi Gubbi people on whose land we would be playing. He asked everyone to pay their respects to the tribe's elders, past present and emerging. This acknowledgement of the traditional custodians of the land was a feature of all our games and, I believe, something quite new and uplifting in modern Australian custom. The welcome ended with a traditional dance and 'smoking ceremony' (we didn't have to smoke anything – just be engulfed in the smoke from burning sage leaves to drive out evil spirits). The game itself was a low-scoring affair due to a very slow pitch and grassy outfield. Hitting boundaries was virtually impossible. This was explained by the fact that the ground had been under 9 metres of water a year earlier. The pavilion, a single-storey structure, had disappeared completely under the water. England's total of 131 looked nowhere near enough but the home side struggled similarly against our tight bowling and were eventually dismissed 20 runs short. My gym training and 2 days in Bali paid dividends as I was awarded Man-of-the-Match for conceding just 4 runs from my 5 overs and scoring 22 in a low scoring match. The second game at Caboolture against a SE Queensland XI followed a similar pattern – runs hard to come by and the bowlers on top. England's total of 160 was an improvement and I was pleased to feature in an important 4th wicket partnership of 75. Queensland were bowled out 22 runs short.

With the policy of giving everyone a roughly equal number of games, my non-selection for the third regional game was perhaps a good omen for the first ODI in Brisbane 3 days later. And so it proved when the team was announced. We had won 3 out of 3 so far – no mean feat with high humidity and temperatures in the mid-30s – but the Aussies made it very clear that it was the ODIs that really counted and they would be after our blood. England won the toss and batted first in a 50-over game. In truth we had bowled and fielded well in all games so far but our primary batsmen were not yet firing. We stuttered

to 196 for 8 with my 13 off 16 balls helping to boost the total in a late flurry. I managed to trap the Aussie captain LBW, but unfortunately not before he had scored a patient 90 to set up the win. The winning margin of 6 wickets looked more comfortable than it was as we managed to push them to within one over from the end without playing at our best. Our first loss, but a crucial one. We would have to win both remaining ODIs to retain the Ashes.

Our stay in Queensland was over and we took the short flight to Sydney before driving 2 hours north to Newcastle. Signposts to Wallsend, Jesmond, Hexham and Morpeth told of close historical connections to NE England – coal being the main attraction. But why Toronto? What's the connection with Canada? It turns out that Toronto is village in Co. Durham. The Newcastle no.1 Oval is one the finest cricket grounds I have played on. The outfield was like a bowling green. You felt you should take your boots off before setting foot on it. New South Wales used to play Sheffield Shield matches there, and also games against international touring sides (the younger professional ones). Now, most games are played in Sydney and England only seem to have time for international matches, not State games. Nevertheless, on Feb. 7th 2023 it was once again the venue for England versus NSW Blues. England managed to win reasonably comfortably without much help from me. This was the part of the tour where it hardly seemed worth unpacking your suitcase – only 2 or 3 days in each place and very little time for sight-seeing.

From Newcastle we drove 4 hours north to Tamworth - the first place in Australia to have streetlights. It is famous for its country and western festival – and sheep. We were royally entertained by our hosts at a sheep station where we saw sheep dogs at work and shearing. The hospitality was second to none which made it even more galling that the game against NSW Waratahs the following day was called off. The game was to be a day-night match under floodlights and on our way back from the sheep station we stopped off at the ground to have a look. Our host could turn on the floodlights from his mobile phone – which he duly did. Unfortunately, he didn't have the same ability to turn off the sprinklers. Like most sports grounds in Australia, it was council owned and run. (Apparently there are a lot of votes in providing sports facilities and the grounds are, quite simply, superb. No wonder the Aussies are so good at sport). The sprinklers were computer controlled on an automatic timer but they didn't seem able to take account of the weather which was showery. Never mind, it would dry out by tomorrow we were told. It may well have done until a short sharp shower in the morning caused large puddles to form all over the well-sprinkled square. We hung around all day and were very well fed and watered but the ground was too wet to play. A disappointment for us but a disaster for the local team. We still had another 5 matches to play but this was their one and only chance to play in an international. One chap had even delayed his retirement for a year so he could say he had played against England! We really felt their pain.

