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Notchers' News

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The network for cricket scorers

This newsletter is *your* forum for sharing news and experiences, discussing scoring issues and networking.

Scoring and Cricket for the Blind and Partially Sighted

As an irregular reader of Notcher's News but a fan of the Christmas quiz since being introduced to it while doing an ACO scorer's course, I wanted to share the opportunity to score for what is a "different ball game" with Notchers' News readers.

As an adult my cricket had been reduced to watching on TV and keeping an eye on the Hampshire score in the paper – rather sad for a child whose parents had hooked me with TMS on radio 4 and the 40 over Sunday cricket on BBC2, and who had scored for the Co-op seconds in Plymouth as a teenager.

About six years ago my youngest child started playing and, having been to watch a few times, I realised that I could contribute to the game by scoring. This would be especially useful for his team as he is visually impaired and plays for a visually impaired team. Inevitably getting the players to score is harder than for red ball cricket.

Scoring for the Blind Cricket England and Wales (BCEW) and British Blind Sport (BBS) competitions has been great fun and, in 2013, allowed me to score from the box at Northants at the BBS cup final. In recent years this match has been hosted at county grounds including The Rose Bowl and Edgbaston.

There are now two regular BCEW development leagues for Blind Cricket in England - based south & west and north & the midlands - each with at least five teams; as well as a seven team national league - so with the BBS cup and T20 cup competitions there are lots of games.

Blind cricket now has a team in nearly twenty counties all over the country, most of which would be very grateful for help with scoring.

Those umpires who have become involved in the game since BCEW looked to appoint red ball ACO officials have generally enjoyed taking part and I am sure scorers would enjoy it too – as a change or perhaps even on a more regular basis.

The white size 3 football used for the game is easy to see and although there are a few competition rules to adjust to, as ever, scoring is much as for the "red ball" game. The two most notable exceptions are:

- * when batting, those with no sight at all score double runs
- * some overs can contain more wides than generally seen, as players may struggle to see or find gusty wind blows the ball off course.

All games are played in an afternoon with an enjoyable break for tea giving officials the chance to meet the players.

Anyone who may be interested in taking part in scoring, or just in finding out more about the game should contact Paul Toplis by e-mail at alisonr.jones@gmail.com

Paul Toplis

The newsletter can only be successful if copy is received for publication. Please submit articles, letters and questions to notchers@btopenworld.com <http://www.notchers.co.uk>

The Christmas Challenge 2014: Results

John M Brown

Quite bizarrely there were the same number of entries as last year – forty-eight – and the same number of all-correct solutions.

Nine of those entries came from readers of Notchers' News and the remaining thirty-nine from ACO members.

SOLUTION

	Scratchers	Notchers
1	198	136
2	4	6
3	3	14
4	1	108
5	120	75
6	90	71
7	85	0
8	8	6
9	2	9
10	3	0
11	0	5
Extras	11	9
Total	525	439

RESULT: Scratchers won by 86 runs

As always there were several questions which caused more difficulty than others, although in each case there were more people who produced the right answer than the wrong. A surprising number (17 errors) gave 5 as the answer to Notchers extras, but that is the distance in front of the *popping crease* to which the covers may extend whereas the question asked how far in front of the *wicket* - 9 feet.

In Scratchers 2 (15 errors) most mistakes came when entrants failed to recognise that the umpire would call and signal No ball and then repeat that No ball signal when the ball was dead.

There were thirteen errors in both Notchers 1 and 3, but the error was really the same in each: for ball 8 in that eventful over, if a batsman plays no shot at a ball which goes from his pad to his bat, then no runs may be scored.

In Notchers 7 (12 errors) it is no longer possible for a batsman to score runs after he has played a second shot in defence of his wicket, not even from an overthrow – this change took effect after the Law revisions in October 2013.

Notchers 10 (8 errors) – the captain winning the toss must notify his decision whether to bat or field first immediately.

Scratchers 7 (8 errors) – No balls count as balls received by the striker since he is able to hit these, but Wide balls do not count since they are out of the striker's reach.

