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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.

### The Score box and scoring

#### A compilation of readers' comments and entries in the Umpires and Scorers Facebook page

On my visit to a ground last year I found myself scoring the match under a tarpaulin shelter. It was comfortable - a table, chairs, close enough to the players to get information as required and also close to drinks, tea and toilet facilities. Why the alfresco scoring then? Because the old pavilion had been taken down and the new pavilion was being built as the match was being played.

I asked lots of questions (having read Fred Godson's thoughts on the ideal scoreboard) and liked the answers received - large windows for good vision, ample room, worktop space and power points for use by two scorers with books, computers and any other equipment, close to the umpires' room and toilet facilities.

I was really looking forward to going there this season. Sadly things had not gone to plan.

On arrival I was greeted with apologies in that the scorers' room was not fit for purpose. We could score in the social/bar area with a good view of play but the noise and activity would make it difficult for us to concentrate or communicate. Next was a corridor close to the social area but this too was noisy with lots of people traffic. Plan C was the table and chairs near the boundary.

Not ideal! Needless to say I was very disappointed.

I always ask the opposition team if they have a scorer and point out the scoring position. At this match the opposition scorer decided to sit with his team on the opposite side of the ground. Why would a scorer with an ounce of common sense not want to sit with his opposite number?

When the opposition batted I had to ask the umpire to give me names over the radio but, with many similar sounding and two with the same surnames, it made life extremely difficult.

Comment 1: I've had it happen to me. On one occasion the opposition tried to claim that their scorer was right. The umpires' response; 'A home scorer is sitting in the box which is there for scorers, not just decoration. We shall go with her book'. Strangely enough we never had an issue after that.

Comment 2: The law does state that the 2 scorers should frequently check their scores agree. Not sure how that can be done from opposite sides (of the field).

Comment 3: Ounce of common sense about gets it. I recall umpiring a match where the two scorers sat in their different cars. I chose to ignore one of them and signal to the one I knew

Scored with a colleague using TCS on a laptop with a very small screen. We were checking scores. Suddenly he found that he had the wrong batsman facing. His very small screen made it difficult (impossible?) for him to find where the error had occurred. He just changed the batsmen round; we now agreed individual scores but not the deliveries received.

Comment 1: TCS should be used on a laptop with a screen big enough so the scorer is not straining his/her eyes. Common sense

*To read all the comments and other interesting threads visit Facebook Umpire and Scorers*

The newsletter can only be successful if copy is received for publication. Please submit articles, letters and questions to [notchers@btopenworld.com](mailto:notchers@btopenworld.com)  
Search for the 'Notchers' group on Facebook  
<http://www.notchers.co.uk>

## It's worth going in to bat for the art of the cricket scorebook

Polly Rhodes



A beautifully completed, totally-tallying cricket scoresheet is a wonder to behold.

The box method, the linear method, top-and-bottom method – these are codes that transport me to another world. I can look at a scorebook from a century ago and decipher the ebb and flow of the game. That is a great joy, and one that we must never lose.

Yet, sadly, the skills in which my fellow scorers and I take such delight are fading, as an array of computer “apps” and software replace time-tested pencil and paper with digital ones and zeros. These programs offer simplicity and ease, and they also mean that our work is broadcast and updated on the internet, where it can be followed, live, by fans around the world.

But that is not quite the same as a permanent record.

I have seen scorebooks going back to the 1800s, and my own will themselves be placed in the archive at the County Ground – Somerset’s home – where I hope they in turn will transport future followers of the game, long after I am gone.

Don’t get me wrong: I’m all for software. But it must be a *complement*, not a replacement, to the beautiful ledgers of the game that we have today. I am no Luddite, I teach all methods of scoring, including digital ones. But only the traditional, manual methods truly communicate what the game is all about. A computer filling in the blanks does not force you to get to grips with the 42 laws.

For cricket scoring is not a robotic exercise; it is about a true love of the game. Certainly, every scorer I know must have something akin to obsessive compulsive disorder – we have to make it all add up, to make everything look neat, but there is an artistry in our obsession. Some score in colours so details stand out; the feats of individual bowlers, for example, or the batsmen who face them. To some, such colour is itself a new fad, having only arrived in the last 30 years or so.

