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Notchers' News

ISSUE 41

MARCH 2018

The network for cricket scorers

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

Working as a Team

Mike Arnold

I've just been reading the very welcome notes for scorers linked from http://www.berkscoa.co.uk/2017_law_change.html

Two items in particular took my attention, as I'd been giving thought to this myself:

PENALTY TIME: Please could you assist the umpires when players leave and return to the field of play noting the times this occurs.

SUBSTITUTES: It must be clear which substitute is acting for which player, please help by noting this if there is more than one substitute.

I've always tried my best to keep a record of times when fielders leave or come onto the field, to provide assistance to umpires if they require it, but it's something that umpires may not realise is actually quite difficult for scorers to do.

It often happens without warning between overs, when we are usually very occupied in finishing the business of the previous over and looking for potential bowling changes. If it coincides with a wicket falling then you can pretty much guarantee I won't have spotted the personnel change! With any luck with my own team I'll spot something has happened before the end of the over, but I won't have recorded the exact time of the change. Also if I'm scoring alone and don't know the opposition players I might never notice the fielding change, never mind identifying the players involved.

So if umpires would like our assistance with this task, please help us to help you and make sure we're aware of fielding personnel changes, and if we need the information the identities of the fielders involved. I imagine walkie talkies would be essential. If this is not possible we'll do our best, but you'll have to keep your fingers crossed we were not otherwise engaged on our other tasks.

Practical training sessions: Cricket Scoring on a laptop

Mick Warren

Interested in Scoring but lack the confidence to move on to computer scoring? Would you like to try using a laptop to score a live game for a day alongside an experienced scorer at St Edward's School, Oxford? The computer scoring programme of choice for these matches is TCS. Matches start in early April so there's the opportunity for pre-season games as well as mid-week or Saturday matches.

We will try to fit into your availability and you join us for as long or short a time as required. This is an ideal opportunity for scorers with basic score book knowledge to take up laptop scoring. Also for a club 'book' scorer wishing to transfer to electronic scoring or just to brush up your skills in readiness for the coming season

Everything provided - laptop, tea/coffee and lunch - and all free of charge

Just contact Mick Warren michaelwardwarren@btinternet.com
or Steve Harris theharrishousehold@live.co.uk

An excellent idea. I'd welcome news of similar sessions and am happy to circulate details? Ed.

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

The Christmas Challenge 2017: Results

The Third Umpire

There were fewer entries this year than any other since I started this Challenge twenty-five years ago.

Of these thirty-eight entries there were ten all-correct, another eight with just one error and a further six with two mistakes. One entrant sent only the result of the match, missing the point that twenty-four answers were needed as well. Ten of those entries came from readers of Notchers' News and the other twenty-eight from ACO members.

In one early year of the competition I received 116 entries, but that was in the dark ages when every entry arrived through my letter-box! Perhaps the time has come to give the Challenge a rest.

Solution

	Notchers	Scratchers
1	42	42
2	4	1
3	3	45
4	104	15
5	18	23
6	20	108
7	112	1
8	64	90
9	5	5
10	1	5
11	0	1
Extras	5	9
Total	378	345

Result: Scratchers won by 33 runs

As usual most of the questions seemed to have been straightforward enough, but there were some which deserve further comment.

Scratchers 7 was the question which attracted the most errors (13): since the batsmen had crossed when the throw was made the second run counts even though it was not completed.

Notchers 8 (10 errors) was another interesting one: under the new laws, if a fielder leaves the field, the maximum length of playing time he must wait after his return before he can bowl is 90 minutes.

There were only four other questions where there were five or more errors: these included the twinned questions of Scratchers 5 (5 errors) and Notchers 5 (7 errors) in which entrants missed the point that when a fielder is sent off for a Level 3 offence, the over in progress does not count towards the penalty.

Notchers 4 (6 errors) will annoy those who misinterpreted the use of the word "players" rather than "fielders" – it is, of course, possible for there to be fifteen players on the field while the ball is in play with two batsmen and two runners.

There were seven entrants (Scratchers 6) who thought that the match would be a Tie if the scores finished level even though the team batting second still had a wicket in hand. They need to bear in mind that time-cricket is not the same as limited-over cricket in such a situation.

I was grateful to the law-makers for providing me with some fresh ammunition this year, but as I wrote in my opening paragraph, I wonder whether the time has come for something different to take the place of this annual Challenge.

It is always good to receive entries from the old faithfuls, and I thank not only them, but those few who have tried for the first time. And thanks to those who have again sent friendly greetings and appreciative comments.

The successful entries were sent in by Colin Campbell, Malcolm Doody, Wendy Hardy, Keith Healey, Frank Hodgkiss, Mark Shaw, John Smith, George Temperley, Mike Turner and Richard Verrinder.

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 is **Wendy Hardy** and she has already received her £20 prize

My thanks go to John for his sterling work over many years. His first fifteen challenges appeared in How's That?, the quarterly journal of the Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers. Since then he has published a new challenge in the December issue of this newsletter annually. I'm going to miss that opportunity to consider the various scenarios posed.

The new challenge:

To hear from a reader who is willing to put our knowledge to the test with a challenge, crossword or similar. Over to you.

