

the CRICKET paper

out EVERY Sunday
From Test match to village green

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SMITH STARS IN ENGLAND FIGHTBACK

By Jo Harman

AFTER SLIPPING to 54-5 on the morning of day two at Edgbaston, England were staring down the barrel at a sizeable first-innings deficit against a jubilant West Indies.

However, a stand of 115 between Joe Root (87) and Ben Stokes (54) steadied the ship before Jamie Smith continued his impressive start to his Test career with a scintillating knock of 95 from 109 balls, denied a first century when he was unfortunate to be bowled by Shamar Joseph.

Chris Woakes chipped in with a half-century of his own to give England a first-innings lead of 94, and Woakes and Gus Atkinson then picked up a wicket apiece to put Ben Stokes' side firmly in the ascendency heading into day three.

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Big impression: Smith makes 95 at Edgbaston
PICTURES: Alamy

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PICTURE: ECB/Getty Images

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July 26-30, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 3rd Test Match

West Indies 282 (Brathwaite 61, Holder 59, Atkinson 4-67)
& **33-2** (Louis 18*, Woakes 1-8, Atkinson 1-16)

England 376 (Smith 95, Root 87, Joseph 4-122, Seales 3-79)

West Indies trail by 61 runs

Toss: West Indies, who elected to bat

Officials: Nitin Menon, Adrian Holdstock, Rod Tucker, Javagal Srinath, Russell Warren

Root and Smith turn the tables on West Indies

By Charles Reynolds

ENGLAND OVERCAME a difficult first hour against the West Indies at Edgbaston to finish day two firmly on top and strong favourites to secure a 3-0 clean sweep.

The tourists finished the day 33-2, still trailing by 61 runs, as England's bowlers built on good work done with the bat earlier on.

Chris Woakes proved a star in both disciplines, following up his half-century by striking in the very first over of the West Indies second innings – Kraigg Brathwaite bowled with a delightful delivery that angled in and then nipped away slightly off the seam, knocking his off stump back.

The Windies found themselves a wicket down without a run on the board and England's attack sensed blood, but Ben Stokes spurned

an excellent chance, putting down Mikyle Louis on 9 off the bowling of Woakes.

However, the second strike would come an over later; Kirk McKenzie lured into edging Gus Atkinson behind to fall for 8 and end a miserable series in which he averaged 5.5.

It could have been even worse for the visitors, Louis leading a somewhat charmed life and extremely fortunate not to be given out lbw to a Mark Wood toe-crusher,

surviving on umpire's call following an England review.

If the bowlers applied the gloss on what was ultimately an excellent day for England, then over the course of the afternoon their lower order provided the thrust, wearing an increasingly ragged bowling attack into the ground with a succession of aggressive partnerships.

Jamie Smith had come to the crease following the dismissal of Stokes, with England's



ENGLAND V WEST INDIES 3



On the pull: Jamie Smith took the attack to West Indies

PICTURES: Alamy

WEST INDIES 1ST INNINGS

	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	
Brathwaite (c) c fSmith b Wood	61	86	8	0	130	70.93	
Louis	c fSmith b Atkinson	26	61	4	0	93	42.62
McKenzie	b Wood	12	9	3	0	13	133.33
Athanaze	b Atkinson	2	7	0	0	7	28.57
Hodge	b Woakes	13	11	2	0	17	118.18
Holder	b Atkinson	59	112	6	1	177	52.67
Da Silva †	c fSmith b Woakes	49	99	3	0	142	49.49
Joseph	c Stokes b Woakes	15	31	1	0	26	48.38
Motie	c Root b Atkinson	8	8	2	0	12	100.00
Seales	not out	7	15	1	0	26	46.66
Joseph	c Crawley b Shoaib Bashir	16	15	2	0	18	106.66
Extras	(b 4, lb 6, nb 3, w 1)	14					
Total	(75.1 overs)	282					all out

BOWLING	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS
Woakes	18	3	69	3	3.83	76-1 (21.5 overs) Louis
Atkinson	20	1	67	4	3.35	93-2 (24.3 overs) McKenzie
Wood	16	2	52	2	3.25	97-3 (25.6 overs) Athanaze
Stokes	11	0	29	0	2.63	115-4 (28.5 overs) Brathwaite
Bashir	10.1	0	55	1	5.4	115-5 (29.1 overs) Hodge
						224-6 (Silva overs) Da Silva
						244-7 (67.6 overs) Joseph
						246-8 (68.5 overs) Holder
						259-9 (70.2 overs) Motie
						282-10 (75.1 overs) Joseph

ENGLAND 1ST INNINGS

	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	
Crawley	c Holder b Seales	18	13	3	0	18	138.46
Duckett	b AS Joseph	3	12	0	0	20	25.00
Wood	c Holder b Seales	0	8	0	0	11	0.00
Pope	b S Joseph	10	20	2	0	30	50.00
Root	lbw b Motie	87	124	7	0	194	70.16
Brook	c fDa Silva b Seales	2	3	0	0	4	66.66
Stokes (c)	c Brathwaite b AS Joseph	54	69	5	1	105	78.26
Smith †	b S Joseph	95	109	12	1	155	87.15
Woakes	c Brathwaite b AS Joseph	62	78	7	0	115	79.48
Atkinson	c Motie b AS Joseph	21	16	1	2	26	131.25
Bashir	not out	0	5	0	0	9	0.00
Extras	(b 10, lb 10, nb 3, w 1)	24					
Total	(75.4 overs)	376					all out

BOWLING	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS
Joseph	17.4	2	122	4	6.9	29-1 (3.6 overs) Crawley
Seales	19	1	79	3	4.15	29-2 (4.1 overs) Duckett
Joseph	13	0	63	2	4.84	31-3 (5.6 overs) Wood
Holder	7	0	31	0	4.42	51-4 (10.5 overs) Pope
Motie	19	2	61	1	3.21	54-5 (11.5 overs) Brook
						169-6 (35.2 overs) Stokes
						231-7 (48.2 overs) Root
						337-8 (69.2 overs) Smith
						363-9 (73.3 overs) Woakes
						376-10 (75.4 overs) Atkinson

WEST INDIES 2ND INNINGS (END OF DAY 2)

	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	
Brathwaite (c) b Woakes	0	6	0	0	-	0.00	
Louis	not out	18	38	1	0	-	47.36
McKenzie	c fSmith b Atkinson	8	18	1	0	-	44.44
Athanaze	not out	5	23	0	0	-	21.73

Extras	(lb 1, nb 1)	2					
Total	(14 overs)	33					for 2 wickets

BOWLING	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS
Woakes	4	2	8	1	2	0-1 (0.6 overs) Brathwaite
Atkinson	4	0	16	1	4	22-2 (5.4 overs) McKenzie
Bashir	3	1	2	0	0.66	
Wood	3	1	6	0	2	

resurgence threatening to waiver, but he took the attack to the opposition, first in partnership with Joe Root and then Woakes.

Smith showed exactly why England were so keen to make him a part of their Test side, with his second half-century in his first three matches, eventually falling five runs short of a richly deserved maiden hundred – bowled by a Shamar Joseph off-cutter that kept devilishly low and clattered into his off stump.

He was the second England player to narrowly miss out on three figures, Root trapped plumb lbw by Gudakesh Motie for 87 to end an excellent 62-run partnership with Smith.

If the West Indies had

hoped the dismissal of Root would signal a change in fortune they were sadly mistaken, as Smith and new man Woakes continued to pile on the misery, putting on 106 for the eighth wicket as England overhauled their opponents' first-innings total.

Woakes batted on imperiously following the loss of Smith, bringing up a fifty of his own by dabbling Shamar Joseph for four wide of backward point, as he and Atkinson hammered home England's advantage, the hosts eventually all out for 376, a lead of 94.

It marked quite the turnaround after West Indies had begun the day much where they had left it the evening before, gleefully sending

England batters back to the pavilion. The hosts started play on 38-3, both openers and nightwatchman Mark Wood already dismissed, but were soon in considerably more trouble.

The ground was still in the process of filling up when Shamar Joseph struck first, Trent Bridge centurion Ollie Pope unable to repeat his heroics here, chopping onto his stumps for 10 as he flashed at one that was neither short nor wide enough to cut.

An over later and West Indian joy intensified as Harry Brook, another to reach three figures a week ago, drove loosely at Jayden Seales and only succeeded in edging through to a grateful Joshua Da Silva behind the stumps –

he'd made only 2 and suddenly England were 54-5 and still 228 runs behind.

The West Indies will rue a big missed opportunity to really grab hold of this game when they opted not to refer a rejected lbw shout against Root in just the second over of the day. Hawkeye later revealed the delivery to be crashing into leg stump.

It was a reprieve that Root would make the most of, slotting snugly back into the role of England's rescuer, its familiarity probably almost reassuring to him at this point in his career.

Fortunately for England, their other firefighter-in-chief was also at the crease and Root and Stokes set about hauling their side

back into the match. The West Indies bowlers had been excellent at the start of the day, but they struggled to keep the pressure on England, Root nibbling away at their advantage with every well-taken single.

By the end of a thrilling first hour, things were already improving for England – their captains past and present had dragged them to 101-5, Root moving past Brian Lara to seventh in the all-time Test run-scorers list. With Stokes and Root batting together England were sailing in considerably calmer waters, the hundred partnership brought up shortly before lunch – moments after England's skipper had gloriously deposited Motie

into the Hollies Stand with a slog-swept six.

There were half-centuries for both men, Root before the break, Stokes just after, and although England still trailed by more than a hundred runs, things were beginning to feel much more comfortable for the hosts.

The West Indies still had a trick up their sleeve, however, echoing Stokes' own short-ball tactics from the first innings to ensnare England's skipper, out for 54, pulling the ball straight to Brathwaite catching on the leg-side in front of square.

Ultimately it would prove of little relief to the tourists, Smith picking up the baton and continuing an impressively assured start to his Test career.

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JOE'S ROUTE TO THE SUMMIT OPENS UP

By Phil Walker

That's the thing about Joe Root, you barely notice him, and then you look up at the scoreboard to see he's 33 years old and an elder statesman of the world game.

So swiftly are the records cascading that it's tempting to wonder what will be left when he finishes. In the last week he's eased past Mahela Jayawardene, Shiv Chanderpaul and now, at Edgbaston, in front of the man himself, Brian Lara, into the top seven run-scorers in Test match history.

Root is a routine 18 months from overtaking all but one of those ahead of him; after that it's a straight endurance race to the line, all in pursuit of one man and a single vast irreducible number. Sachin Tendulkar's mark of 15,921, compiled in the last golden era of Test cricket, once appeared astronomically untouchable. It will take a fair wind and a good dose of luck for Root to haul it in, but at least the skill part of the equation is taken care of.

Root's batting life for England can be broken down into four acts: impish head-boy old-world opener; shimmering world-class stylist-fulcrum at No.4; one-man monologist as the lone voice in a team turned mute; and now this latest iteration, and perhaps his most fun yet: the wry living legend swept up in the great Stokesian Test match experiment.

He's had occasional bouts of paucity, but overall his consistency is mesmeric. Across his last 100 Test matches, he's been nestled in the top 10 of the ICC's batting rankings for all but one of them, when in November 2019 he fell to No.11 – though the descent didn't last long. The next game he made 226.

He's done it all with grace and class and integrity. No one's been stitched up or muscled aside in pur-

suit of the immortals. No dressing rooms set aflame, no noses put out of joint, no opposition fallouts. The only time he's ever been drawn into a flashpoint was when he pointed out to Shannon Gabriel that there was nothing wrong with being gay. And while his role as captain in the resting/jettisoning of Jimmy Anderson and Stuart Broad following a cranky Ashes tour in 2021/22 was the nearest he ever got to controversy, the dignified way he resigned after that fruitless West Indies trip laid any issues to rest.

No one doubts that whatever ego Root possesses flows outwards, which makes talk of personal records a tricky thing. When I interviewed him at the turn of 2021, a year that began in Asia and would end with that doomed Ashes tour, he was reluctant to discuss numbers, which wasn't quite the same as being unaware of them. After a relatively uneven preceding two years during which, over 19 Tests, he'd converted just two of his 10 fifties into hundreds, he was more interested in technique. Forced into a not-unwelcome sabbatical by Covid, he'd chosen to disassemble his game. He got hold of a bunch of footage from Sky and set down to study it. It became a pivotal point in his career. Since when he's been imperious.

"I spent a long time analysing certain aspects of how I was getting out," he told me. "I tried to eradicate certain flaws, changed some things in my technique and tried to manage my game better at different stages [of an innings]. I wanted to make it harder to get me out early on – I felt I was getting out leg-before and bowled more than I should be, and then as my innings progressed I was getting out caught at the wicket, so it was a case of working out how to manage that. I changed my technique, finding a way to make me more solid, more

secure at the start of my innings." He thus went into 2021 with a deeper understanding of his game and "at peace with different modes of dismissal" at certain points of his innings. What came next was a series of brain-scrambling numbers. Across 12 games in 10 months – six away, six home – he made 1,455 runs at 66 with six hundreds, all while his Covid-depressed team could barely buy a win. How did he do it? He put it to me that he would locate his quiet place out there in the middle, away from the clamour and miseries of captaincy, and just bat. Rob Key later described it as one of the great sporting achievements.

He hasn't let up. From the start of 2021 to the present day, he averages a century every three Tests – 15 tons in 45 games. For context, Sachin across his career made one in every four. Life before Joe is a distant memory. He's been a reassuring constant in an era of perpetual drama and



Unstoppable: Root celebrates his 32nd Test ton last week
PICTURES: Alamy

Root is a routine 18 months from overtaking all but one of those ahead of him; after that it's a straight endurance race to the line, all in pursuit of one man and a single vast irreducible number

flux. He remains weirdly unaffected by the life his talent has given him. Just as remarkably, and crucially for his longevity, he's retained some residual essence of innocence, the man-boy still in thrall to the beautiful act of hitting cricket balls. That's why the Stokes era suits him. Freed from the captaincy, unshackled just to bat, he's been liberated to do his thing.

For a time he appeared a little too keen to absorb the ethic of ultra-aggression, to get funky with the kids. He doesn't need to. He's too good for that. Last week's hundred at Trent Bridge was the perfect Root innings, its inventiveness serving as an adornment to the orthodox. He may yet outlast them all.