I started scoring at school, when I found I was mad keen on the game but was deemed too young to play. I loved it, and when I grew up discovered that I was much better with a pencil than with a bat! When my son started playing I scored for his Colts’ team. They nagged me to get qualified, and I went on from there. Bill Frindall – aka “Bearders” in the *Test Match Special* team – taught me his linear method.

I started with Somerset under-17s in 2006, then moved to the Second XI in 2008; last year I scored all the first team games at the County Ground. I will also do some England games this year. My season started on March 19<sup>th</sup> and it will end on September 28<sup>th</sup> – during which time I will have watched some 120 days of cricket.

The passion remains undimmed, both for traditional scoring and the game itself. It would be a tragedy if the paper and pencil method were lost. It really is something of an art. Each scorer puts their own stamp on it. Some even put a key at the beginning of each scorebook so their particular signs – inverted triangles for a leg bye perhaps, a cross for a wide – can be decrypted years later. With very fine pens we can make it look really very beautiful.

It is blissful. For when I look up from the scoresheet out towards the square I get to appreciate the great players playing. It’s an absolute joy, the way that the scorer’s handwritten dashes and dots translate the artistry on the field, into a different kind of artwork in the scorebook. And like all great art, we must preserve it.

This article originally appeared in The Daily Telegraph on Friday 21st April 2017

## What Was Wrong With That Then, Umps?

Book review

There are countless books written about the wonderful sport of cricket, but not many from the unique perspective of the umpire. An entertaining and amusing insight into the world of cricket.

Matthew Stevenson's diary covers five seasons spent as an umpire in recreational cricket, the many grounds he officiated at, the characters he encountered, the decisions he had to make - some right, some wrong - the cricket teas and the after match post-mortems. Whether you are just an armchair cricket fan or an aficionado of the summer game, there is much in this book to interest and amuse you. For a player at any level, it will give you a greater understanding of the level of knowledge and concentration needed by the match officials who are so essential to recreational cricket.

“It is a warm book, written by somebody in love with the game, the diary contains many delightful stories: not over-egged for an easy laugh but flowing naturally out of the cricket, as all the best stories do. The result is a charming book that gives the reader a strong sense of an umpire’s life. Not just umpires but players should read it”. – **Stephen Chalke**

Price £8.99p (or £2.99p on Kindle) and available from:

- <https://olympiapublishers.com/books/what-was-wrong-with-that-then-umps-> (p&p free)
- Your local bookshop quoting the ISBN reference number: 978-1-84897-746-4
- [mcs1728@btinternet.com](mailto:mcs1728@btinternet.com) - the author for information regarding signed copies (p&p charges will apply)

## Now anyone can score

Sharron Jones

There has been a move in recent years from book scoring to electronic scoring, primarily with a laptop. There are several software packages available but the generally preferred one, for scorers and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has been Total Cricket Scorer (TCS). That seems to be changing though.

TCS has been acquired by CricHQ who recently delivered the new version of the software, version 9, with a number of improvements. However, there is a fly in the ointment. It seems that the new version will no longer interface with the ECB's Play-Cricket website due to commercial terms not being agreed between CricHQ and the ECB. Many leagues, and therefore clubs, use Play-Cricket as the central archive for their league data so this has significant impact for those who score using TCS.

Whilst this is all going on though, there has been an announcement about the development of a new scoring app available on smartphone and tablet only (no laptops) called Play-Cricket Scorer. This software will be fully integrated with Play-Cricket, as you would expect. The ECB have issued communication about this app saying that the objective is to get more people interested and involved in the art of scoring. As a guiding principle, this is commendable but for me it raises a few issues.

The ECB has developed a structure of scoring levels which it encourages those who are members of the ECB ACO (Association of Cricket Officials) to attain. However, the inference that anyone could pick up a smartphone or tablet and score a cricket match rather contradicts the importance and relevance of their accreditation and development programme.

Scorers who have undertaken training to score, whether by book or electronic means, have generally done so off their own bat, making time to take the course, gain experience and to fund any associated expenses. The inference that anyone with a smartphone or tablet can score a cricket match demeans this time, effort and expense.

Those established laptop scorers who have, until now, fully interfaced with Play-Cricket for their clubs and leagues will now need to determine whether to switch to Play-Cricket scorer, abandoning the laptop and TCS license both of which they are likely to have funded for themselves, or to continue using TCS and then manually upload the match data later. I suspect if the latter option is chosen that only the essential data to detail the match result will be uploaded.