The next day we were on a plane back to Sydney with the second ODI beckoning at the Coogee Oval, just around the coast from Bondi. By now jetlag was a thing of the past, humidity a lot less and playing conditions altogether more amenable. Our batters were also beginning to find some form and we posted a challenging 223 for 8 in our 50 overs. Knowing we had to win to stay in the series we bowled and fielded like demons and Australia never got close – all out in the 43rd over 112 runs short. Next stop Canberra and another comfortable win – by 6 wickets with 10 overs to spare. The British High Commissioner hosted both teams at her residence the night before the game. The finger buffet was excellent, although nowhere near as good as the small portions of fish and chips that were served towards the end of the evening. The Diplomatic Service still knows how to entertain! On the way to Canberra we had stopped off at Bowral, the childhood home and long-term residence of Sir Don Bradman, probably cricket's best ever batsman. The Don famously retired with a Test batting average of 99.94 having scored a duck in his last match against England at the Kennington Oval. Legend has it that he couldn't focus on the ball properly as he still had tears in his eyes following the prolonged standing-ovation he received from the Oval crowd. We (or at least

the men in the party) spent a very interesting couple of hours being shown around the Bradman Museum. We saw the cylindrical water tank he used to hit a golf ball against with a cricket stump for practice. Indeed, we were invited to have a go, without huge success! No wonder he averaged nearly 100.

One more stop – and one more victory – at the Benalla Gardens Oval before finally reaching Melbourne. Benalla was another ground that had been under water the year before – this time only by 3 or 4 feet. Melbourne was the end of the road after nearly 2000 km of travelling, most of it by road, although there were still two important cricket matches to play – one of them the third and final ODI that would determine where the 'Silver Ashes' would reside for the next few months. Since Queensland we had been living out of our suitcases, or in my case a cricket bag, so there was a mad rush for the washing machines as soon as the coach doors opened. Luckily most Australian hotels are very well equipped in this regard, far more so than English hotels. I had never been to Melbourne before and first impressions were mixed. Our hotel was in Jolimont, next to the impressive Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) and tennis centres, and a short walk from the city centre. It was a bit like being in a hotel that overlooked Clapham Junction, with the 7 or 8 tracks leading to Flinders station right next door. However, once we had found the footbridge leading to the Yarra River and its riverside walks, and the free tram that takes you around the city centre, our initial impressions were revised considerably. The MCG was being readied for the forthcoming 'footie' season and the imminent arrival of Ed Sheeran, so no cricket to watch. I enjoyed the cricket section of the Australian Sports Museum, although the life-sized hologram of Shane Warne telling me all about his life from only a few feet away was a touch unnerving. It did occur to me a couple of times that reports of his early demise might have been exaggerated.

Our final two games were to be played at the Caulfield Oval, another top-class ground where the hospitality shown by the local club was superb. A Victoria Chairman's XI were beaten comfortably although the match provided us with a valuable preview into how the pitch would play for the 'big one' in two-days' time. A meeting was called after breakfast the day before the match to announce the team. All 17 players in the squad had performed really well at various times. In fact, the team had been playing better and better as the tour went on. Team selection must have been a nightmare for the selectors and tension in the room was palpable. I must admit that after hearing my name read out, I didn't have a clue who the rest of the team was. Making the team for all 3 ODIs was my primary goal, but at the very limits of my expectations. Now we just had to win the thing. The England captain was definitely a 'bat first' man but on this occasion he won the toss and elected to field. Our game 2 days earlier had shown that the outfield could be quite damp early on but would dry out and speed up as the game went on, making the boundary easier to find. The tactic worked perfectly. Rarely have I played in a team more focussed and determined to do well. I am tempted to describe our bowling and fielding as 'tigerish', although the term doesn't fit a bunch of 70-year-olds easily. Nevertheless, Australia found scoring difficult throughout and their total of 159 for 9 in the allotted 50 overs appeared well below par; that is until the England opener was caught off the first ball of our innings. At 28 for 2 there was still a lot of cricket to be played and the result by no means certain. Luckily that was our last real scare as our skipper and his Kent colleague kept the score ticking over at 4 runs/over to bring us home without further loss with more than 8 overs to spare. The Ashes (silver variety) would be on our flight back to the UK! The 5 weeks had simply flown by. Winning 9 of the 10 games played obviously helped but it had been a hugely enjoyable tour with a great bunch of blokes and their ladies. A lot of new friends were made, both English and Australian. The hospitality had been impeccable, something we will have to work hard to match when the Aussies come over in the summer to try and wrest back the trophy. Will I be able to stay in the squad with several new promising 'youngsters' reaching 70 in the meantime? Who knows? Fitness may well be the key, but I shall certainly try.