Summit: Sachin's 15,921-run Test mark remains Root's ultimate goal



THE BIG GUNS	TESTS	RUNS	AVERAGE
Sachin Tendulkar	200	15,921	53.78
Ricky Ponting	168	13,378	51.85
Jacques Kallis	166	13,289	55.37
Rahul Dravid	164	13,288	52.31
Alastair Cook	161	12,472	45.35
Kumar Sangakkara	134	12,400	57.4
Joe Root	143*	12,027	50.11
Brian Lara	131	11,953	52.88
Shivnarine Chanderpaul	164	11,867	51.37
Mahela Jayawardene	149	11,814	49.84

MARK BUTCHER



BROOK AND BASHIR SHOW THEIR CLASS

England's win at Trent Bridge featured some of the best Test cricket I've seen for a long time. West Indies did well to stay in the match after England threw everything at them but in the end Ben Stokes' side were just too strong.

With the exception of Zak Crawley, who missed out twice and was unlucky to be run out in England's second innings, everybody in the team made a contribution. There were several standout performances.

Having conceded a first-innings lead, England's batting in the third innings was clinical and skilful.

I asked Stokes in the post-match press conference about their approach with the bat, and whether they'd spoken about tempering some of the risk-taking. He said it was a sign his team are maturing. They showed they had the skill to keep the scoreboard moving but in a less reckless way.

It was a terrific, match-defining partnership between Joe Root and Harry Brook. With Joe, you could tell immediately that he thought, 'This is a flat pitch, I'm scoring a hundred here, there's going to be no nonsense'.

Brook was more expansive. He's an incredibly special player; the range of shot-making, the imagination he has around run-scoring, the skill, the power, the athleticism. The way he moves at the crease, it's almost balletic. And you see it in the field, too. The catch he took of Shoaib Bashir to get rid of Mikyle Louis and some of his work on the boundary – he just moves beautifully. When you can do that with bat in hand as well it looks so pleasing and it's also devastatingly effective.

It was heartening to see Brook and Root do what we've been wanting from England's batting line-up for a little while. Sure, entertain us, we all love to see that. But when the game is in the balance do what you need to do to get your team in a winning position. They seized control of the match with brilliant and eye-catching strokeplay but showed their ruthless streaks as well.

Ben Duckett was also hugely impressive and Ollie Pope returned to form to win the Player of the Match award. I'm sure there wouldn't have been any pressure on Pope from within the England camp after his slow start to the County Championship – I'm not sure the selectors are even paying much attention to that – but his first-innings hundred was another sign that he's figuring out Test cricket. He's played some very impactful knocks in a relatively short space of time and I expect we'll see more consistency from him as his career progresses.

With the ball, Mark Wood bowled fantastically well and was desperately unlucky to only pick up two wickets in the match. And a shout out to Chris Woakes, who got better and better through the match, making the breakthroughs in the fourth innings and showing his skill with the new ball. But the headline performer was Shoaib Bashir, who picked up his third five-wicket haul in only his fifth Test match.

He's the real deal. You could even see it in West Indies' first innings at Trent Bridge, when the pitch was flat as anything and not turning at all. He had the control and variety in terms of pace and flight to still trouble batters. Then in the second innings, when there was some rough to work with, you could see how difficult he is to play because of his height, pace and bounce.

Bashir is very happy to wrap his around the ball and get it go away from the right-hander, bowling an attacking line when the pitch gives him something to work with. But he's also good enough to hold tight lines and give his captain control when nothing's happening, encouraging batters to have a dip at him.

In Stokes he has a brilliant and sympathetic skipper who sets fields which don't allow batters to milk him for singles. I see a very productive partnership between them going forward.

Bashir's very modest County Championship record is a bit of a mystery – he doesn't even get selected by Somerset, with Jack Leach ahead of him in the pecking order. You only have to watch him



Harry on point: Brook notched his fifth hundred in 14 Tests in the win at Trent Bridge
PICTURE: Alamy

Brook is an incredibly special player. The way he moves at the crease, it's almost balletic

to see how skilful he is and how much better he could become.

He seems to be able to take on information very quickly and isn't someone who gets flustered by being asked to do different things. He has so much natural ability, but he's almost like a blank canvas at this stage in his career. One advantage of not having played a massive amount is that you don't have preconceived ideas about what it is that you do and are perhaps more willing to experiment.

Having said all of that, you have to have the strength and skill to be able to pull it off, and he has that in abundance.

It was a gorgeous delivery to dismiss Alick Athanaze in the fourth innings. It dipped and turned just enough to the left-hander, who ended up pushing at it, with Root

taking an excellent catch at slip.

It was reminiscent of Graeme Swann; lots of energy on the ball, the batter thinks he knows where it's landing, and it's suddenly six inches further away than he thinks. If you have that dip and top spin, you don't need pitches that are ragging square. It's not something I think Leach has ever had, and it's something Bashir, who is still only 20, definitely has from the outset. Good luck to him, I think he's going to go well.

Mark Butcher features every week on the Wisden Cricket Weekly podcast.

The real deal: Shoaib Bashir has made an eye-catching start to his England career



GREAT SURVIVOR HOLDER KEEPS HOLDING ON

By Jo Harman

At 115-5 on day one of the Edgbaston Test, having won the toss and elected to bat first on a placid surface, the West Indies threatened to be blown away as they had been five days earlier in Nottingham.

A steady start had given way to a flurry of wickets, the visitors losing their top five in the space of nine overs as England's seamers found their groove.

A rescue operation was needed and, not for the first time in his decade-long Test career, Jason Holder was the man to orchestrate it.

Holder is no longer skipper, having relinquished the role to Kraigg Brathwaite in 2021 in somewhat acrimonious circumstances. But he remains the heartbeat of the side:

metronomic with the ball, bucket hands at slip, and a reassuring presence in the middle-order.

Holder has always exuded calmness and confidence. It's why, as a greenhorn 23-year-old with only eight Test appearances to his name, he was fast-tracked to the West Indies captaincy. Appointed ODI skipper in 2014, the following year he took charge of the Test side following a contractual dispute between the players and board which resulted in the abandonment of their tour of India. He would quickly come to realise that leading his team on the field was only part of a job which at times bordered on impossible.

Holder is no longer skipper but he remains the heartbeat of the side: metronomic with the ball, bucket hands at slip, and a reassuring presence in the middle-order

"It felt like the right thing to do at the time," he later reflected on accepting the captaincy, "but it was so much to deal with. There was a lot of off-the-field stuff that I never catered for. Finding that balance between focusing on my cricket and dealing with the players, that was difficult."

He had his moments as captain – most notably the Test series victory over England on home soil in 2019, when Holder made an unbeaten double-century at the Kensington Oval to set up a stirring win – but all too often he was hamstrung by the fact that many of the West Indies' top talents either didn't want to play Test cricket or were locked in disputes with the board.

Despite the friction, Holder always led with good grace and generally performed impeccably. Following that double ton in Barbados, he became officially the No.1 Test all-rounder in the world – the first West Indian to top the ICC all-rounder rankings since Sir Garfield Sobers in 1974.

Even after being thrown a curveball when he was sacked as captain three years ago – "I probably may not show it, but it's been difficult," he admitted soon afterwards – he remained committed to the cause, playing a lead role in the thrilling one-wicket win over Pakistan at Sabina Park only a couple of months later. And so it came as a shock when in December last year the great survivor of West Indian cricket rejected the offer of a central contract and made himself unavailable for the Test tour of Australia.

Speaking ahead of this series, he said watching from afar as the Windies turned over Australia in Brisbane reignited his passion for the longer format.

"It gave me a renewed energy to come back to the group and try to be a part of something special again," Holder said. "I missed Test cricket. I'm just happy that I've been able to still get the body up and going and being up for the challenge here."

West Indies would have been hugely grateful for his presence on day one at Edgbaston. Holder had warmed up for the series with a stint at Worcestershire, making



Marking the milestone: Holder's half-century was his 13th in Test cricket
PICTURES: Alamy



A calming presence: Jason Holder used his experience to steady the West Indies innings

a century against Kent at Canterbury, but he looked short of form with the bat in the first innings at Trent Bridge, playing and missing repeatedly in a tortuous knock of 27 from 76 deliveries.

In the second dig he played more expansively in his innings of 37 and looked much better for it, but he began watchfully in Birmingham as he and Joshua Da Silva attempted to stem the flow of wickets.

His first boundary, an inside edge to fine-leg, came from his 29th delivery and it wasn't until Shoaib Bashir entered the attack that Holder started to play some strokes, paddling the off-spinner for four to

bring up a half-century partnership with Da Silva and then dispatching the same bowler back over his head for two fours and a six.

A cover drive off Chris Woakes brought Holder his 13th Test half-century but he became more circumspect when the spinner was removed from the attack, eventually losing his off stump to a fine delivery from Gus Atkinson which nipped back in.

"At the stage when I got out, I was trying to get past the two spells, of Woakes and Atkinson," Holder explained at stumps. "The ball was starting to do a little bit more; it was quiet for a bit but then it started to swing a bit more."

"I knew Woody [Mark Wood] was deep into his workload in terms of the amount of overs he was asked to bowl. Obviously coming with a short-ball plan on a very slow wicket, it takes a lot of effort. I wasn't really expecting him to come back too soon after, so maybe Bashir would have come back, and I'd try to push the game on a little bit more."

Holder never got that chance but his innings of 59 gave the visitors a foothold in the match, and they gained further traction when the Bajan took two superb diving catches at slip off Jayden Seales to dismiss Zak Crawley and Wood late on day one, reaffirming his value to a team that he's given so much for.

DEREK PRINGLE



@derekpringle

BROOK HAS THE RIGHT STUFF TO LEAD

There would have been sniggers as well as knowing nods over Harry Brook's credentials to be an England captain when the notion was aired last week. Brook's brilliance as a batter of special gifts is obvious, unlike his leadership qualities which although unproven come freighted with all manner of prejudices like class, accent and education – even in the 21st century.

I don't know Brook the person but from what I've seen from interviews 'bluff, cocky Yorkshireman' would be a fair description, though none of that is a bad thing in my book. I also get the impression, from comments made by teammates, that Brook doesn't burden himself with unnecessary thoughts other than the cricketing task in front of him. But even if both are true, does that really preclude him from becoming a good captain?

Cricket is one of those sports where many still have a fixed idea of what the country's captain should look and sound like. And while there remains conjecture about what the FEC daubed on Michael Atherton's cricket case really stood for, Future England Captain won the day given his combination of sound batsmanship and

a broader education that took in Manchester Grammar School and Cambridge University.

I experienced something similar when I first played for England in 1982 – not the crude initials but an assumption from many cricket supporters that because I'd been to Cambridge I'd one day captain England. To their mind all the important credentials were in place save the really important one: to be consistent enough to stay in the team.

Being good enough is one thing Brook need not worry about. His achievements so far for England, at least in the Test arena, are off the chart. In 14 Tests ahead of Edgbaston he had five hundreds at a strike-rate approaching

a run-a-ball and an average of 62.54. With only Don Bradman ahead of him, no wonder he batted away recent comparisons with Kevin Pietersen (Test average 47.28).

That talent plus a cricket intelligence (you can see him calculating every time he comes to the crease) means he could captain perfectly competently without worrying about his place. He's done it before with England under-19s and is about to do it again with the Northern Superchargers in The Hundred, a gig that could act as an audition to lead England's white-ball teams should Jos Buttler carry the can for poor recent showings.

Anyway, Brook says he'll be a "chilled" skipper, which is Gen-Z talk for not wasting time and energy on things that don't count.

I'm all for being counter-intuitive when choosing captains. When I retired from first-class cricket I told Essex, my county, that they should make Nasser Hussain their next captain after Graham Gooch. The hierarchy's response is not printable in this family newspaper but I always thought Hussain's petulance and undoubted passion for the game would be better harnessed under the responsibility of leadership. England eventually saw it my way and he went on to captain his country with distinction.

Ben Stokes is another who many felt unsuitable for higher office, especially after his brawl outside a Bristol nightclub in 2017. But Rob

From what I've seen 'bluff, cocky Yorkshireman' would be a fair description, though none of that is a bad thing in my book. I also get the impression that Brook doesn't burden himself with unnecessary thoughts

Leader in waiting: Brook has been spoken about as a successor to Jos Buttler as England's white-ball captain

PICTURES: Alamy



A leftfield call: Nasser Hussain was an inspired choice as England captain

Key, director of England men's cricket, spotted the sharp mind behind the untrammelled aggression and in league with Brendon McCullum, England's coach, Stokes has re-invigorated Test cricket to the point where 'Bazball' is now firmly entrenched in the game's vocabulary.

To be an exceptional captain often requires attributes that cannot be taught, like emotional intelligence; what Australia's Rodney Hogg, when referring to Mike Brearley, called a "degree in people". With modern teams having an army of coaches and analysts crunching stats in real time, I reckon captains just need to know their own mind (to cut through all the data noise) and command the respect of their players. Everything else is on the curve of ever diminishing returns.

To me Brook would be the most natural successor to Stokes and his Bazball philosophy, though he has a rival in Ollie Pope. At the moment Pope is Stoke's vice-captain, which would suggest he is the man the selectors feel most likely to assume

the mantle. He certainly ticks those captaincy boxes from 30 years ago when a certain upbringing and education were seen by many as vital.

But Pope is a nervous starter and while that remains, his place in the side will not always be guaranteed – and the one thing a captain needs is to be indispensable.

FOUR DAYS GOOD, THREE DAYS BETTER

Listening to Richard Gould, the ECB's chief executive, talk about the health of cricket in England, I was struck by the lack of mention of the County Championship, something I (but not the ECB) still regard as the doyen of county competitions.

Gould was at the third Test at Edgbaston watching England's bowlers make their way through West Indies' faltering batting line-up. Not so long ago counties were told that the red-ball game's primary reason for existence was as a feeder system to the England Test team, though that clearly no longer applies.

These days selection is based on the hunches of those in charge and brief glimpses of players (Shoaib Bashir was spotted bowling to Alastair Cook on YouTube) rather than on a player's consistent progress in the Championship.

I've no problem with that but if red-ball cricket is no longer seen as essential to the England team's well-being, can we please have our game back and return it to one division and three-day cricket. Let's face it, Bazball has pressed fast forward in the Test game so why can't counties do the same and condense four days into three?

That way, some of the fixture list congestion might be eased with the Championship then played throughout the summer rather than shunted to the season's extremes when inclement weather tends to have a greater say on matters.

Sell The Hundred by all means, but let's return the Championship to the pole position it held 30 years ago – the best three-day entertainment in the land.

Disability cricket shines at Lord's with hopefully more to come

By Sam Dalling

It was not, to many minds, the most prestigious day of the Lord's summer. In fact, there was no jostling for position on the Pavilion benches, and the fanfare was minimal for the inaugural disability cricket showcase event.