John Brown reminisces on an incident at Derby on 28th May 2017. Gary Wilson batting, swept the off-spinner very fine and the ball went to the boundary. The ball just brushed the helmet on the ground behind the wicket-keeper; the umpire signalled 5 penalty runs; the ball was dead so no boundary scored. Gary was out later for 97.

I'm advised that one of the 2017 Christmas Challenge questions was inspired by an incident in Derbyshire's T20 match with Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge - more of that in the June issue of NN.

Ed.

Circling the Drain

Quentin Jones, Oxford University CC & Oxford MCCU scorer.

Mick Warren's article in NN40 and a recent Regional Scorer's report from Mel Smith (Northants ACO) have made interesting reading for me. Mel's in particular struck very close to home when he described the state of cricket scoring in the Northamptonshire leagues as '*a ticking timebomb*'. In a roundabout way I will try and explain.

In 2005 I first began to consider hanging up my playing boots. A pelvic injury was becoming problematic but I still wanted to be involved in the game. I'd never enjoyed umpiring but had always enjoyed my turn with the scorebook. That winter I signed up for an ACU&S scoring course at Northampton, ironically taken by Mel Smith.

My club at the time was Olney Town. Ever since I had started playing for the club at the age of thirteen, Olney had run four weekend sides; two Saturday and two Sunday XIs. Looking back now, I realise that although the club's Saturday league XIs were not playing in the highest league level (the Four Counties league), it was a really good standard. When I dropped down to captain the 2nd XI in division 5 of that league, we still came up against 1st XI sides who had been promoted from feeder leagues. The club was blessed with regular umpires and a home scorer.

Let me wind the clock forward ten years. I had long since retired from playing and my son had joined a local club playing in the second top division of that league. His season with that club was a real eye-opener. Fortunately, the club had more than one scorer and a regular Saturday umpire. But, in the seven years since I'd been involved in that league, one thing hit me squarely between the eyes. The standard of cricket and the behaviour of the players had plummeted considerably. This 1st XI was nowhere near the standard of the 2nd XI I'd played in less than a decade previous. I can only describe what I saw as '*catastrophic*'.

And now this article finds itself in the present day. Two years later and things are far worse. My wife has been scoring for her club in the South Northants Cricket League First Division. As far as I can tell she was one of only four regular scorers in the top two divisions of this league. Numerous well-established local clubs have gone to the wall or tried to merge to save themselves. Others are desperately clinging on for dear life, sometimes only managing to field eight or nine players. The league panel of umpires is down to single figures. At the end of the season my wife resigned as the club scorer. For much of the season she felt she was no longer enjoying cricket scoring.

Why was this? Put quite simply, local league cricket in the South Northants / North Bucks area has all but gone to the dogs along with the facilities for scoring. Trying to get computer-qualified this season became problematic as few, if any grounds had shelter, let alone electricity sockets. More and more demands seemed to be put on the scorer. Scoring turned into a logistical nightmare as result sheets, money collection, player registration id's and giving players lifts to the grounds was just some of what landed on her plate. Add in the frustration of rarely having a fellow-scorer and various individuals who often questioned whether she had the score or an individual's players score correct, left her increasingly disillusioned.

Things came to a head when my son suffered a horrendous hand injury playing for the club. The next game after Milton Keynes University Hospital had managed to put him back together again, he stood as the club's league umpire in a South Northants League fixture. During the game he got a barrage of abuse, not from the opposition but from his own side. This culminated with him being spat at. He resigned from the club that evening.

Who on earth would want to score in such an environment? How my wife lasted so long as their scorer is only credit to her. Local league cricket here in my region is dying on its feet. It is circling the drain. There is practically no Sunday cricket left. If I understand correctly, my old club Olney Town, along with Northants Premier outfit, Stony Stratford, now do not play Sunday cricket along with the Milton Keynes Sunday league which is now defunct. Cricket at the local comprehensive schools is a distant memory.

I would not know where to start in trying to solve these problems. As far as scoring goes then educating governing bodies, leagues and clubs as to the importance of scorers is a MUST. Sadly, though I just can't see this happening. If the BBC and CricInfo can't be bothered to list or recognise scorers as match officials at international or first-class level then what incentive or hope is there?

After reading the recent articles on BCEW cricket Julia Scully (South Africa) wrote:

I once scored a blind cricket game at The Bidvest Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg. It was an incredibly humbling experience and there wasn't a dry eye in the scorebox.

I wish I was in the UK so I could do another game with for these incredibly brave people.

Scorers and their decline

Marion Cottingham

I would like to respond to your excellent article in the last Notchers News re scorers and their decline.

I have scored for my local club (Newick) for a quarter of a century and have helped with Sussex Seniors for the last two years. It has been noticeable that provision of scorers has become a problem, this last season I have to say also in the senior games. *The question remains what is the answer?*

At club level I have commented to the League that several teams who do not have a scorer do not give the impression they are trying very hard to find a scorer; they assume all will be well. Two of these teams finished top of their league and have been promoted - will they need/provide a scorer for the 2018 season?