The author of the article, John Hall, is circled in the team photo above. No points for recognizing the dapper gentleman without a hat on the back far right.

The Australians Over 70's tour of England itinerary was published in the last edition of Coloured Trousers, but why not pop along to two of the local games. On 18th August, they play Berks/Bucks XI at Taplow, and finish their tour two days later with the 3rd ODI v England at Maidenhead and Bray.

Simon Prodger R.I.P.

We are very sorry indeed to have to tell you that long-standing member Simon Prodger died suddenly over the Easter weekend. He played for our Over 50s team from 2009 to 2014, captaining them for four of those years. At the time of his death, he was Managing Director of the National Cricket Conference and Secretary of the Club Cricket Conference. He was widely known, liked and respected in cricketing circles. He played many years for Watford Town and then Harefield. In his earlier years he was an outstanding hockey player, until injury curtailed his career.

Susan Klyne - Membership Secretary

Update on Ron Hedley's Prostate Cancer Research walks

Our fundraising has just topped £7000 after 5 walks.

March five involving England Cricket Seniors was organised by Warwickshire Over 60s and Over 70s. The latest walk took place at Edgbaston Cricket Ground, Birmingham on Wednesday 22nd March 2023. Fifty eight people took part in the walk with Warwickshire Over 60s and Over 70s players and wives supported by people from Buckinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and Worcestershire. A great effort and we thank them all. We were all delighted to be joined by former England Test great Ian Bell along with former Warwickshire players Tim Munton and Andy Lloyd. To add to the Birmingham connection former Birmingham City players Mick Harford and Tony Coton also joined our walk.

The picture below shows Ian Bell, Tim Munton, Ron Hedley and Andy Lloyd at Edgbaston



The picture below shows all the walkers on the hallowed turf before setting off. The walk commenced around the perimeter of the Edgbaston ground and was followed by walking through the lovely Cannon Hill Park finishing with a final walk around the Edgbaston ground.



SKY Sports filmed the walk and carried out interviews to be broadcast over the five days of the England v Australia Ashes Test Match at Edgbaston in June 2023. We thank SKY for helping us to raise awareness of prostate cancer and our reason for walking, which is to raise funds for Prostate Cancer UK and The Bob Willis Fund. Bob was and still is a Warwickshire and England legend. Lauren, his widow, and Nicola Tallett of Prostate Cancer UK also walked to show their support for England Cricket Seniors. Walkers met at the very impressive Indoor School and were able to witness England Test bowler Chris Woakes netting, I think all the batsmen amongst us were very pleased we would

not have to face him. We are indebted to Dave Murphy, Warwickshire Over 60s/70s representative for organising such a great day, to the Edgbaston staff and to everyone who walked and has donated to our cause. A special mention to Andy Owen for all of his help at the Indoor School so we could distribute T shirts, caps and badges to the walkers. (Andy does support Luton Town FC, a sensible man). **If you have donated, we thank you, if not, please do.**

Walk number seven was organised by Essex CCC Over 60s and Over 70s with a meet at Old Chelmsfordians CC followed by a walk to The County Ground, Chelmsford and back to Old Chelmsfordians CC for a delightful lunch provided by “Wenzels The Bakers”, we thank them for their kindness. After a very wet night on Tuesday, we were delighted to wake to blue sky, sunshine and just a bit of a chilly breeze. Yet again we managed a walk with no rain although we did have heavy rain from the moment we drove out of Chelmsford until we arrived back in Buckinghamshire.