The successful entries were sent in by John Betts, Peter Danks, Fred Godson, Wendy Hardy, Keith Healey, Robert Ridge, Clive Robinson, Garry Rook, Steven Smith, George Temporley, Paul Toplis, Angela Tuff, Mike Turner and Richard Verrinder.

Special mention should be made of Frank Hodgkiss who made all the right calculations, but forgot to add the 23 scored during the over in Notchers 1 to the total score when the over began.

The names of Notchers' News all-correct solvers were put into the Umpire's hat and the winners drawn at random.

The Notchers' News winner was **Paul Toplis**. He has already received his £20 prize

My thanks to all those who entered – and to all those who had a go, but did not send in their solutions (next time perhaps, *please*) – and especially to those who sent appreciative comments. JMB

My thanks to John Brown for devising another excellent Christmas Challenge.

It takes time and effort to produce a new selection of questions geared to encouraging readers to carefully consider the Laws of Cricket and how they are applied and even more time to mark and summarise the entries.

I hope that the explanations provided by John have given readers a greater understanding of the relevant Laws of Cricket

The number of entries was disappointing at less than 0.5% of both the ECB ACO and NN circulation lists.

We could do better; yes, it would mean more marking for John but he would be happy about that in the knowledge that his efforts are really worthwhile.

I know that they are; thank you John

Ed.

From school to England in a decade; the journey and inspiration of a young scorer

Martyn Holloway-Neville

What a pleasure to be able to contribute to Notchers News! A great publication, and long may the notching continue!

Those of you who know me, or have worked with me in the past, will know most, if not all, of this story – I write this both as a tale of success and perseverance, but also as an inspiration and encouragement to the young scorers who are reading. There are precious few of us around, and we need to stick at it!

I fell in love with the beautiful game (the **proper** beautiful game!) ever since I could watch it, back in the heady days of terrestrial televised cricket (sigh). I really had little choice – my dad and his three brothers were all cricket-mad – three played, and dad scored – and one of them (Uncle Jack) is now a top umpire in the Devon Premier League.

I originally set my sights on playing, but it quickly became apparent that my talents did not lie on the field, but at the side of it. Even at school age groups, aged 9 or so, I'd be taking up the pencil and book when we were batting. I had very little idea what I was doing, but we muddled through somehow.

My route into scoring full-time came via Dad and my old PE master, both of whom taught me the basics. So, in 2003, at the tender age of 10, I took on scoring full-time with my age group team. The changes came thick and fast – pencils replaced by coloured pens, new and better scorebooks (the Slazenger box type, still my preferred 1-day scorebook), and innovations such as a painted table tennis bat – revolutionary to a youngster like me.

As the years progressed, I began to be noticed. Soon I was scoring part-time for the school 1st XI, a mere 4 years too early by age, and then in 2005, came the breakthrough that has defined my career to date. The school were hosting a high profile charity match between CHASE, and an Old England XI, and they needed a competent scorer. Astonishingly, I find myself in the company of Ali Brown and co., and impress on what, for a 12 year old, was quite a big stage. That caught the attention of the local cricket club, Ashted CC, who hired me for the rest of their season. The journey up the ranks had begun.

At this point, it seemed logical to take on a course – do the job properly and all. So I went to the local ACU&S Introductory course, ran at that time by Geoff Knight, a familiar name to many of you, I'm sure. After passing with flying colours (99%), I was hastily picked up by Surrey to score full-time for their U15 side.

As the years at school kept coming, and the work started to pile up, time pressures became ever more apparent. This didn't stop me, however, as I continued to pick up the odd 'special' fixture, such as corporate fixtures at The Oval in '07 and '08, as well as acing the ACU&S Standard exam in December '07.

It was the 2009 season, and subsequent winter, that proved the next watershed. In July '09, I was selected to score for London & East U15 at the Bunbury Festival, a great honour, and a great stepping stone to bigger and better things. Then, in March 2010, I was invited to the pilot course of the new ECB ACO Level 3 qualification, then (as now) the highest achievable level, qualifying for all forms of the game. After much deliberation, I was awarded this status, along with all the other pilot colleagues.