But by evening, under the bluest of skies and with sunshine baking all those present, it was difficult to conclude anything other than that the most important day's cricket of them all had just finished. Undoubtedly, it had been the most wholesome.

For the first time, England's disability cricketers graced the famous grass with their presence. A game between two Visually Impaired teams – including a mix of internationals and MCC members – was the morning apéritif to a fixture between the hosts and an ECB Disability Chair's XI after lunch.

The latter, a pan-disability team consisting of roughly equal numbers from England's Physical Disability, Learning Disability and Deaf squads, emerged victorious by five-wickets. But the winning feeling permeated beyond a simple sporting victory. This was inescapably a momentous step.

"In terms of us and our cricket journey, it's a real milestone," Richard Hill, the ECB's Disability Events and Competitions manager, explains.

Hill spent the day watching on proudly, bacon and egg tie hanging from his collar, having been choked

by emotion when ringing the bell to signal play commencing.

For him, for Ian Martin - Head of Disability Cricket and fellow MCC member – for Neil Bradshaw, for Jane Powell, and for a host of others involved in the ECB's disability squads, it was a proud, proud day. "What dreams are made of," as Hill puts it.

"Ian and I talk quite a lot about progress in disability cricket,"

Hill continues. "I very often say to him, 'you know, when we have times where we get frustrated, we need to reflect on where we were, and where we currently are.' And we're a quantum leap ahead of wherever we've been – to find disability cricket almost being normalised."

Hill credits Martin for putting oodles of time and effort into nudging the club into agreeing to the day, before nodding to the MCC themselves for "putting their arm around his shoulder and saying 'yeah, let's do it.'"

And while there is credit to be given for progress, it should also be made clear that this must just be the start. The Home of Cricket belongs to everyone, not just an elite, privileged few. Its doors must always be open, irrespective of an individual's race, gender, sexual orientation, ability or any other historically discriminated against characteristic. This must, at the very least, morph into an annual happening.

Part of the day's beauty was that it's magic was not restricted to the main square. Far from it, in fact. Inside the Long Room, England

This must, at the very least, morph into an annual happening



Not easy: Ben Foakes struggled with the blindfold on
PICTURE: ECB/Getty Images

wicketkeeper Ben Foakes, Australian spinner Nathan Lyon and comedian Adam Hills tried their hand at table cricket – an adapted version of the game played on, as the name suggests, a table. The format gives young people with disabilities the opportunity to play competitive sport.

From there, the famous triptych were accompanied by Lord's Tav-

erners staff to the Nursery Ground. There they played Super 1s, a soft ball offering again designed to promote inclusivity amongst teenagers and young adults.

And finally, a spot of blind cricket followed, with the trio each wearing eye-masks to replicate the various grades of sight loss. In VI cricket, B1 category players are completely blind and have a runner, while B2 and B3 category players retain some sight.

Handed a ball fitted with ball-bearings, Foakes was first to bowl "Foakes, you ever got a first-class wicket?" Lyon teased. To start, Foakes tried without his blindfold. All went ok. Then Foakes pulled down the cover on his vision. Again, things went ok.

But then came the real challenge: keeping his blindfold down when receiving the ball back and then re-aligning himself with the stumps. It proved tricky, with Foakes, usually so graceful and elegant, for once losing his co-ordination.

Lifting the blindfold was "the only rational way I could think of doing it because otherwise, once the ball stops rattling, I'm just walking around in circles," Foakes, who describes the day as "amazing", explains to TCP. "Leaving it down and trying to work out where the ball was...that was impossible. This is the hardest game in the world!"

Then came Lyon's turn. Before beginning, he was introduced to England's premier bowler, Justin Hollingsworth, who was, Lyon was

told, during the side's last tour down under, prevented from bowling for being too fast.

"Not morally right to bowl too fast," suggests one volunteer with a grin. Quick as a flash, Lyon quips "Nah, you'd have to have voided the series!" Much laughter follows, as does a promise Lyon will do his utmost to drop in on the upcoming Ashes series in November.

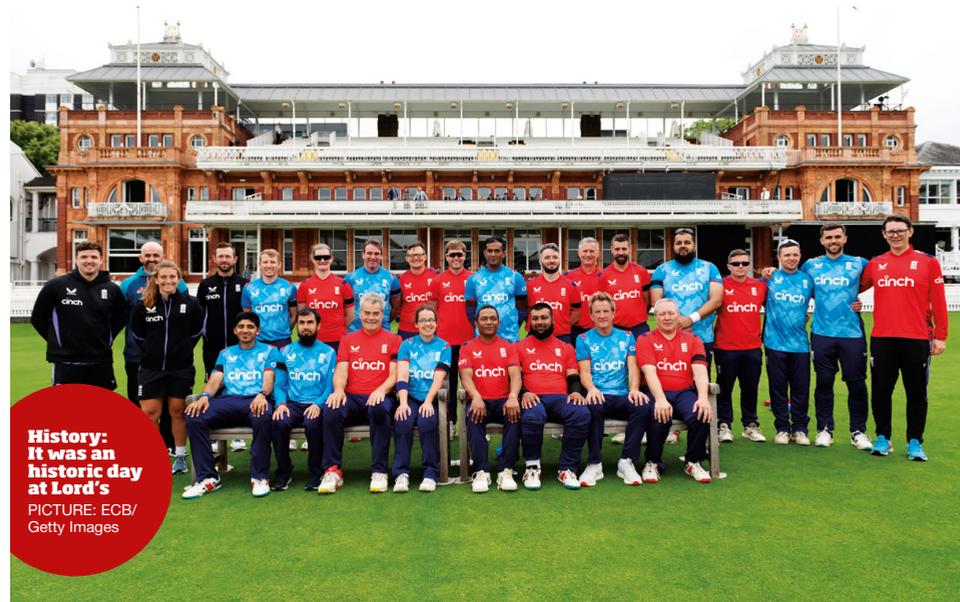
"I think it's brilliant that young boys and girls have the opportunity to represent their state and their country," Lyon explains. "They're no different in my eyes from Steve Smith and myself."

Lyon has been involved in disability cricket over in Australia for years. A friend and neighbour during his youth had Down Syndrome and for him it was normalised.

When offered an ambassadorial role, Lyon "jumped at the chance. The ability to inspire and connect through cricket really proves that it is a sport for all and there's room for everyone," he tells TCP.

"To come over here and see how the ECB does it has given me some really good insight. I can now have further conversations with Cricket Australia about how we can improve disability cricket at home."

Foakes and Lyon both agree that the key now is to continue raising awareness. Many first timers watching disability cricket remark that they are surprised about the standard. "That's our best kept secret," Hill says with a smile. The secret is out now – let the word spread.



History: It was an historic day at Lord's
PICTURE: ECB/Getty Images

10 THE HUNDRED - SAT JULY 27



July 27, Lord's Cricket Ground
London Spirit Women 147-9
Phoenix Women 127-5
 London Spirit won by 20 runs
 Toss: Birmingham Phoenix, who elected to field

Lanning anchors Spirit victory

MEG LANNING won the battle of superstar Australians at Lord's, scoring her first half-century in The Hundred as London Spirit overcame Birmingham Phoenix, despite Ellye Perry's innings of 65 in reply.

The 16,641 crowd – the fifth-highest in the history of The Hundred Women's Competition – were treated to a competitive affair in the sunshine.

Phoenix – off the back of 11 consecutive defeats in The Hundred – looked set to spring a surprise and take it deep, and perhaps even pull off a memorable upset, but the required run-rate got away from the visitors and three late wickets for Sarah Glenn (4-22) sealed the deal for Heather Knight's side, who have now won two from two this season.

Earlier, Spirit – wearing a special shirt to mark their partnership with Transport for London – set off like a train. Lanning, Georgia Redmayne and Cordelia Griffith all found the boundary with regularity. Griffiths' consecutive sixes off Em Arlott, one whipped into the Mound Stand with no shortage of flair, a particular highlight.

Off the back of her winning half-century at Utilita Bowl on Wednesday, England captain Knight added to her side's momentum and ultimately Phoenix would have been happy to restrict Spirit to 147-9, with a bigger total looking likely earlier in the innings.

The smart money would have been on Spirit to defend their total with relative ease but Perry and New Zealand captain Sophie Devine jangled a few nerves with their partnership of 89, especially when Devine dispatched Sarah Glenn for two sixes over the leg-side.

The equation with 20 balls left was 40 runs required for Phoenix, but the boundaries dried up and Glenn's last set of five ensured London Spirit ended day five of The Hundred top of the table with a 100% win record.

Player of the Match Meg Lanning said: "It's a beautiful day here and we wanted to get off to a good start with the bat and put Birmingham Phoenix under pressure, and I think it was a really

good all-round performance from everyone.

"It felt like it got a bit more tricky as it went on. Birmingham Phoenix took the pace off a little bit, and the wicket was pretty conducive to that, so it felt like it was a bit more difficult than we had thought but it ended up a competitive total.

"With the ball it was about bowling pretty straight at the stumps and taking pace off the ball. We thought Phoenix used that really well so we wanted to do that right from the start, and we were able to hold our nerve when Devine and Perry were going. We just had to hold our nerve and we knew a chance would come.

"Lord's is a great place to play, very special. It's great to be here in front of a fantastic crowd and nice to get the win."



Magic meg: Lanning set up the Spirit's second win of the campaign
 PICTURE: Alamy



July 27, Lord's Cricket Ground
London Spirit Men 127-7
Phoenix Men 131-7
 Birmingham Phoenix won by 3 wickets
 Toss: Birmingham Phoenix, who elected to field

Abbott leads the charge for Phoenix

SEAN ABBOTT produced a memorable performance with the ball to inspire Birmingham Phoenix to a three-wicket victory over London Spirit in a low-scoring thriller at Lord's.

Abbott claimed 4-14 from his 20 deliveries – the 10th-best figures in the history of The Hundred Men's Competition – as Phoenix restricted their hosts to 127-7, and the Australian all-rounder was there at the finish as his side snuck home with a ball to spare.

Asked to bat first, the Spirit had slumped to 30-5 after Tim Southee trapped Daniel Bell-Drummond lbw with his first delivery and Abbott saw off Michael Pepper, Adam Rossington, Dan Lawrence and Ryan Higgins in the space of eight balls.

Shimron Hetmyer briefly flickered but fell for 16 after top-edging Benny Howell to Adam Milne before Liam Dawson (36 from 34) and Andre Russell (37* from 20) mounted a recovery. Russell hit four sixes in a typically brutal knock which included three maximums off the final set of the innings, bowled by Milne.

Phoenix also struggled against the new ball, slipping to 20-4 after Dan Worrall claimed two early breakthroughs including the crucial wicket of Moeen Ali for a duck. Liam Livingstone was unlucky to be run out by Olly Stone at the non-striker's end before the young guns Dan Mousley (39 from 38) and Jacob Bethell (43 from 27) took charge.

The visitors stuttered when both players were dismissed with the finishing line in sight but Howell (24* from 12)



The match winner: Sean Abbott starred with the ball and was needed with the bat
 PICTURE: Alamy

held his nerve, smashing the penultimate ball of the match over extra-cover to seal the win with Abbott, the Meerkat Match Hero, standing at the non-striker's end.

Abbott said: "The feedback from the guys who opened up was that it was doing a little bit so I was just trying to present the seam and hit the top of the stumps. Keeping the run rate down is the most important thing and if you can

pick up some wickets along the way then that's a bonus.

"The first two games have favoured the bowlers. We didn't expect as much seam movement at this time of the year.

"It was nice to be out there at the end. I was chuffed for Benny, he played really well again tonight. It wasn't the easiest wicket and the two young blokes [Mousley and Bethell] did pretty well to get us close to home."

LONDON SPIRIT INNINGS										BIRMINGHAM PHOENIX INNINGS									
		RUNS	BALLS		4S	6S	MINS	SR			RUNS	BALLS		4S	6S	MINS	SR		
Lanning	c Smale b Levick	53	41	7	1	74	129.26		Bates	run out (†Redmayne)	6	12	0	0	-	50.00			
Redmayne †	run out (†Jones)	9	8	1	0	16	112.50		Kalis	b Norris	2	3	0	0	-	66.66			
Griffith	c Bates b Levick	21	10	2	2	7	210.00		Perry (c)	c Gibson b Glenn	65	48	8	1	-	135.41			
Knight (c)	c Perry b Baker	26	18	4	0	18	144.44		Devine	st †Redmayne b Glenn	37	31	0	3	-	119.35			
Gibson	c †Jones b Arlott	15	15	2	0	21	100.00		Jones †	not out	9	4	0	1	-	225.00			
Burns	c Perry b Arlott	0	2	0	0	1	0.00		Arlott	c Gray b Glenn	0	1	0	0	-	0.00			
Glenn	st †Jones b Levick	4	4	0	0	5	100.00		Smale	not out	1	2	0	0	-	50.00			
Dean	run out (Devine/†Jones)	1	2	0	0	5	50.00		Extras		(lb 2, lb 2, nb 2, w 1)	7							
Gray	run out (Wong/Levick)	0	1	0	0	1	0.00		Total	(100 balls)	127	for 5 wickets							
Munro	not out	0	0	0	0	1	-		Extras		(lb 3, w 6)	9							
Total		147	(100 balls)				18		Total	(100 balls)	127	for 7 wickets							

BOWLING					FALL OF WICKETS				
B	R	W			B	R	W		
Devine	15	20	0	25-1 (18 balls)	Norris	10	9	1	3-1 (4 balls)
Perry	20	26	0	52-2 (30 balls)	Munro	15	29	0	27-2 (29 balls)
Paveley	15	23	0	96-3 (60 balls)	Dean	15	17	0	116-3 (91 balls)
Arlott	15	33	2	138-4 (87 balls)	Gibson	20	19	0	117-4 (94 balls)
Levick	20	24	3	138-5 (89 balls)	Glenn	20	21	3	117-5 (95 balls)
Baker	10	9	1	143-6 (96 balls)	Gray	15	18	0	
Wong	5	7	0	145-7 (97 balls)	Burns	5	10	0	
				145-8 (98 balls)					
				147-9 (100 balls)					
				Dean					

LONDON SPIRIT INNINGS										BIRMINGHAM PHOENIX INNINGS									
		RUNS	BALLS		4S	6S	MINS	SR			RUNS	BALLS		4S	6S	MINS	SR		
Bell-Drummond lbw	b Southee	6	6	1	0	4	100.00		Patel	c Dawson b Stone	3	6	0	0	-	50.00			
Rossington †	c Mousley b Abbott	1	4	0	0	21	25.00		Donald †	c Lawrence b Worrall	1	2	0	0	-	50.00			
Pepper	c Milne b Abbott	16	12	3	0	13	133.33		Livingstone	run out (Stone)	4	3	1	0	-	133.33			
Lawrence (c)	b Abbott	1	2	0	0	3	50.00		Mousley	c & b Stone	39	38	6	0	-	102.63			
Hetmyer	c Milne b Howell	16	16	1	1	28	100.00		Ali (c)	c †Rossington b Worrall	0	3	0	0	-	0.00			
Higgins	c Livingstone b Abbott	0	3	0	0	2	0.00		Bethell	c Lawrence b Dawson	43	27	4	1	-	159.25			
Dawson	c Milne b Southee	36	34	2	1	43	105.88		Howell	not out	24	12	2	1	-	200.00			
Russell	not out	37	20	1	4	25	185.00		Fuller	c Stone b Dawson	6	5	1	0	-	120.00			
Ellis	not out	5	3	1	0	6	166.66		Abbott	not out	3	5	0	0	-	60.00			
Total		127	(100 balls)				9		Total	(99 balls)	131	for 7 wickets							

BOWLING					FALL OF WICKETS				
B	R	W			B	R	W		
Milne	20	45	0	6-1 (6 balls)	Bell-Drummond				
Southee	20	16	2	28-2 (21 balls)	Pepper				
Abbott	20	14	4	29-3 (23 balls)	Rossington				
Fuller	4	6	0	30-4 (25 balls)	Lawrence				
Ali	1	0	0	30-5 (28 balls)	Higgins				
Howell	20	18	1	64-6 (61 balls)	Hetmyer				
Livingstone	5	9	0	104-7 (92 balls)	Dawson				
Mousley	10	16	0						

BEN GARDNER



THE HUNDRED'S FOR SALE BUT WILL THE BUYERS COME?