Let's be honest, most scorers do not get paid for giving up their day to score for their club. Umpires get paid because generally leagues set out fee structures as part of their regulations. Scorers arrive early to obtain and set up all the data, whether scoring by book or laptop, ready for play to commence. They are frequently last in to tea, due to finishing off the first innings record. At the end of the match they can be found finishing off the match record whilst players and umpires are getting changed or sorting out post-match refreshments. They often then make themselves available to assist with completing any match paperwork required for the league by the umpires or club captains. Hopefully they are thanked by players and umpires, but I am certain that that does not always happen either. This will understandably make scorers question how much they are appreciated.

To now have the ECB, effectively the governing body as part of the ECB ACO, tacitly condone that anyone with a smartphone or tablet can score a match will only serve to further demean the art of scoring and demoralise qualified and experienced scorers.

## The Play-CricketScorer App

Steve Livingstone

I have just tried out the play-cricket app (5<sup>th</sup> March 2017). Besides being quite clunky and lacking the easy functionality of TCS, there are a few bugs that need to be sorted out.

Scoring a dummy game on my iPad, I entered two no-balls in one over. In each consequent over I got asked after ball 4 if I wanted to end the over. I then hopped out of the app to look for help (not found) and now cannot find a way back into the game, although I keep getting pop-up messages to say that a game is in progress.

I have not found a way to record innings notes in it.

There is also a question of how log-in is arranged for scorers by team management, what happens at a rural field where there is no mobile signal and who will pay data costs when there is.

I score some club and county age group games. No professional or premier league games. Even so, I take some pride in the process. This just feels too simplistic and schoolboyish. I can't see myself enjoying it, in which case I either won't score or I will go back to my neglected felt tip pens. Then someone else will have to re-enter everything onto the play-cricket website.

I will keep TCS V8 and hope that this will continue to link to [play-cricket.com](http://play-cricket.com).

Steve hoped that the ECB/developers would have ironed out the glitches before the June issue of NN went out. Have they?

## What's happening to TCS?

In recent weeks TCS users have received a series of emails from CricHq and ECB. Some of that correspondence can be accessed via the Play-Cricket and CricHq websites. Including it in NN is not an option as it runs to too many pages.

In summary, the bottom line is that:

- CricHQ now owns TCS.
- Historically ECB's Play-Cricket integrated with both TCS and CricHQ scoring
- The ECB and CricHQ have not been able to reach reasonable commercial terms for the ongoing sharing of data from CricHQ v9 to the Play-Cricket website. (They appear to have dropped the 'TCS' from v9)
- CricHQ have made the decision that "continued investment at our cost alone for the provision of any services including match data capture via either the CricHQ scoring app and TCS to the Play-Cricket.com website, is not commercially feasible".
- CricHQ have introduced TCS v9 which will be available free of charge
- support for TCS v8 and earlier versions of TCS will be withdrawn by CricHq as v9 comes on line
- The CricHq platform for competition management which will allow scorers to import and export results from v9. The platform can use this information to provide statistical information etc to clubs and leagues
- ECB is offering scorers Play-CricketScorer, their new, free of charge, scoring App available for use with android and Apple devices.
- ECB's Play-cricket website remains fully operational and scorers can download and upload files from v8 to the Play-CricketScorer site. As with CricHQ, the platform can provide statistical information etc to clubs and leagues using the data on the site
- Leagues in the higher echelons of the ECB structure are required to download fixtures from and upload results to the Play-Cricket site. Scorers will not be able to do so if they are using v9.
- Staying with TCS v8 or switching to Play-CricketScorer will allow scorers to import matches from and export results to Play-Cricket.
- **Staying with TCS v8 or earlier versions will not be an option after 1 October 2017 when the 2017 MCC Code of Laws takes effect; some scoring entries must change to accommodate the revisions.**

Scorers using TCS appear to have become pawns in a match that is being played outside the boundary and which they are not in a position to influence. Options for scorers are limited?

Many scorers are totally committed to TCS having used it for years. Many prefer to use a laptop computer rather than a smaller Android or Apple device.