The last 3/4 years have seen further strides. The MCC came calling, and I now score for them in out-matches and matches at the most hallowed of hallowed, Lord's itself. I've scored several times at the Nursery Ground, including a ground-breaking T20I between MCC Ladies and China in 2014, and scored on the Main Pitch as well. University caught up with me, and I now work for Durham's 2nd XI, scoring on MCCU pitches across the north.

England, however, was the goal - in a sense, it had always been. The chance to work for your country, on the big stage, at the highest level – it meant everything. I had come so close in early 2013, being offered the reserve position for Press Box Scorer at the ICC Champions Trophy, despite then being just 19. But in August that same year, I got my wish. Sri Lanka U17 were in town, and I had the privilege of scoring the 2-day warm-up they played. 12 months on, Pakistan the visitors, I scored the 3-day Youth Test.

Alongside this, I volunteer tirelessly across the spectrum of the game – as Registration Secretary at my cricketing home, Ashted CC – and as Statistician for the Surrey Championship, a role I took on 5 years ago, aged just 17.

So, you may ask, what does this have to do with me? I suppose I'm talking to all of you when I say that if you have a goal, within the cricketing world, then strive for it. You can do it – I never believed I would be as successful as I am now, even 2 years ago. Do the courses, actively look for the roles you want, and go for it!

For the young scorers out there, whether you've been scoring for a week, a year or several years, I would say that if you aim high, you can get there. It's so easy to get bogged down in study and other concerns, particularly towards the latter end of school and into university. Go with your passion, and see where it takes you. I started, just like you, with the pencil and the book – and look where the journey has taken me.

A vote for best scoring position

Mike Turner

Can I put in a vote for best scoring position?

A little way from my usual haunts in Gloucestershire, I was fortunate to score the Civil Service knockout final at Wokingham CC. I understand this is a fairly new ground, and I am always delighted in these circumstances when so much careful thought has been given to the needs of the scorer.

The scorers have a spacious room raised on the first floor – always a bonus

The room is directly off the dining room (but with a door to close) and right next to the kitchen so easy to get a drink

The toilets are close enough to be reached in a drinks break without missing play.

The table is roomy enough for two scorers with books and laptops, and of course there are power sockets for those laptops. In between the two scorers – reachable by either – are the controls for the electronic scoreboard which is remotely operated and is sited directly opposite in the line of vision on the other side of the ground.

There is of course a switch – also reachable by both scorers - for the light to acknowledge the umpires.

The whole of the field of play can be seen through the window by either scorer, and for me the key detail which set it apart is that the window is hinged at the bottom with the top of it opening into the room: absolutely no chance of rain coming in. Incidentally the opening window is a must, to help hear calls of no ball.

The scorers' position faces east onto the ground, so the setting sun is behind us.

The boundary is right next to the pavilion, so the play is not too distant.

A final nice touch is that the scorers were provided with a small bowl of fruit to keep us going should we need it.

No doubt there are other new grounds with similarly superb facilities, but I don't get to experience them too often, so for me this was heavenly!

Reflecting on 'From the field' (NN 21, page 4)

Fred Godson

I read Helen Caird's article with interest and accept that there is room for more than one opinion on whether scorers should intervene if they feel that they can discreetly prevent the umpire from making a mistake. I firmly hold the view that a scorer should accept whatever the umpires do and signal, without intervention or comment: if the umpires come to the scorers to check anything then the information requested should be supplied.

I agree that there is some merit in discussing the extent of any intervention at the pre-match conference but again I would, as scorer, leave it to the umpires to initiate that discussion if THEY wanted to. As an example, if an umpire came to me before the match I was to score and said "Fred, I'm not very good at keeping track of the number of overs these young fast bowlers can bowl, will you shout over when they've had their quota?" I would naturally comply.

If you are going to intervene, where does it end? I remember the embarrassment caused by a scorer who frequently criticised the umpires, arguing with them and telling them where they'd gone wrong; he was never discreet, telling all the players, trying to show how much he knew about the game and the laws and how clever he was as a scorer (he'd never played himself).