Ben Gardner questions whether private investment in The Hundred is the best way to go



Bailout or all out?: the future of The Hundred is uncertain

PICTURE: Alamy

As the 2024 edition of the Hundred gets underway, the battle in the boardroom will be fought as keenly as the matches on the field. This will be the last year of the New Competition as we have come to know and tolerate it. 2025 will bring with it privately owned teams and a much-changed landscape.

The briefest background: While the ECB will still own and run the Hundred, the eight teams are set to be sold. Forty-nine per cent of each side will be auctioned off by the ECB, with the rest given to the host county (or the MCC, in the case of London Spirit) who will then be able to sell or keep their stake as they wish. A portion of all proceeds will be split between the counties, and a portion kept aside for the recreational game.

Sounds complicated? You're not alone in thinking so. For some would-be owners, the convolutions of minority shares and the rest is serving a deterrent. Your average would-be buyer wants to guarantee a controlling interest when investing in a team, but many host counties are reportedly reluctant to cash in on their 51 per cent holdings at the first possible opportunity.

There is no shortage of other leagues to sink their money into, and these, in general, come without such wrinkles. It's the ECB's belief that at least some of these leagues won't stay the course, though that raises the question, why sell now, when the market is saturated, rather than waiting for the market to settle, for supply to dwindle, and therefore for supply to increase? We'll come back to that. But for now it's worth noting that on all sides there is spin, and nothing should be taken at face value.

With private investment will come competing aims. Even if you believe they are wrongheaded and misguided, the ECB do have, at heart, a belief that, if everything works out as they hope it will, the whole English game will be better

off as a result. Investors will surely care for the success of the Hundred and the Hundred alone. International cricket will become a competitor. Team owners who have forked out

upwards of nine figures will, you imagine, not tolerate their best and most marketable players missing the first week of the tournament to play a Test match. There's also the fear that a Hundred team investor might not see the same value in gender equality (in platform if not pay) that the competition has provided so far. The ECB say that bids are being assessed on more than just a basis of who can say the biggest number, but when an extra £20 million is on the line, principles can be compromised.

It's worth asking again: Is private investment definitely necessary? And, relatedly, does the Hundred

exist to benefit English cricket, or is it the other way around?

Certainly, if the Hundred is to achieve the ECB's stated aim of being the second-best competition in the world, with the IPL presumed to be unreachable, then more money is needed. Salaries simply can't compete with even the second tier of franchise leagues, including Major League Cricket, against whom the Hundred is in direct competition. The opening week of the competition has been notably low-key, with many international stars yet to turn up. Southern Brave had one overseas player for their tournament opener, and that was Daniel Hughes, who is yet to play for his native Australia.

The 'best v best' promise is not being delivered upon, not least because the Hundred can't even convince England's stars to take full part. It has been presented as something of a coup that Ben Stokes will double his tally of career Hundred appearances this season by playing four games for Northern Superchargers. Shortly after came a report in the Telegraph that he was due to sign a whopping £800,000 deal for a full season in SA20. The top deal in the Hundred is worth less

than a sixth of that figure. Private investment would allow offering the biggest names the kind of fees they'll turn up for.

But why does the Hundred need the biggest names? If this is about attracting a new audience, does signing up Quinton de Kock rather than Matt Short move the needle much? If the games are close and high-quality, does it matter if some other tournament no one in England is watching pulls away a few World Cup winners?

The ECB would argue that a better competition means a bigger TV deal means more money for the rest of the game. Behind closed doors, they would also admit that for some counties, big and small, a private investment windfall is of near existential need. Why sell now? Because if they don't, the Hundred will fall even further behind, and it could drag the rest of English cricket with it. The blame for that state of affairs lies in no small part with the ECB's mistakes of the past. The bailout could take the future out of their hands.

Ben Gardner is Managing Editor of Wisden.com

Does the Hundred exist to benefit English cricket, or is it the other way around?

12 METRO BANK ONE-DAY CUP - FRI JULY 26



July 26, Utilita Bowl, Southampton Hampshire 285-8 Northants Steelbacks 214

Hampshire won by 71 runs
Toss: Northants Steelbacks, who elected to field

Brown's one-day best downs Steelbacks

By Alex Smith

BEN BROWN celebrated his century of List A appearances with an exceptional hundred as Hampshire got their campaign off to a winning start against the Steelbacks.

Wicketkeeper Brown had only scored one previous white-ball century – for Sussex in 2021.

Hampshire were 25 for three after Jack White's opening spell but Brown, with help from Felix Organ's 59, got the hosts to 285.

Then Eddie Jack and Tom Prest picked up their professional best figures of four for 29 and three for 41 as the Steelbacks reached 214 to lose by 71 runs.

Earlier, Lewis McManus'

decision to bowl first immediately paid dividends with an unplayable new-ball spell from White. He made Fletcher Middleton play and miss three times before thumping into the opener's leg stump with his fifth ball, then he had Nick Gubbins caught and bowled and Tom Prest pounced at second slip, ending his six-over spell with three for six.

But in sliding to take the Gubbins catch, he damaged his knee and could not return.

Brown rebuilt the innings, first with Toby Albert, then with Organ. His third century of the season came in exactly 100 balls while Organ sailed to a 51-ball 59 in a flash to join Brown for 188 runs before he picked out deep mid-wicket – giving Zaib the third of his three for 60.

When the Steelbacks batted, Prithvi Shaw and Emilio Gay

got off to a good start with 56 inside nine overs but the innings was full of such starts which weren't capitalised on.

Jack's introduction – with Mohammad Abbas forced off after just two overs – was the main catalyst, the teenager dragging Shaw into a drive to cover with his second ball in a miserly spell.

Gay and Ricardo Vasconcelos put on 42 but a swipe off Brad Wheal saw the end of the former while Vasconcelos swept into the deep, Rob Keogh was lbw on the reverse and George Bartlett was caught behind as three wickets fell for 15.

Gus Miller scrapped hard for 47, but with the run-rate surging above 10s he skied Jack straight up, before the England under-19 quick completed Hampshire's victory by cleaning up White.



Double hundred: Brown brought up a century in his hundredth List A game

PICTURE: Alamy

HAMPSHIRE INNINGS											
						RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	SR	
Middleton	b White	0	5	0	0	3	0.00				
Gubbins (c)	c & b White	6	10	1	0	13	60.00				
Prest	c Vasconcelos b White	11	15	2	0	29	73.33				
Brown †	not out	139	131	16	1	196	106.10				
Albert	c Finan b Zaib	28	46	2	1	51	60.86				
Eckland	c Weatherall b Zaib	4	13	0	0	16	30.76				
Organ	c Miller b Gay	59	51	9	1	63	115.68				
Jack	c Gay b Zaib	18	15	1	1	16	120.00				
Abbott	c Shaw b Weatherall	11	14	0	1	18	78.57				
Wheal	not out	0	1	0	0	10	0.00				
Extras	(b 1, lb 2, nb 2, w 4)	9									
Total	(50 overs)	285 for 8 wickets									
BOWLING											
	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS					
White	6	3	6	3	1	0-1 (0.5 overs)	Middleton				
Finan	5	0	44	0	8.8	7-2 (2.5 overs)	Gubbins				
Weatherall	9	0	65	1	7.22	25-3 (6.5 overs)	Prest				
Miller	10	0	44	0	4.4	76-4 (19.2 overs)	Albert				
Zaib	10	1	60	3	6	96-5 (23.3 overs)	Eckland				
Keogh	6	0	38	0	6.33	214-6 (40.2 overs)	Organ				
Gay	4	0	25	1	6.25	241-7 (43.6 overs)	Jack				
						268-8 (47.6 overs)	Abbott				

NORTHANTS STEELBACKS INNS											
						RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	SR	
Shaw	c Gubbins b Jack	40	34	5	1	34	117.64				
Gay	c Albert b Wheal	34	43	2	1	74	79.06				
Vasconcelos	c Wheal b Organ	22	45	1	0	54	48.88				
Keogh	lbw b Prest	10	18	0	0	22	55.55				
Zaib	lbw b Prest	22	28	1	0	41	78.57				
Bartlett	c †Brown b Prest	7	6	1	0	4	116.66				
McManus (c)†	c Albert b Jack	5	11	0	0	13	45.45				
Miller	c sub b Jack	47	49	4	1	56	95.91				
Finan	c Albert b Wheal	3	13	0	0	11	23.07				
Weatherall	not out	12	15	0	1	32	80.00				
White	(b 1, lb 3, nb 4, w 4)	12									
Extras	(b 1, lb 3, nb 4, w 4)	12									
Total	(43.5 overs)	214 all out									
BOWLING											
	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS					
Abbott	7	0	55	0	7.85	56-1 (8.2 overs)	Shaw				
Abbas	2	0	5	0	2.5	98-2 (18.3 overs)	Gay				
Wheal	8	0	40	2	5	114-3 (21.6 overs)	Vasconcelos				
Jack	8.5	1	29	4	3.28	119-4 (23.6 overs)	Keogh				
Organ	6	1	21	1	3.5	129-5 (25.3 overs)	Bartlett				
Prest	10	0	41	3	4.1	140-6 (28.4 overs)	McManus				
Gubbins	2	0	19	0	9.5	168-7 (33.4 overs)	Zaib				
						173-8 (36.3 overs)	Finan				
						214-9 (43.2 overs)	Miller				
						214-10 (43.5 overs)	White				



July 26, Nettleworth Sussex Sharks 216 Notts Outlaws 217-2

Notts Outlaws win by 8 wickets
Toss: Sussex Sharks, who elected to bat



Age just a number: Luke Fletcher keeps delivering the goods

PICTURE: Alamy

Slater and Haseeb give Outlaws easy win

By Jon Culley

BEN SLATER and Haseeb Hameed made unbeaten centuries as the Outlaws bounced back from defeat at Leicester with an eight-wicket victory over Sussex Sharks at the picturesque home of Welbeck Cricket Club.

Opener Slater, who averages above 53 in the List A format, scored 107 with skipper Hameed making 101 not out as they shared a county List A third-wicket record partnership of 209.

Sussex were bowled out in the 48th over for 216 despite Fynn Hudson-Prentice's 90 from 109 balls. The all-rounder hit nine fours and a six but found himself ploughing a lone furrow.

Luke Fletcher (three for 35) and Toby Pettman (three for 44) were the most successful Outlaws seamers, although

Brett Hutton, who bowled his 10 overs in a single spell, made a strong comeback after three months out with an Achilles injury.

The Outlaws stuttered at the start of their chase, finding themselves eight for two, but Sussex were unable to make any further inroads as their opponents cruised home with 50 balls to spare.

Slater passed fifty from 54 balls with eight boundaries, while Hameed reached his from 69 balls. The left-handed Slater reached his seventh List A hundred when he pulled Karvelas for his 13th boundary as the Outlaws closed in on their target, Hameed hitting the same bowler for six, four, four and one to complete his.

Sussex found the going tough from the outset after opting to bat first. The pitch seemed to lack pace and, in the face of excellent, tight bowling at both ends from Hutton and Fletcher, they lost both openers for 33 by the second ball of the 11th over.

Joined by Hudson-Prentice, Oli Carter sought to rebuild but the arrival of Pettman in the attack made scoring no easier.

The 26-year-old seamer, making his first senior appearance since last August, took two wickets in two balls and Hudson-Prentice soon lost two more partners as 19-year-old Daniel Ibrahim was caught at slip and 18-year-old Henry Rogers, on debut, skied to long-on.

Hudson-Prentice and 20-year-old off-spinner Bertie Foreman but Sussex were eventually all out with almost three overs unbowed.