Suggestions put forward include:

- a) fining financially a club who comes without a scorer;
- b) taking one of the players to score - teams could organise a rota;
- c) deducting points for a team without a scorer. Harsh but it could focus minds!

I do not take remuneration for scoring at a club level but do when scoring for the seniors. In senior level matches I would make the suggestion that the team without a scorer should give the money to the lone scorer as that person has to work double-time!!! Whilst most teams help when their own side was batting the responsibility still remains with the dedicated scorer for accuracy.

As a club, we are now actively involved in the age of computer scoring and we have the new TCS10 system installed on our laptops to accommodate the new scoring regulations. Our club scorers also attended refresher training at the end of January 2018 - an opportunity to get back up to speed and to network with other scorers.

Taking a break from scoring

Sharron Jones

Mick Warren's article in NN 40 clanged some bells for me.

I had a scorecard that it took me literally a month to rework to make it a publishable scorecard simply because I was not there to score the match.

No-one mentioned the agreement had been to retire on scoring thirty, that the team that played was different to that advised or who won the toss/batted first. I treated it like a puzzle to solve but it was definitely a nail in the coffin of the decision over whether to continue scoring or not.

On receiving this email I put the question to Sharron 'have you retired as a scorer? The response was:

Yes, I have decided to take a break from scoring, certainly at club level. Frankly, I was not just scoring. I became relied upon for almost everything related to the match - providing directions, lifts, collecting monies, providing team sheets, submitting results sheets, supporting the sponsorship arrangements - which was all fine as long as I was agreeing with everyone. When I pointed out that someone's action could cause upset or offence they threw their toys out and left the club. I was requested to provide an apology but that did not make them return.

There were a number of other points which when all put together made me realise I was dreading match days and no longer enjoying scoring. I was so pleased when the club season ended! However, I had a booking to score independently for a wandering side with my husband which I kept in spite of thinking I no longer enjoyed scoring - and found that that was not the case! I really enjoyed it without the added club pressures. So perhaps I will be scoring again next season, but if I am it will not be for a club side.

An unusual scoring record entry

Jackie Chapman

I wonder if any colleagues have experienced this one before.....

I score regularly for a friendly senior side.

One Sunday recently (2017 season) I had occasion to record a "Run-out – Trousers down"! The unfortunate batsman was trying to make it home on his 2nd run when his trousers, which hadn't been tied up tightly enough, comically dropped to his ankles, tripping him up and planting him firmly face down on the track.

Fortunately, he was quite unhurt (except I suspect to his pride), but the hard-hearted umpire gave him out – hence the note in my scorebook. Do computers have this facility I would ask?

Ed's note: yes, most computer scoring packages do have a 'ball note' facility where comments can be entered

Back to Reality

Mick Warren

Following my match of a lifetime scoring the one-day international England v Ireland at Lords I must come back to reality.

You may recall me mentioning in the March 2017 Notchers News that Oxfordshire did not have the funds to support scorer appointments at County 2nd and U17 level and would no longer appoint official scorers to these matches; the assistant coach would be required to score on a mobile phone using a play station app.

Now I've been scoring the Under 17 matches for many seasons and get great satisfaction and enjoyment from dealing with match-day demands (including DLS) and producing match analysis for both individual players and the team when requested. Consequently, when the Coach asked me to carry on scoring this age group for another season on the agreement that they would assist with travel (no match fee), I agreed as I am sure most of you who love the game would.

This worked well until I declined to travel the 200 miles to Shropshire to cover three days of matches in the ECB Cup and Championship as I knew Shropshire (like Oxfordshire) would not arrange a scorer. Oxfordshire could not find a replacement scorer so the coach had to score on his play station. I hoped that this would be a learning experience.

Sadly this backfired on me. The coach called me frequently on each of the three days, requiring advice on how to set up or correct this or that; he was having a very stressful time. I helped as much as I could at the time and then spent many hours trying to correct his input on his return to Oxfordshire. It turned out he was on his own in the scoreboard and was required to keep the score and operate the scoreboard unassisted. He has advised Oxfordshire that he will resign if asked to score again.

Where does that leave us in Oxfordshire? With no scorer pathway, what is the point of pushing oneself through the scoring pathway when there is no higher level of game available?

I am reliably informed other Counties are following suit and will not be appointing scorers at county level.

Will I be an unwanted statistic and go on record as the last scorer from Oxfordshire to be appointed to score at Lords?

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



Visit the Acumen Books website at

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Refill pack of 50 double sided loose leaf sheets £10 + P&P
email milsteadmsr@gmail.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 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@gmail.com

Share your cricket scoring experiences and scoring questions with readers.

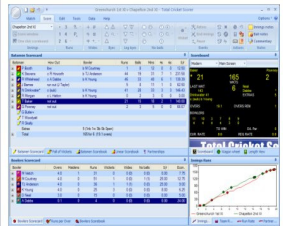
Photos are welcomed and add interest to the newsletter.

Send your contributions to: notchersnews@gmail.com

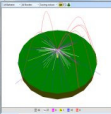
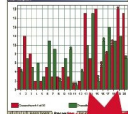
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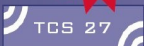
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Your questions, news and views are welcomed for use in future issues