I do not think that my approach should be regarded as the scorers being "subservient to" or "playing second fiddle to" the umpires - I think that such a view is quite inappropriate. It is simply that the laws clearly describe the umpires in being in charge of a match and the scorers as accepting whatever signals and instructions are given by those umpires; the umpires do their job and we, as scorers, do ours. We are all part of that team of four - the officials in a cricket match.

... and reflecting on 'All run fours' (NN 21, page 4)

Fred Godson

I'm of the opinion that this statistic is intended to record the number of direct boundaries a batsman hits.

Consequently I would not include an all-run 4 (meritorious though this is) or any score including an overthrow going to the boundary.

I think the spirit of the thing is that batsmen should get credit for what they do by their own efforts, not where they are helped by a fielder's mistakes.

Time to learn to love linear

Mike Turner

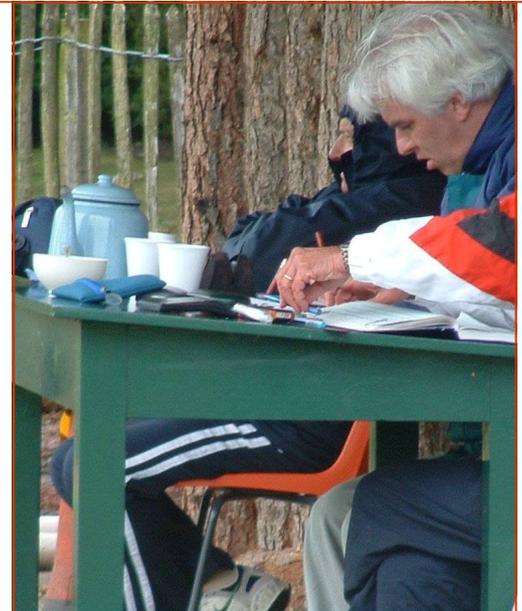
I had intended to reply to Jenny Booth's response in NN20 and my own challenge to make me believe there was something to Linear scoring; thanks to Fred Godson for reminding me.

Fair play to Jenny, I am convinced and, like Fred, I can see now that at first class level it is essential.

It sounds like my scoring experience is at much the same level as Fred's - mostly at club level where the players like seeing the Box method with just the occasional opportunity to score at a higher level but I can see now that staying with Box could cause me to limit those opportunities to be appointed to those higher level matches.

It strikes me that what would be best for me personally would be to jump straight to competence with computer scoring; that seems to be accepted at most high-level matches now. The trouble is, I don't trust that computers never fail, so I'd need to have a backup written record, and Box-type is too much to do at the same time as computer scoring. So it looks like I can't escape it.

I still need to learn to love Linear!



Kenny Nisbet caught on camera again. Is he the only scorer? No score box but at least he has the luxury of a good sized table and a pot of tea. Sadly no protection from the elements Not the ideal scoring position! Ed.

ADVERTISING SCORER TRAINING COURSES

Notchers' News (<http://www.notchers.co.uk>) hosts a list of known courses which will be updated as details are received.

England and Wales Cricket Board Association of Cricket Officials (ECB ACO)

<http://www.ecb.co.uk/ecb/ecb-association-of-cricket-officials/>

<http://www.notchers.co.uk> hosts links to other websites offering information for scorers



For books, scoring equipment and coloured pens or to access the Bulletin Board;

Visit the Acumen Books website at:

www.acumenbooks.co.uk



MILLENNIUM SCORING RECORD

The A3 scoring record originally designed by members of the ACU&S Scorers' Board .

Binder and 50 sheets (= 100 innings) £20 + P&P

Refill pack of 50 sheets £10 + P&P

Contact milsteadmsr@btinternet.com for more information

SCORER TRAINING

ECB ACO offer courses - For more information visit the ECB ACO website

A scorer correspondence course which aims to achieve the same high standards previously set by The Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers is open to those wanting to learn more about cricket scoring.

For more information contact cathy.rawson@btopenworld.com

Share your cricket scoring experiences and scoring questions with readers.

Photos are welcomed and add interest to the newsletter.

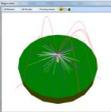
Send your contributions to: notchers@btopenworld.com

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Your questions, news and views are welcomed for use in future issues