SUSSEX SHARKS INNINGS											
						RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	SR	
Clark	c †Moore b Hutton	14	15	2	0	22	93.33				
Haines	c †Moore b Fletcher	14	33	2	0	42	42.42				
Carter	c Hameed b Pettman	23	44	1	0	74	52.27				
Hudson-Prentice	c James b Pettman	90	109	9	1	158	82.56				
Simpson (c)†	lbw b Pettman	0	1	0	0	2	0.00				
Ibrahim	c Montgomery b Patterson-White	5	7	1	0	13	71.42				
Rogers	c McCann b Patterson-White	13	22	2	0	21	59.09				
Foreman	run out (James)	21	39	1	0	50	53.84				
Lenham	c †Moore b Fletcher	2	6	0	0	10	33.33				
Karvelas	c Pettman b Fletcher	7	7	1	0	14	100.00				
Crocombe	not out	2	1	0	0	5	200.00				
Extras	(b 1, lb 3, nb 2, w 19)	25									
Total	(47.1 overs)	216 all out									
BOWLING											
	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS					
Fletcher	9.1	2	35	3	3.81	19-1 (5.4 overs)	Clark				
Hutton	10	0	41	1	4.1	33-2 (10.1 overs)	Haines				
Pettman	9	1	44	3	4.88	87-3 (22.5 overs)	Carter				
James	9	0	57	0	6.33	87-4 (22.6 overs)	Simpson				
Patterson-White	10	0	35	2	3.5	104-5 (25.2 overs)	Ibrahim				
						123-6 (31.2 overs)	Rogers				
						187-7 (42.5 overs)	Foreman				
						198-8 (45.1 overs)	Lenham				
						214-9 (46.5 overs)	Hudson-Prentice				
						216-10 (47.1 overs)	Karvelas				

NOTTS OUTLAWS INNINGS											
						RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	SR	
Slater	not out	107 125 14 0 152 85.60									
McCann	c Crocombe b Karvelas	2 4 0 0 9 50.00									
Haynes	c †Simpson b Crocombe	0 7 0 0 6 0.00									
Hameed (c)	not out	101 116 8 1 138 87.06									
Extras	(lb 1, nb 4, w 2)	7									
Total	(41.4 overs)	217 for 2 wickets									
BOWLING											
	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS					
Karvelas	7	1	51	1	7.28	7-1 (2.1 overs)	McCann				
Crocombe	8	1	32	1	4	8-2 (3.4 overs)	Haynes				
Foreman	8	1	30	0	3.75						
Hudson-Prentice	4	0	17	0	4.25						
Ibrahim	4	0	27	0	6.75						
Lenham	8.4	0	43	0	4.96						
Clark	2	0	16	0	8						

METRO BANK ONE-DAY CUP - FRI JULY 26 13



July 26, County Ground, Taunton

Kent Spitfires 267
Somerset 270-7

Somerset won by 3 wickets
Toss: Kent Spitfires, who elected to bat

Umeed carries on where he left off to give Somerset a big win

By Richard Latham

ANDY UMEED continued his love affair with the Metro Bank One-Day Cup as Somerset launched their Group A campaign with a three-wicket victory over Kent Spitfires at Taunton.

The opener, who averaged 87.57 in last season's competition, hit an unbeaten 114 off 121 balls to help his side chase down a target of 268 with 3.3 overs to spare, James Rew contributing 71 off 69 balls.

The Spitfires had posted 267 all out off 49 overs after winning the toss, Joey Evison and Grant Stewart making half-centuries, while Hamidullah Qadri contributed a rapid 43. Left-arm spinner Lewis Goldsworthy, back from a loan spell with Leicestershire, claimed career-best List A figures of four for 44 and seamer Alfie Ogborne three for 58.

Kent were given a solid start

by Evison and Beyers Swanepoel, who skied a return catch to Ogborne off a leading edge with the total on 31 in the eighth over. Eighteen-year-old Ekansh Singh marked his debut with a six over mid-wicket off Kasey Aldridge before falling for 16, bowled aiming to launch another maximum off Jack Leach. Skipper Jack Leaning then helped Evison add 37, but was undone by a reverse sweep, bottom-edging a ball from Goldsworthy onto his stumps.

Goldsworthy followed up with the wickets of Evison, Harry Finch and Jaydn Denly as Kent became bogged down against spin. But Stewart and Qadri delivered some overdue momentum, sharing five sixes and seven fours in a stand of 58 off 5.1 overs.

Somerset's response had reached 32 in the fifth over when George Thomas miscued a pull shot off Swanepoel to be caught at mid-wicket. Goldsworthy edged behind soon after but Umeed and Rew then assumed control, batting with increasing confidence.

Rew was first to his half-century, off 47 balls, with seven fours and a big six off leg-spinner Matt Parkinson, drilled over long-off. Umeed soon followed, off 62 deliveries.

When Somerset's young wicketkeeper deposited a short ball from Evison through mid-on the partnership overtook Somerset's List A record for the third wicket against Kent, previously 108, put together by Peter Trego and Dean Elgar at Taunton in 2017.

Soon afterwards, Rew was bowled by Nathan Gilchrist, swinging to leg, youngster Archie Vaughan was run out backing up without facing a ball and suddenly Somerset were 165 for four.

Umeed was joined by skipper Sean Dickson and the pair added 40 before Dickson carelessly pulled a catch to mid-wicket.

Josh Thomas was bowled by Parkinson and Aldridge also fell cheaply but Leach thumped a six off Parkinson and Umeed went to a 119-ball hundred as Somerset finished with a flourish.



Up and away: Umeed's incredible One Day Cup record just got better

PICTURE: Alamy

KENT SPITFIRES INNINGS

		RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR
Swanepoel	c & b Ogborne	8	19	1	0	31	42.10
Evison	c Umeed b Goldsworthy	55	69	4	1	84	79.71
Singh	b Leach	16	24	2	1	24	66.66
Leaning (c)	b Goldsworthy	17	21	1	0	22	80.95
Finch †	b Goldsworthy	14	30	1	0	27	46.66
Denly	c Aldridge b Goldsworthy	18	31	2	0	26	58.06
Stobo	c Aldridge b Ogborne	19	28	1	0	30	67.85
Stewart	c Dickson b Ogborne	51	34	5	2	48	150.00
Qadri	b Aldridge	43	30	2	3	32	143.33
Gilchrist	c GW Thomas b Aldridge	10	7	0	1	15	142.85
Parkinson	not out	2	2	0	0	5	100.00
Extras	(lb 2, nb 2, w 10)	14					
Total	(49 overs)	267					

BOWLING	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS
Leonard	6	0	27	0	4.5	31-1 (7.1 overs) Swanepoel
Ogborne	8	1	58	3	7.25	65-2 (13.4 overs) Singh
Aldridge	6	0	54	2	9	102-3 (20.6 overs) Leaning
Leach	10	0	55	1	5.5	107-4 (22.4 overs) Evison
Goldsworthy	10	1	44	4	4.4	128-5 (30.4 overs) Finch
Vaughan	6	0	16	0	2.66	137-6 (32.4 overs) Denly
Thomas	3	0	11	0	3.66	182-7 (40.5 overs) Stobo
						240-8 (45.6 overs) Stewart
						258-9 (48.1 overs) Qadri
						267-10 (48.6 overs) Gilchrist

SOMERSET INNINGS

		RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR
Thomas	c Stobo b Swanepoel	18	23	4	0	19	78.26
Umeed	not out	114	121	5	4	183	94.21
Goldsworthy	c †Finch b Stobo	7	15	1	0	15	46.66
Rew †	b Gilchrist	71	69	8	2	79	102.89
Vaughan	run out (Stobo)	0	0	0	0	5	-
Dickson (c)	c Evison b Stewart	23	21	3	1	22	109.52
Thomas	b Parkinson	2	5	0	0	6	40.00
Aldridge	c †Finch b Swanepoel	10	18	0	0	19	55.55
Leach	not out	10	9	0	1	15	111.11

Extras	(lb 2, nb 4, w 9)	15
Total	(46.3 overs)	270 for 7 wickets

BOWLING	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS
Swanepoel	7	0	32	2	4.57	32-1 (4.6 overs) Thomas
Stewart	6	0	37	1	6.16	44-2 (8.6 overs) Goldsworthy
Gilchrist	7	0	42	1	6	165-3 (23.6 overs) Rew
Stobo	8	3	2	4	1.94	165-4 (30.5 overs) Vaughan
Qadri	5	0	33	0	6.6	205-5 (36.2 overs) Dickson
Parkinson	9	0	57	1	6.33	212-6 (37.4 overs) Thomas
Evison	3	0	16	0	5.33	231-7 (42.5 overs) Aldridge
Leaning	1	0	9	0	9	



July 26, County Ground, Leicester

Leicestershire Foxes 88
Warwickshire 92-2

Warwickshire won by 8 wickets
Toss: Warwickshire, who elected to field

Barnard's purple patch sees Foxes hunted down

By Richard Rae

WARWICKSHIRE MADE it two from two in the Metrobank One Day Cup with an emphatic eight wicket victory over Leicestershire.

Bears' skipper Ed Barnard, who made a big century and took two wickets in his side's first game against Essex at Chelmsford, continued his outstanding form in the competition by taking four quick wickets, including that of India Test star Adityan Rahane, after putting the Foxes in to bat, reducing the home side to 40-4.

Craig Miles then picked up three as Leicestershire subsided to 88 all out in just 25.4 overs.

Although former Warwickshire player Chris Wright took two quick wickets when the visitors began their reply, Rhodes and teenager Hamza Shaikh put together an unbeaten partnership of 85 to steer their side

home with 32.4 overs in hand.

Warwickshire gave a start to two 18-year-olds, wicketkeeper Kai Smith and spinner Taz Ali.

Barnard chose to bowl first after winning the toss, and he soon brought one back to bowl the struggling Swindells, then found the edge of Budinger's bat with a fine delivery which left the left-hander.

Opposite number Hill was his third victim, edging a lifting delivery to the wicket-keeper, but his fourth wicket, the key one of Rahane, had an element of fortune about it, coming off a low leg side full toss which the batsman tried to help down to long leg only to turn the bat too soon. The ball struck the back of the bat and looped gently back to the grateful if slightly startled bowler.

Leicestershire's second overseas batsman, Peter Handscomb, also went caught and bowled, in his case chipping a full straight delivery straight

back to Rhodes for a duck. The procession continued, Liam Treviskis edging a delivery pushed across him from Hannon-Dalby low to Rhodes at slip, before a stand of 34 between Ben Cox and Ben Mike gave Leicestershire's supporters hope of posting some sort of score. But Cox chipped a simple catch to midwicket, Mike top edged an ambitious pull for Ali, running back from mid-on, to take a good catch, then Rhodes took a stunner at slip off Jake Lintott to see the back of Scriven.

Wright was last to go, bowled off the inside edge, but the seamer at least enjoyed some measure of revenge, trimming Barnard's bails with a beauty and then winning a leg before decision against Theo Yllie to reduce the Bears to 7-2. Thereafter Rhodes and Shaikh played with increasing comfort to see their side over the line in double quick time.



One-day wonderful: Ed Barnard has had a week to remember

PICTURE: Alamy

LEICESTERSHIRE FOXES INNINGS

		RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR
Swindells	b Barnard	9	25	1	0	22	36.00
Budinger	c Benjamin b Barnard	18	20	3	0	39	90.00
Hill (c)	c Benjamin b Barnard	9	20	0	0	28	45.00
Rahane	c & b Barnard	3	10	0	0	16	30.00
Handscomb	c & b Rhodes	0	5	0	0	11	0.00
Cox †	c Wylie b Miles	15	21	2	0	41	71.42
Treviskis	c Rhodes b Hannon-Dalby	0	6	0	0	8	0.00
Mike	c Ali b Miles	21	26	3	0	38	80.76
Scriven	c Rhodes b Lintott	8	14	0	0	15	57.14
Wright	b Miles	1	6	0	0	8	16.66
Salisbury	not out	0	1	0	0	4	0.00
Extras	(lb 1, w 3)	4					
Total	(25.4 overs)	88					

BOWLING	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS
Hannon-Dalby	7	0	26	1	3.71	15-1 (5.3 overs) Swindells
Barnard	7	0	21	4	3	34-2 (9.3 overs) Budinger
Rhodes	5	1	13	1	2.6	39-3 (11.6 overs) Hill
Miles	3.4	0	16	3	4.36	40-4 (13.1 overs) Rahane
Lintott	3	0	11	1	3.66	42-5 (14.1 overs) Handscomb
						43-6 (15.4 overs) Treviskis
						77-7 (21.3 overs) Cox
						86-8 (23.6 overs) Mike
						88-9 (24.5 overs) Scriven
						88-10 (25.4 overs) Wright

WARWICKSHIRE INNINGS

		RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR
Wylie	lbw b Wright	4	13	0	0	18	30.76
Barnard (c)	b Wright	1	8	0	0	12	12.50
Rhodes	not out	48	48	8	0	61	100.00
Shaikh	not out	34	35	6	1	56	97.14

Extras	(lb 2, w 3)	5
Total	(17.2 overs)	92 for 2 wickets

BOWLING	O	M	R	W	EC	FALL OF WICKETS
Wright	5	2	17	2	3.4	6-1 (2.6 overs) Barnard
Salisbury	3	0	7	0	2.33	7-2 (4.1 overs) Wylie
Scriven	5	1	21	0	4.2	
Mike	4	0	41	0	10.25	
Budinger	0.2	0	4	0	12	

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All-round Chappell enjoys day out for Derbyshire

GROUP A**DURHAM V LANCASHIRE AT SEDBERGH**

Captain Alex Lees starred with a superb 111 added to impressive all-round contributions from Dutch internationals Bas de Leede and Colin Ackermann as Durham claimed an opening day One-Day Cup win over Lancashire at Sedbergh School.

Opener Lees cleanly struck eight fours and a six in a 126-ball innings which underpinned 344 for four - Durham's sixth highest List A total. De Leede contributed 72 off 63 and Ackermann 59 off 33.

In ideal batting conditions, and in front of approximately 2,000 spectators, Lancashire's task of chasing was tall. Josh Bohannon top-scored with an excellent career best 147 off 119 balls, an even better innings than Lees'. But Ackermann and de Leede equally shared six wickets in 287 all out - a Durham win by 57 runs.

Lees made the most of his decision to bat first, hitting all of his boundaries on the leg-side and driving George Balderston's seam over long-off for his only six.

Durham paced their innings beautifully against a Red Rose attack who failed to gain control. Only Balderston - 1-57 from 10 overs - went at less than six in over in a six-man attack.

Durham coach Ryan Campbell said: "You have to take your hat off to Bohannon - he played unbelievably well. When a guy does that, you're going to leak runs at the back end. There were plenty of runs on not a massive ground.

"At the end of the day, it was a comfortable win in the end. We amassed a score that I was so positive about us defending. I'm pretty happy, to be honest.

"There was a bit of nibble, and I thought they bowled nicely in the first powerplay. But the good thing was we didn't panic. Lees and young Ben McKinney soaked it up and waited for the right time.

"When we got to 80 without loss, we're thinking, 'Now we can kick on'. What came next was exactly how Durham want to play their one-day cricket."



Top Chap: Zak Chappell took four-for and score 94 not out
PICTURE: Alamy

NORTHANTS V DERBYSHIRE AT NORTHAMPTON

Zak Chappell smashed a List A career best unbeaten 94 to propel Derbyshire to an unlikely two wicket victory over Northamptonshire in their One-Day Cup clash at Wantage Road.