Reports from those who have upgraded to v9 suggest that, after a few early problems, the version appears to be reliable and does what they want it to do (other than uploading to Play-Cricket)

Many have urged caution, primarily in respect to the upgrading process which is reported to have deleted v8 and/or earlier versions from their computer and completely and irrecoverably cleared their TCS database.

Comments from some TCS users who have upgraded:

- Earlier versions of TCS may sometimes be removed when v9 is installed, together with the data and backup database
- Export all data to another computer, a USB memory stick or other safe storage; you can import it later if you do lose data during the upgrade. (No evidence received to support this to date)
- Consider loading v9 to a computer that does not already have a version of TCS on it.
- Remember that you cannot download and upload information to Play-Cricket
- It's interesting that no one seems to be asking what price CricHq will ask to enable people to transfer the game onto play cricket by an xml file. If it is the price of the live scores licence then no one is really any worse off as CricHq have advised that they will not charge a live scores fee.
- I was hoping they would keep the TCS website going as the crichq live score search engine is appalling.

**Over to you to make your own, hopefully a little more informed, choice**

This article was compiled from statements in the emails circulated to TCS users by ECB & CricHq and comments from TCS users

## Is this the future of scoring? My response.

**Nathan Bradley**

I read Mick Warren's article "Is this the future of Scoring" (Notchers News 37, page 1) with great consternation and personal understanding.

Last year I was appointed to the National Final of the County U15 competition, Division B, by my county. The match was hosted at a neutral ground and our opposition had had to travel significantly further than we did. I had scored at the ground before so knew the scoreboard and facilities.

I arrived 90 minutes before as always, met the coaches managing my appointed team and was given the team-sheet; I then retired to the scoreboard to do my pre-match administration before meeting the umpires about 45 minutes before the game was due to start. All that was missing was my scorer colleague. The umpires were very helpful, promising to let me have a copy of both signed team-sheets and taking my radio so that we could communicate on any points arising during the game. After learning who had won the toss and which team would bat first I returned to the scoreboard after the toss informing me of such.

Still no colleague. The match manager, a well respected Premier League and MCCA umpire and the ECB representative at the ground, declared this to be unsatisfactory. For me it certainly would not do as the scoreboard at Leamington is manual and one that I am unable to operate due to my disability.

Eventually we were informed that the opposition had not brought a scorer.

Remember, this was a national final. After much hand wringing, the older brother of one of the players was coerced into sitting beside me with a scorebook. No slight on the young gentleman, he was fine, knew his way around a scorebook, knew the majority of his players, and we were able to check with the umpires using the radio to confirm the names of any players we didn't know.

However, I came away from the experience, much like Mick Warren, shaking my head and wondering how, at this level, it came to that. I'm aware that this is not an isolated incident, merely the most high profile that I have come across.

### ADVERTISE SCORER TRAINING COURSES IN YOUR AREA

Notchers' News (<http://www.notchers.co.uk>) hosts a list of known courses which is updated as information is 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



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### THE MILLENNIUM SCORING RECORD

An A3 binder with capacity to score 100 innings, each of up to 65 overs  
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Refill pack of 50 double sided loose leaf sheets £10 + P&P  
email [milsteadmsr@btinternet.com](mailto:milsteadmsr@btinternet.com) for more information

### LINEAR SCORE BOOK

Designed to take all games played in one club cricket season.  
Each sheet will take 70-80 overs per side with all appropriate statistics.  
Price £18.00 + p&p.  
Contact Polly Rhodes at [pollyrhodes@aol.com](mailto:pollyrhodes@aol.com) for more information

### SCORER TRAINING

For information visit the ECB ACO website (See above)  
Scorer training courses known to Notchers News are advertised on the Notchers website  
A scorer correspondence course continues to be available.  
For more information email [cathy.rawson@btopenworld.com](mailto:cathy.rawson@btopenworld.com)

Share your cricket scoring experiences and scoring questions with readers.

Photos are welcomed and add interest to the newsletter.

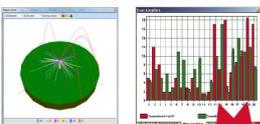
Send your contributions to: [notchers@btopenworld.com](mailto:notchers@btopenworld.com)

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## Total Cricket Scorer



With just one click you can update your scorebook, scoreboard, statistics and live internet scores.



To download your free trial copy or for more information, please visit our website:

**[www.totalcricket scorer.com](http://www.totalcricket scorer.com)**

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