We were delighted that Victoria Polley of BBC Radio Essex, who presents their weekly cricket show every Wednesday evening, joined the walkers for the first leg to the County Ground. Les Gray led the walk with over 60 people enjoying a lovely walk, through local parks to the Ground. On reaching the Ground we watched some of the Essex players having a net session before the four-day match v Lancashire which starts on the 13th April. Unfortunately, we just missed Sir Alastair Cook having a practice session. We were delighted that Sam Harmer, Sam Cook, Ben Allison and Jamie Porter gave up their time to come out for a photo call in front of the pavilion. The walkers then made their way back to Old Chelmsfordians CC for a well earned rest and lunch. Phil Mitchell, who organised the day along with Les Gray, Duncan Blackie and Nick Goode, also organised a prize draw. We thank those who donated prizes and who bought tickets for helping us to the magnificent total of £320 raised. We thank all of the afore named for their hard work and the ladies who provided tea and biscuits and sold prize draw tickets. Pat Hedley has the giving out of T shirts, Caps, Badges and prostate cancer booklets down to a fine art and helped by Laura Kerby, CEO of Prostate Cancer UK, everybody was soon kitted out.

At lunch Phil gave thanks as did Ron to all who supported the day. Laura gave a brief outline of the work of Prostate Cancer UK and The Bob Willis Fund and how our donations are spent wisely on research projects. We have to give special mention to Chelmsford City Walking Football members who joined our walk and helped to make it such an enjoyable day. Their donation with Gift Aid is over £1000 of over £2500 raised by Essex so far.

Ron was delighted to meet ex Buckinghamshire Over 60s, star batsman, Dick De Caires and his wife who both walked with us. Ron's first two matches for Bucks Over 60s, a year apart, were both opening the batting with Dick. Both partnerships were of over 80 and I will forget how many of those I scored. We are so thankful to Victoria and Paul of BBC Radio Essex and we really enjoyed listening to their programme last night. You can hear the show by going to BBC Radio Essex, The Cricket Show on their twitter feed or listen on BBC Sounds.

Our walks now move on to the following venues;

Surrey Over 60s and Over 70s walk at Horsley and Send CC on Monday 17th April.

Wales Over 60s and Over 70s walk at Abergavenny CC on Wednesday 26th April

Hertfordshire Over 60s and Over 70s walk at The Red Lion PH, Preston, near Hitchin on Friday 12th May.
Lincolnshire Over 60s and Over 70s walk at Louth on either the first or last Sunday in June.
Buckinghamshire/Oxfordshire Over 60s and Over 70s walk at Wormsley Cricket Ground, Ibstone on Wednesday 28th June 2023. The walk will take place in the morning and walkers will be able to stay and watch the match between the Sir Paul Getty XI and the touring Australian Club, Crusaders.
Cornwall Over 60s and Over 70s walk at Truro CC on Friday 28th July 2023. The walk will be in the morning of the match between Cornwall Over 60s and the touring Australian Over 60s
We are delighted to have added more walks to our goal of walking in all of the 32 English Counties and Wales who play Over 60s County Cricket.

We hope all Counties will arrange a walk by 15th September 2024.

To donate or join a walk contact Ron at rjhatters1@yahoo.co.uk

01494 812645

07710 987 950

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SUPPORT BUCKS CRICKET

By joining Bucks County Cricket Club

The County Club and the Bucks Cricket Board are working actively to promote and develop cricket at all levels and ages throughout the county

You can support these efforts by joining the Bucks County Cricket Club

The Annual Subscription is : -

£25 for individuals

£35 for partners living at the same address

£10 for juniors (aged under 18)

£15 for students in full time education ((aged under 24)

Life membership is also available

Membership forms are available from the membership secretary Susan Klyne

mail to: susanklyne@bucksccc.org.uk

April 2022

Once again, many thanks to all those who have helped and contributed to Coloured Trousers particularly Kevin Beaumont, Andy Bone. Ron Hedley, Su Klyne, Mike Knox, Rachel Hudson, John Hall, County Cricket Matters and Yahoo Over Cow Corner. All contributions gratefully received of course - why not write an article- join our happy band of literary contributors.

.....and hope to see, either in a deck chair or wandering around the boundary somewhere in the coming season.

Bill Scholes

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The views expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of Bucks C.C.C.