Chappell came together with his skipper Ross Whiteley with Derbyshire in tatters at 79 for seven chasing 236 to win, but they turned the game on its head with a record eighth wicket partnership of 131 (23.4 overs) for the visitors against any opposition and the 22nd highest in the history of List A cricket worldwide.

Despite Northamptonshire's teenage pacer Raphy Weatherall sparking the initial collapse and finishing with figures of four for 50 on his List A debut, the momentum was all with Derbyshire as Chappell and Whiteley made hay.

Earlier Emilio Gay (59)

and George Bartlett (50) each struck half-centuries in a partnership of 79 in 15 overs. Saif Zaib and Lewis McManus then picked up the mantle and looked set to propel Northamptonshire towards a competitive total during a stand of 69 in exactly 11 overs.

But their departure precipitated a Steelbacks collapse, five wickets falling for 22 in 33 balls. On a day to remember for Chappell, the quick bowler finished with career best bowling figures of 4-39 while veteran all-rounder Samit Patel took 3-41 as the hosts were bowled out for 235 in 47 overs, which looked well below par.

Derbyshire's Zak Chappell said: "I said before I went out, if we can build a partnership, with a score of 235, you're only ever one partnership away. I obviously know that Ross has got time and he bats well and I thought if I could sur-

vive with him and we bat to 45, 50 overs, we would win the game. I went out with a mindset of just playing normal shots and batting for 20 overs and seeing where we were."

WORCESTERSHIRE V MIDDLESEX AT WORCESTER

Centurions Ed Pollock and Gareth Roderick rewrote the record books in spectacular style for Worcestershire during their 183-run One Day Cup triumph over Middlesex at New Road.

The opening pair smashed 259 off just 35.2 overs - Worcestershire's highest first wicket List A partnership against all opposition in a total of 371-3 from 48 overs.

A three-wicket burst with the new ball by Harry Darley, one of six Worcestershire One Day Cup debutants, pressed home his side's advantage.

Another in Jack Home then chipped in with three

wickets with Middlesex, who lost half of their side for 118 despite Mark Stoneman's powerful 75 off 37 balls, were bowled out in just 25.4 overs.

The Pollock-Roderick stand surpassed the 243 by Club Captain Brett D'Oliveira and Jack Haynes against Essex at Chelmsford three years ago.

Pollock went on to amass 180 from 138 balls with five sixes and 21 fours, his second century in four days after his 120 not out against Wales.

It was the second joint highest individual score for Worcestershire in List A cricket alongside Tom Moody with only Callum Ferguson (192) ahead of Pollock.

Worcestershire fielded arguably the most inexperienced attack in their history after being decimated by injury and illness and absent were Joe Leach, Adam Finch, overseas signing Nathan Smith, Ben Gibbon, Matthew Waite, Yadvinder

Singh, Josh Cobb, Kashif Ali and Club Captain Brett D'Oliveira.

Six players made their One-Day Cup debut in Home and Darley, Rehaan Edavalath and new short term signings from National Counties cricket in Tom Hinley (Oxfordshire), Hishaam Khan (Staffordshire) and Tommy Sturgess (Berkshire).

Middlesex had five players absent due to the Hundred in Stephen Eskinazi, Max Holden, Leus du Plooy, Ryan Higgins and Tom Helm and handed first One-Day Cup starts to Nathan Fernandes and Noah Cornwell.

GROUP B ESSEX V WARWICKSHIRE AT CHELMSFORD

Ed Barnard continued his summer love affair with Chelmsford by hammering his highest score in List A cricket.

Warwickshire's One-Day Cup captain followed

up his personal-best 165 in the Championship reverse in May by carrying his bat with a 140-ball 173 to underpin a seven-wicket victory over Essex. Barnard, whose previous best was 161, was ably assisted in match-defining stands by Rob Yates, Will Rhodes and Michael Burgess as last year's semi-finalists eased home with 14 balls to spare.

Essex, who won just one game in the 2023 campaign, were again on the receiving end after being put in on a green-tinged stand. And that despite Nick Browne claiming his fourth List A career half-century with seven fours, one of them all run, in an innings of 75 from 90 balls.

The left-handed opener shared stands of 51 with Feroze Khushi, 71 with Robin Das and 55 with Charlie Allison, who went on to contribute a 72-ball 69 and engage in a swashbuckling partnership of 70 with Luc

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Benkenstein. Olly Hanon-Dalby, meanwhile, chipped in with three wickets in nine balls to finish with three for 69.

GLAMORGAN V GLOUCESTERSHIRE AT CARDIFF

Glamorgan opened their account in the One Day Cup with a nail-biting derby win over Gloucestershire.

In a 33-over rain-affected game, Glamorgan set 187 for eight with 20-year-old Ben Kellaway hitting a rescuing 65 not out preventing the hosts from collapsing at 27 for three.

Dan Douthwaite shined with the ball with four for 25 including the crucial wicket of James Bracey whose solo magnificence was in vain after striking a 79-ball 86.

The visitors looked set to win yet another Severn-side derby before Douthwaite and Andy Gorvin combined to collapse Gloucestershire from 157 for five to 160 all out.

Glamorgan's Dan Douthwaite said: "We always want to make it interesting at Glamorgan, but Andy Gorvin, Ben Kellaway and myself who bowled towards

the end, we kept believing we were only one or two wickets away even though it looked unlikely at times.

"It was a bit fortuitous the way I got Bracey with a chop-on, but we'd come close and his luck ran out.

"It's an exciting start with a win coming into a new competition after a disappointing T20, the vibes are really good at the moment as we look to go again at Surrey on Sunday."

SURREY V YORKSHIRE AT THE OVAL

Will Luxton's 79-ball 83, George Hill's 51 off 38 balls and four dramatic late sixes by Matt Revis propelled Yorkshire Vikings to 240 for six from 33 overs and an eventual 25-run win against Surrey in the One-Day Cup at The Oval.

Luxton, 21 and making just his 15th List A appearance, hit 12 fours and played the innings of a rain-shortened Group B match, while 23-year-old Hill also took three for 41 with his medium pace as he and Revis, 22, added wickets to their earlier run-scoring exploits. Surrey, set 248 from their 33 overs after Duckworth Lewis Stern calculations, were restricted to 222 for nine in reply.

A fourth homegrown Yorkshire young gun, 23-year-old James Whar-ton, followed up a quickfire 22 by pulling off two memorable boundary catches – the first of them a quite astonishing one-handed over-the-shoulder effort – to remove Ben Geddes and Rory Burns.

With Ben Coad producing a beauty to bowl Ryan Patel for 40 towards the end of a superb seven-over new ball spell of 7-1-25-1, it was an eye-catching all-round performance by the Vikings – who failed to qualify for the knock-out stages in last year's 50-over competition but, on this evidence, could be contenders 12 months on.

LEICESTERSHIRE V NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AT LEICESTER

Leicestershire Foxes began their defence of the One-Day Cup with a victory over Group B rivals Nottinghamshire Outlaws, albeit one achieved in unexpected fashion after India Test star Ajinkya Rahane had excited his latest home crowd with a debut innings of 71 – the match coming down to the visitors trying in vain to score 55 runs from 23 balls.

The Foxes had been set to defend 370 after an impressive showing with

the bat in which captain Lewis Hill top scored with 80 and Sol Budinger made 75 as Leicestershire totalled 369 for six from their 50 overs, their score bolstered by some big hitting from Ben Cox and Ben Mike at the death.

Chasing 370 would have been a tall task for an inexperienced Outlaws side had rain not left their reply stranded on 50 without loss from 10.1 overs.

Needing 55 from 23 balls to reach a revised

target of 105, the visitors added to the drama by retiring both Ben Slater and debutant Freddie McCann, the not out batters, in favour of big-hitters Jack Haynes and Tom Moores only to lose Haynes first ball, immediately followed by new batter Lyndon James.

Moores did hammer four boundaries in four balls off Mike, but the Outlaws were still 16 runs short of their target when the overs ran out.

METRO BANK ONE-DAY CUP SCORES

GROUP A

Durham 344-4 (Lees 111, de Leede 72, Ackermann 59) beat **Lancashire** 287 (Bohannon 147) by 57 runs

Derbyshire 236-8 (Chappell 94*, Whitely 65, Weatherall 4-50) beat **Northamptonshire** 235 (Gay 59, Bartlett 50, Chappell 4-39) by 2 wickets

Worcestershire 371-3 (Pollock 180, Roderick 115) beat **Middlesex** 188 (Stoneman 75) by 183 runs

GROUP B

Essex 324-7 (Browne 75, Allison 69) lost to **Warwickshire** 328-3 (Barnard 173*, Burgess 59*) by 7 wickets

Glamorgan 187-8 (Kellaway 65*) beat **Gloucestershire** 160 (Bracey 86, Douthwaite 4-25) by 27 runs

Surrey 222-9 lost to **Yorkshire** 240-6 (Luxton 83, Hill 51) by 25 runs (DLS Method)

Leicestershire 369-6 (Hill 81, Budinger 75, Rahane 71) beat **Nottinghamshire** 89-6 by 15 runs (DLS Method)



Bears: Warwickshire got off to a winning start

PICTURE: Alamy

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16 THE HUNDRED - FRI JULY 26



July 26, Headingley, Leeds
Trent Rockets Women 123-5
Superchargers Women 103
 Trent Rockets won by 20 runs
 Toss: Trent Rockets, who elected to bat

King leaves Superchargers in a spin

TRENT ROCKETS began their Hundred campaign in fine style, defeating Northern Superchargers by 20 runs at Headingley thanks to a superb performance from their spin arsenal.

Chasing 124 on a dry surface, last year's runners-up could only manage 103 all out in 97 balls, Australian leg-spinner Alana King starring with 2-17 including a beauty that Shane Warne would have been proud of to clean bowl Bess Heath.

Lucy Higham top scored with 26 for the Superchargers, as King - in combination with fellow spinners Kirstie Gordon and Ash Gardner - turned the screw, Aussie seamer Heather Graham also impressing with 3-13.

Earlier, Grace Scrivens was fast out of the blocks for the Rockets, showing her class with six boundaries in her 32 from 22 balls before picking out Linsey Smith to give Annabel Sutherland the breakthrough.

Bryony Smith made 23 from 21 before becoming Sutherland's second victim and Linsey Smith dismissed Gardner and Graham with consecutive deliveries to reduce the Rockets to 87-4.

Nat Sciver-Brunt made an unbeaten 36 from 34 in a fine all-round display, later picking up two wickets, but was kept in check by an impressive performance in the field from the Superchargers, with Sutherland trapping Katie George lbw to finish with 3-14 and restrict the visitors to 123-5.

They came up short with the bat, though, as the Rockets reg-

istered a commanding win. Player of the Match Alana King said: "It was nice to have a bit of turn and grip in the wicket. We saw that the wicket did a lot in the first innings so we just had to keep our processes really simple. I love to have a pitch with a little bit of turn and I was happy to play my part.

"It felt really nice out of the hand," she said of the delivery which bowled Heath. "It's a leg-spinner's dream, so I'll take that first pill.

"I've loved having Ash [Gardner] and HG [Graham] join the Rockets this year. We played three Aussies today and we loved getting the win."



A regal performance: Alana King starred for Trent Rockets
 PICTURE: Alamy



July 26, Headingley, Leeds
Trent Rockets Men 185-5
Superchargers Men 138-8
 Trent Rockets won by 47 runs
 Toss: Northern Superchargers, who elected to field



Short and sweet: Chris Green delivered a performance to remember
 PICTURE: Alamy

Green fires Rockets to victory

AN IMMENSE all-round performance by Australian star Chris Green propelled Trent Rockets to a commanding 47-run victory against Northern Superchargers at a packed Headingley.

Asked to bat first, the Rockets' openers dominated the powerplay, putting on 44 before Adam Lyth mis-timed a drive to give Ben Dwarshuis his first wicket.

Matthew Potts, hotfooting it from Edgbaston having been left out of the England Test XI, then hurried by Alex Hales, who was well caught by Adam Hose on the long-on boundary.

Thereafter Sam Hain joined Tom Banton and they played out a compelling duel with the Superchargers' spin twins, Adil Rashid and Callum Parkinson, Banton edging the exchanges to reach a classy fifty from just 27 balls.

Potts finally checked their progress, spearing in a brilliant yorker to remove Ban-

ton on 66, the Banton-Hain partnership having yielded 65 from just 36 balls.

Hain's mix of orthodoxy and invention brought him 49 (28), and it was Green's magical seven-ball 25 - featuring three sixes - that blasted the Rockets up to 185, their third-highest score in the competition's history.

In reply Ollie Robinson and Graham Clark plundered six fours and a six inside the powerplay but when Clark was clean bowled for 17 (12) by Imad Wasim, the floodgates opened.

Superchargers' skipper Short was magnificently caught by a diving Green at long-on, Robinson was trapped in front by a Green off-break, and when Green removed Hose and Nicholas Pooran, the Superchargers were languishing on 62-5.

Green's perfect night was made complete with a smart run out of Clark, and despite

some spirited late-order hitting from Potts and Dwarshuis, the Rockets ran out comfortable winners.

Green, who returns to Australia after the game, was the Meerat Match Hero: "That was a lot of fun, my first taste of The Hundred. Short and sweet! I was told to go out and give it a whack and luckily it was my night to have some fun with the bat. I got good info from the other batters who'd done a great job up top.

"I enjoyed bowling out there tonight, it was conducive to spin. I saw that if you hold your length for as long as possible and spin it hard you could put the batters under pressure.

"I've only been here for five days and unfortunately this is my last day, but the staff at Trent Rockets have been fantastic and I wish them all the best for the remainder of the tournament. I think they're going to be a good team."

TRENT ROCKETS INNINGS

	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	
Smith	c Kelly b Sutherland	23	21	3	0	38	109.52
Scrivens	c Smith b Sutherland	32	22	6	0	24	145.45
Sciver-Brunt (c)	not out	36	34	4	0	44	105.88
Gardner	c & b Smith	10	9	2	0	7	111.11
Graham	c Higham b Smith	0	1	0	0	1	0.00
George	lbw b Sutherland	6	11	0	0	15	54.54
King	not out	6	5	1	0	5	120.00
Extras (lb 3, nb 6, w 1)	10						
Total	123 for 5 wickets						

BOWLING	B	R	W	FALL OF WICKETS
Ballingier	20	31	0	47-1 (33 balls) Scrivens
Cross	20	29	0	74-2 (53 balls) Smith
Smith	20	23	2	87-4 (63 balls) Gardner
Higham	5	3	0	87-4 (63 balls) Graham
Sutherland	20	14	3	114-5 (91 balls) George
Wareham	15	20	0	

SUPERCHARGERS INNINGS

	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	
Armitage (c)	c Scrivens b Nat Sciver-Brunt	14	9	2	0	17	155.55
Kelly	lbw b Gordon	9	8	2	0	8	112.50
Litchfield	lbw b Gardner	0	3	0	0	3	0.00
Sutherland	c King b Graham	15	12	1	0	25	125.00
Heath †	b King	0	2	0	0	1	0.00
Wareham	c Smith b King	2	4	0	0	2	50.00
D-Richards	run out (George/Smith)	9	10	1	0	10	90.00
Cross	c Nat Sciver-Brunt b Graham	5	10	0	0	9	50.00
Higham	b Nat Sciver-Brunt	26	22	3	0	30	118.18
Smith	b Graham	13	14	0	0	15	92.85
Ballingier	not out	1	3	0	0	5	33.33
Extras (lb 4, lb 1, w 4)	9						
Total	103 all out						

BOWLING	B	R	W	FALL OF WICKETS
Sciver-Brunt	17	19	2	18-1 (14 balls) Kelly
Potts	5	6	0	22-2 (17 balls) Litchfield
Gordon	20	22	1	32-3 (24 balls) Armitage
Gardner	15	18	1	32-4 (26 balls) Heath
King	20	17	2	34-5 (30 balls) Wareham
George	5	3	0	53-6 (47 balls) Davidson-Richards
Graham	15	13	3	54-7 (49 balls) Sutherland
				64-8 (62 balls) Cross
				97-9 (88 balls) Smith
				103-10 (97 balls) Higham

TRENT ROCKETS INNINGS

	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	
Lyth	c Pooran b Dwarshuis	12	12	0	1	15	100.00
Banton †	lbw b Potts	66	38	9	1	46	173.68
Hales	c Hose b Potts	6	6	1	0	7	100.00
Hain	c Jones b Dwarshuis	49	28	4	2	46	175.00
Powell	run out (†Robinson)	12	10	0	1	14	120.00
Green	not out	25	7	1	3	8	357.14
Extras (lb 2, lb 2, nb 2, w 9)	15						
Total	185 for 5 wickets						

BOWLING	B	R	W	FALL OF WICKETS
Parkinson	20	24	0	44-1 (24 balls) Lyth
Dwarshuis	20	28	2	59-2 (35 balls) Hales
Clark	15	45	0	124-3 (71 balls) Banton
Rashid	20	28	0	158-4 (91 balls) Powell
Potts	20	37	2	185-5 (100 balls) Hain
Short	5	19	0	

SUPERCHARGERS INNINGS

	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	
Robinson †	lbw b Green	25	17	3	1	23	147.05
Clark	b Imad Wasim	17	12	3	1	23	141.66
Short (c)	c Green b Gregory	4	3	1	0	2	133.33
Pooran	c Gregory b Green	10	15	0	1	17	66.66
Hose	b Green	4	5	0	0	8	80.00
Jones	b Gregory	7	8	1	0	11	87.50
Clark	run out (Gregory/Green)	0	1	0	0	2	0.00
Dwarshuis	not out	40	20	2	3	31	200.00
Potts	b Wood	24	18	4	0	21	133.33
Rashid	not out	1	1	0	0	2	100.00
Extras (lb 4, lb 2)	6						
Total	138 for 8 wickets						

BOWLING	B	R	W	FALL OF WICKETS
Wood	15	26	1	41-1 (25 balls) Clark
Wasim	20	13	1	47-2 (29 balls) Short
Cook	20	30	0	49-3 (35 balls) Robinson
Robinson	10	28	0	56-4 (49 balls) Hose
Gregory	15	21	2	62-5 (53 balls) Pooran
Green	20	14	3	62-6 (54 balls) Clark
				71-7 (63 balls) Jones
				128-8 (96 balls) Potts



July 25, Old Trafford, Manchester
Originals Women 113-7
Welsh Fire Women 117-3

Welsh Fire won by 7 wickets
 Toss: Manchester Originals, who elected to bat

Slam Dunkley on Fire for the Welsh

SOPHIA DUNKLEY guided Welsh Fire to victory over Manchester Originals at Old Trafford in The Hundred, navigating a mid-innings wobble to see her side over the line with four balls to spare.

Dunkley's 69 from just 47 balls formed the backbone of her side's response to the home side's total of 113-7, and it required some late acceleration from her to get the job done after Manchester Originals' spin duo of Sophie Ecclestone and Fi Morris had stemmed the scoring rate and pegged Welsh Fire back.

With 12 runs needed from the final 10 balls, it was Dunkley's calculated risk-taking against Ecclestone that proved most crucial, slapping her England team-mate for four through the covers and then repeating the dose behind square on the off side with a reverse-sweep.

Captain Ecclestone's 15-ball 27 – including two customary lusty blows for six – had earlier given her Originals side something to bowl at after an underwhelming effort with the bat.

Her innings was the lone Originals knock of note, excluding the opening pair of Laura Woolvardt and Beth Mooney who started the day in imperious form, racing to a partnership of 58 with Woolvardt in particular playing some shots for the purists.

Dunkley's half-century continued a trend of England Women's players standing up to the big occasion in The Hundred, following her teammates Alice Capsey and Heather

Knight – off the back of Head Coach Jon Lewis challenging his charges to dominate throughout the competition.

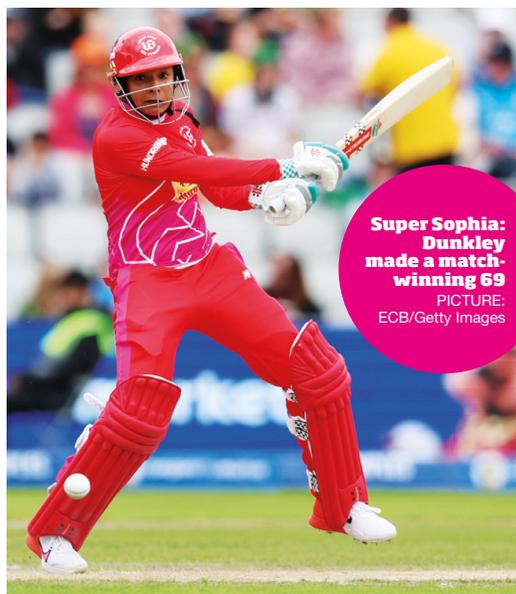
Sophia Dunkley said: "It definitely got a bit closer than we thought. I didn't really feel in the innings for the first half of it. It was quite hard to time the ball, so I found it really difficult. But once you got the pace of the wicket it was easier. At the end I had to take some calculated risks and it got a bit close but luckily we got over the line."

"We were really happy with how we bowled and how we controlled the innings. Spin was definitely quite hard through the middle, and pace off the ball, so we knew it was

going to be difficult but we were definitely pleased at the half-way point.

"I couldn't time it too well throughout the middle. I tried to over-hit a little bit. I had to tell myself to keep calm, strike the ball and keep my head still – and managed to get a few away. I moved a little bit better towards the end and we got over the line, which was great."

"We were definitely heartbroken at the end of last year [exiting at The Hundred Eliminator] so we've got that grit about us that we want to try and go all the way, and redeem ourselves a little bit. We're just really looking forward to getting going in the competition."



Super Sophia: Dunkley made a match-winning 69
 PICTURE: ECB/Getty Images



July 25, Old Trafford, Manchester
Originals Men 86-8
Welsh Fire Men 87-2

Welsh Fire won by 8 wickets
 Toss: Welsh Fire, who elected to field



Too strong: Welsh Fire made light work of Manchester Originals
 PICTURE: ECB/Getty Images

Fire left-armers too hot for Originals

WELSH FIRE strolled to victory against Manchester Originals in record time in The Hundred, inspired by their trio of left-arm pacers who derailed the home team's batting effort before it ever got going.

David Willey, David Payne and Josh Little took 6-46 between them from their 60 balls, reducing the Originals, without injured captain Jos Buttler, to 4-4, then 26-5 and 37-7.

Manchester Originals had no answer to the trio – who also registered 36 dot balls amongst their 60 balls of carnage – as they consistently easy to bat on.

Jamie Overton and Scott Currie hung around with the

bat for long enough to prevent Originals posting the lowest ever total in The Hundred, but their eventual score of 86-8 was at best an exercise in saving face.

Welsh Fire's target of 87 seemed academic and it proved as such, knocked off with a record 43 balls to spare, for the loss of just Tom Kohler-Cadmore and Jonny Bairstow.

It was the perfect start for Mike Hussey's Welsh Fire and it sealed a double win for the Cardiff-based side after their women's team's success earlier in the day.

David Willey said: "We wanted to start the tournament well. We talked about setting the tone and fortunately I got Salty out early on there and we got a nice start."

"I guess the swinging ball [is why the left-armers are dangerous]. These balls have been a little bit inconsistent in practice, some have swung and some haven't. I think left-armers swinging the ball back is always dangerous."

"We all want to do our strengths well, and the communication between us out there is really good as well. Credit to the backroom staff, they've put a good squad of bowlers together and we all complement each other nicely."

"Last year was great fun, probably my most enjoyable month of the year. The staff have put together a great group of guys who enjoy each other's company off the field as well as on the field, and I think that contributes to our success."

MANCHESTER ORIGINALS INNS						WELSH FIRE INNINGS									
RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR				
Wolvaardt	lbw b Jonassen	37	27	4	1	32	137.03								
Mooney	c Ismail b Davis	19	24	1	0	39	79.16	Dunkley	not out	69	47	9	2	68	146.80
Lamb	st †Bryce b Davis	1	6	0	0	4	16.66	Beaumont (c)	c Lamb b Morris	31	29	5	0	37	106.89
Bryce	c †Bryce b Jonassen	6	10	0	0	21	60.00	Matthews	lbw b Ecclestone	1	3	0	0	4	33.33
Morris	c Matthews b Davies	6	4	1	0	4	150.00	Bryce †	st †Threlkeld b Morris	4	10	0	0	7	40.00
Jones	b Matthews	3	9	0	0	8	33.33	Jonassen	not out	9	7	1	0	16	128.57
Ecclestone (c)	not out	27	15	1	2	15	180.00								
Threlkeld †	c Matthews b Jonassen	2	5	0	0	9	40.00								
Extras (lb 10, w 2)		12						Extras (lb 2, w 1)		3					
Total (100 balls)		113						Total (96 balls)		117					

BOWLING	B	R	W	FALL OF WICKETS
Ismail	20	13	0	58-1 (48 balls) Wolvaardt
Jonassen	20	17	3	61-2 (56 balls) Lamb
Davies	10	19	1	62-3 (58 balls) Mooney
Matthews	20	23	1	72-4 (64 balls) Morris
Davis	20	23	2	78-5 (75 balls) Jones
Elwiss	10	8	0	86-6 (85 balls) Bryce
				113-7 (100 balls) Threlkeld

MANCHESTER ORIGINALS INNS						WELSH FIRE INNINGS									
RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR				
Salt (c) †	c Phillips b Willey	0	2	0	0	1	0.00	Kohler-Cadmore	c †Salt b Currie	18	12	0	1	18	150.00
Holden	c Wells b Willey	2	6	0	0	9	33.33	Bairstow †	c Madsen b Walter	18	10	2	1	23	180.00
Madsen	c †Bairstow b Little	5	13	0	0	29	38.46	Clarke	not out	33	24	3	1	25	137.50
Walter	lbw b Willey	0	1	0	0	1	0.00	Abell (c)	not out	11	13	0	0	19	84.61
Raza	b Little	13	10	2	0	8	130.00								
Overton	c Wells b Payne	23	25	1	1	42	92.00								
Hartley	c Clarke b Ball	5	6	1	0	4	83.33								
Mir	st †Bairstow b Crane	2	4	0	0	3	50.00								
Currie	not out	26	25	2	0	31	104.00								
Farooqi	not out	7	9	1	0	9	77.77								
Extras (lb 1, nb 2)		3						Extras (lb 1, nb 4, w 2)		7					
Total (100 balls)		86						Total (57 balls)		87					

BOWLING	B	R	W	FALL OF WICKETS
Willey	20	14	3	0-1 (2 balls) Salt
Payne	20	11	1	4-2 (14 balls) Holden
Little	20	21	2	4-3 (15 balls) Walter
Ball	20	20	1	19-4 (27 balls) Raza
Crane	20	19	1	26-5 (43 balls) Madsen
				34-6 (49 balls) Hartley
				37-7 (54 balls) Mir
				73-8 (86 balls) Overton



July 23, The Oval, Kennington
Oval Invincibles Women 150-5
Phoenix Women 105
 Oval Invincibles won by 45 runs
 Toss: Birmingham Phoenix, who elected to field



Smashing: Paige Scholfield hit 71
 PICTURE: ECB/Getty Images

Scholfield stars in opening Invincibles win

A SPARKLING 71 from Paige Scholfield took Oval Invincibles to a domineering 45-run victory against Birmingham Phoenix in the first game of the fourth year of The Hundred.

In front of 10,249 fans, the two-time champions Oval Invincibles batted first and the 28-year-old Scholfield – enjoying a new role at the top of the order in the absence of Sri Lanka captain Chamari Athapaththu – found admirable company in England’s young superstar Alice Capsey, who herself made 51.

Perhaps in tribute to the opening game’s firework display, the pair put on 90 for the second wicket – sharing 17 boundaries – and looked at times to be threatening a record score in The Hundred

women’s competition before a flurry of late wickets pegged back their progress.

Nevertheless, defending 150, the odds were in the home team’s favour at the interval and when Birmingham Phoenix lost three wickets with the score on 32, their fate was effectively secured.

New Zealand captain Sophie Devine and Birmingham local Amy Jones put up an element of resistance for the visitors, but Oval Invincibles’ bowling attack – and in particular Australian leg-spinner Amanda-Jade Wellington (3-9) – proved too strong and got the home team off to the perfect start with a 45-run win.

Paige Scholfield said: “I’m absolutely buzzing. It’s the first time I’ve opened so I was

a bit nervous but I had *Lozzy* [Lauren Winfield-Hill] there helping me through those first 10 balls and I got a nice feel for the pitch. I haven’t done a lot of opening, I usually come in at the end and try and hit as many boundaries as I can in as few balls as possible! But I enjoyed it.

“I feel like there was a bit of tennis ball bounce in the pitch so you had to either move well back or forward, so I trusted my shots and I played them. We bat down to No.11 so I trusted myself and I went for it – and I’ve always got them in the dug-out if it doesn’t go quite as well. Chamari can have it [the opening role when she returns from the Asia Cup], I’m going to do what Head Coach Jon Batty tells me to do!”



July 23, The Oval, Kennington
Phoenix Men 89
Oval Invincibles Men 93-2
 Oval Invincibles won by 8 wickets
 Toss: Birmingham Phoenix, who elected to bat

Invincibles bowlers too strong for Phoenix

DEFENDING CHAMPIONS Oval Invincibles romped to victory under the lights at The Oval as the fourth year of The Hundred got underway with two wins out of two for the men’s and women’s South London team.

The Invincibles pace duo of Saqib Mahmood and Mohammad Amir ripped the heart out of Birmingham Phoenix’s first-innings effort, after captain Moeen Ali won the toss and decided to bat, reducing them to 10-4 after just 17 balls.

Amir and Mahmood took two wickets apiece, a welcome return to action from injury for England’s Mahmood who last played a game in The Hundred almost three years ago, in 2021.

After Amanda-Jade Wellington took 3-9 for Oval Invincibles women’s team in the day’s first game, another Australian leg-spinner in the shape of Adam Zampa replicated her success, skidding his way to figures of 3-11.

The stylish Jacob Bethell and buccaneering Benny Howell did their best to repair the top-order damage for Phoenix, but their eventual total of 89 would have been under-par on any surface and never looked enough.

In reply, Invincibles were unfussed and unhurried – waltzing their way to an 8-wicket win with 31 balls left. Captain Sam Billings added some late hitting, after Tawanda Muyeve had given the crowd of 23,621 a glimpse of his talent with a 14-ball 23, to make it the perfect start for

both Oval Invincibles teams. Meerkat Match Hero Adam Zampa said: “It was nice to start that way, especially at home, and it was good for us to continue our success from last year. It’s a good feeling and it’s nice to be in the winner’s circle straight away.

“It’s not much of a spinning wicket, to be honest. I enjoy bowling here, I think it skids on a bit and if you get that right it can be hard to hit. I tried to attack the stumps as much as possible today and it worked.

“We’ve had a bit of a chat about what we did well last year and what works here

[The Kia Oval]. In particular, starting well here was really important so we talked about the lengths you have to bowl here and how to do well on this ground. A lot of our guys have good experience of playing here so we’ve had a bit of talk about that.

“It’s a really enjoyable competition, I love playing in The Hundred. You feel like it’s a really alien concept but once you’re playing in it, it’s Twenty20 cricket with a couple of tactical changes – and really good tactical changes that I enjoy being a part of: 65-minute innings, that’s the sweet-spot, I love it.”



Spin king: Adam Zampa took 3-11
 PICTURE: ECB/Getty Images

OVAL INVINCIBLES INNINGS						BIRMINGHAM PHOENIX INNINGS									
RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR				
Winfield-Hill (c)†	b Levick	12	10	2	0	14	120.00	Bates	b Kapp	6	11	1	0	-	54.54
Scholfield	c Perry b Baker	71	40	12	0	49	177.50	Kallis	b MacDonald-Gay	17	12	2	1	-	141.66
Capsey	run out (Perry†/Jones)	52	40	5	0	52	130.00	Perry (c)	run out (Capsey†/Winfield-Hill)	0	7	0	0	-	0.00
Kapp	c Paveley b Arlott	7	5	1	0	11	140.00	Devine	c & b Smale	13	12	2	0	-	108.33
Harris	c Bates b Arlott	0	1	0	0	1	0.00	Jones†	c MacDonald-Gay b Wellington	21	15	2	0	-	140.00
Villiers	not out	1	2	0	0	5	50.00	Smale	st†Winfield-Hill b Wellington	4	7	0	0	-	57.14
Wellington	not out	0	2	0	0	2	0.00	Arlott	run out (Smale)	13	10	1	0	-	130.00
Extras	(b 4, lb 1, w 2)	7						Wong	c Capsey b Villiers	2	3	0	0	-	66.66
Total	(100 balls)	150						Paveley	b Wellington	8	7	1	0	-	114.28
								Baker	not out	2	4	0	0	-	50.00
								Levick	st†Winfield-Hill b Villiers	2	4	0	0	-	50.00
								Extras	(lb 4, w 3, pen 5)	17					
								Total	(92 balls)	105					
BOWLING	B	R	W	FALL OF WICKETS		BOWLING	B	R	W	FALL OF WICKETS					
Devine	15	27	0	28-1 (19 balls)	Winfield-Hill	Kapp	15	21	1	32-1 (22 balls)	Bates				
Paveley	20	27	0	118-2 (74 balls)	Scholfield	Smale	20	24	1	32-2 (29 balls)	Perry				
Wong	5	13	0	144-3 (92 balls)	Kapp	Slater	10	14	0	32-3 (31 balls)	Kallis				
Levick	15	16	1	144-4 (93 balls)	Harris	Villiers	17	17	2	64-4 (51 balls)	Devine				
Arlott	20	19	2	148-5 (97 balls)	Capsey	Wellington	20	9	3	78-5 (63 balls)	Jones				
Baker	15	29	1			MacDonald-Gay	10	11	1	79-6 (65 balls)	Smale				
Perry	10	14	0			Perry	10	14	0	81-7 (68 balls)	Wong				
										101-8 (84 balls)	Paveley				
										101-9 (86 balls)	Arlott				
										105-10 (92 balls)	Levick				

BIRMINGHAM PHOENIX INNINGS						OVAL INVINCIBLES INNINGS								
RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR	RUNS	BALLS	4S	6S	MINS	SR			
Patel	st†Billings b Zampa	25	24	1	1	52	104.16	Jacks	c Ali b Southee	6	7	1	0	85.71
Donald†	c Lammonby b Mahmood	1	2	0	0	4	50.00	Malan	not out	24	22	4	0	55
Livingstone	c Curran b Mahmood	0	2	0	0	1	0.00	Muyeve	c Howell b Southee	23	14	4	0	11
Mousley	c Zampa b Mohammad Amir	1	3	0	0	3	33.33	Billings (c)†	not out	31	28	4	1	36
Ali (c)	c Malan b Mohammad Amir	1	4	0	0	3	25.00	Extras	(b 2, lb 2, nb 4, w 1)	9				
Bethell	c Malan b Jacks	22	20	1	2	18	110.00	Total	(69 balls)	93				
Howell	c Lammonby b Jacks	24	13	2	2	10	184.61							
Abbott	b Sowter	4	8	0	0	14	50.00							
Milne	lbw b Zampa	0	1	0	0	1	0.00							
Helm	lbw b Zampa	1	4	0	0	2	25.00							
Southee	not out	1	1	0	0	2	100.00							
Extras	(lb 3, nb 2, w 4)	9												
Total	(81 balls)	89												
BOWLING	B	R	W	FALL OF WICKETS		BOWLING	B	R	W	FALL OF WICKETS				
Amir	15	7	2	5-1 (6 balls)	Donald	Bates	15	29	0	6-1 (7 balls)	Jacks			
Mahmood	15	25	2	5-2 (8 balls)	Livingstone	Curran	5	14	0	8-3 (12 balls)	Mousley			
Curran	5	14	0	8-3 (12 balls)	Mousley	Zampa	20	11	3	10-4 (17 balls)	Ali			
Zampa	20	11	3	10-4 (17 balls)	Ali	Sowter	16	21	1	47-5 (45 balls)	Bethell			
Sowter	16	21	1	47-5 (45 balls)	Bethell	Jacks	10	8	2	77-6 (64 balls)	Howell			
Jacks	10	8	2	77-6 (64 balls)	Howell					85-7 (72 balls)	Patel			
										85-8 (73 balls)	Milne			
										87-9 (78 balls)	Helm			
										89-10 (81 balls)	Abbott			

20 THE HUNDRED FEATURES

Mousley hails Hundred as brilliant for Birmingham

By Will Barker

FOR BIRMINGHAM local Dan Mousley, The Hundred's commitment to local communities is clear, bringing "so many different people into the game, who probably wouldn't have got involved in the game before".

A strong left-handed ball-striker and off-spin bowler, Mousley has seen benefits of The Hundred in his own local area: "I know from my village people who only got involved in the game of cricket because they watched The Hundred".

This grassroots effect of the competition is integral to drive the "game going forward into a good place."

Though he has experienced franchise tournaments around the world, signing for Peshawar Zalmi, MI Emirates and Team Abu Dhabi, Mousley believes that the uniqueness of The Hundred lies in the teams' relationships with their supporters, making cricket a more open and accessible game. "I love playing in front of a home crowd. The Hollies [at Edgbaston] is always bouncing, so to play with Birmingham, in Birmingham, is something I'm really looking forward to this year".

The Phoenix boast a string of acclaimed England white-ball players, such as Liam Livingstone and Moeen Ali. Alongside Chris Woakes, Ben Duckett and Jamie Smith who are expected to feature following the conclusion of England's Test series against West Indies, the spine of the team is full of experienced multi-format internationals.

With the arrival of Sean Abbott, Adam Milne and Tim Southee as overseas players, the Phoenix have added an excellent battery of quicks to form a formidable seam attack.

The Men's and Women's Hundred competitions promise fast-paced, explosive excitement for both new and experienced cricket lovers. For everyone who loves the sport, or for those looking to get involved, Mousley encourages young players to "always take the positive option no matter how nervous you're feeling" and to never lose the "natural love of the game".

Dan Mousley was speaking in Birmingham where KP Snacks, Official Team Partner of The Hundred, are two years into their initiative to create 100 new cricket pitches across the UK.



Community hero: Dan Mousley is a Birmingham local

PICTURE: Alamy

KP Snacks, Official Team Partner of The Hundred, are in the second year of a three-year project to fund 100 new community cricket pitches. To find out more and search for a pitch visit: www.everyonein.co.uk/pitchfinder

Nothing compares to The Hundred says Linsey Smith

By Toby Reynolds

INTEREST IN women's cricket has risen significantly over the last few years and with franchise competitions popping up around the globe, The Hundred now has competition. But for Linsey Smith, The Hundred doesn't compare to any other league around the world.

Smith said: "We get good support at regional games and the Big Bash, but I don't think you can compare The Hundred to any franchise league that I've played in, especially the support we get at Headingley, and then the noise."

"Sometimes in the game, I just stop and think, 'Wow. This is not something I ever thought that I'd be doing: playing in front of this many people.' So that's been pretty cool."

Smith has a fantastic record over the past few years, being one of the most destructive powerplay bowlers in England. With her low release point, almost all of her deliveries attack the stumps; so if the batters miss, she hits.

"I'm pretty clear with my role now as well. I'll be bowling the tough overs, the powerplay overs, and it's something that I thrive doing. The pressure of 'you really can't miss because you've only got two fielders out' makes me switch on straight away as well."

"I like being competitive, sometimes a little bit too much. I don't generally look at numbers, but if I'm focused and bowling my best then I'm bowling six out of six on the stumps and trying not to give the batters too much. The only thing I really focus on is my plan to



Spin to win: Linsey Smith is a key weapon for Northern Superchargers

PICTURE: Alamy

each batter and sometimes it comes off, sometimes it doesn't."

Smith's brilliant 2023 regional season continued into The Hundred last year. After dominating the Charlotte Edwards Cup, the finger-spinner took nine wickets for the Northern Superchargers, at an economy of just 110, helping them reach their first final.

Here, Smith and the Superchargers lost to Southern Brave, which featured many of her teammates and coaches from the Southern Vipers. However, being the ultra-competitive player she is, she cannot wait to take on her teammates again this year.

"I love it [playing against teammates]. I always have a little bit more energy when we come up against teams like the Southern Brave, that have a lot of Vipers girls and staff involved, so I'll definitely be up for

that one. They got one over us in the final last year, so we'll be bringing our A-game to that game."

It's not just her Vipers teammates who recognise how tough a competitor she is. England captain Heather Knight knows the challenges for batters facing Smith, saying: "She just knows her game so well. She knows what she does really well and then she goes and does it." "The powerplay is something Linsey does brilliantly with the new ball. She controls where she's hit. She's really hard to get away. She's not particularly tall so she can be really hard to get underneath and hit off the back foot and like the other spinners she just keeps the stumps in the game."

Smith and Superchargers will be hoping to go one step further in this year's The Hundred and lift their first title.

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RICHARD CLARKE

AKA The Grumbler



LET THE KIDS PLAY

Richard Clarke says the One-Day Cup is the perfect summer holidays day out

Arsene Wenger is a man with a breadth of sporting knowledge but when it came to cricket he was always left scratching his head.

I was in charge of content at Arsenal FC for the majority of his tenure, including that summer when the 2005 Ashes dominated the back pages so completely that it even permeated the Frenchman's laser focus on football. Ahead of one of my weekly sit-down interviews, we briefly discussed the series his backroom staff had been chattering about.

The conversation quickly careered into something akin to a Two Ronnies sketch. "So when you are out, the next guy goes in?" I remember him asking furrowing his brow.

I firmly believe that the analytical, innovative Wenger would have been a devotee of the game had he been born in the UK. But what he lacked in cricket knowledge, he more than made up for in empathy and understanding around the nature of sport and its fans.

Soon after taking over in 1996, the Frenchman realised his squad was too thin to compete with Manchester United in all the major competitions, so he rested his star players in the League Cup and instead fielded a talented crop of youngsters. He was hammered in the media for his 'disrespect', especially after Arsenal were thrashed 5-0 at Highbury by a full-strength Chelsea two years later.

But Wenger stuck to his guns and, to sweeten the pill, the club reduced ticket prices to £10 for adults and £5 for kids. As part of my pre-match interview, he would always announce his squad and make sure we released it. This was normally a carefully guarded secret but the manager "did not want to cheat the fans".

A season or so later, a strange thing started to happen. These tickets became the subject of perhaps the biggest scramble outside of major finals. They were not included in the season tickets due to their 'lower' value so they were relatively easily available. In the boom time of Premier League football and its associated price rises, parents realised this might be a way to give their children an Arsenal experience for a minimal outlay.

From the press box I distinctly remember the usual hum of a Premier League crowd being replaced with an excited shrill for League Cup ties, especially when the early rounds corresponded with half-term.

For me, the One-Day Cup can fulfil the same role for the county game. Especially as the much-discussed segway from the new Hundred crowd to the rest of the domestic game has not materialised.



The 50-over competition has become a second tier "Dads and Lads" event since the emergence of the new tournament. Not only losing its stars but also a Lord's final.

However, similar to the League Cup back in the day, I find myself looking forward to it more than perhaps any other competition.

Firstly, it is an event based on hope rather than expectation. When I drove home from Essex's opener against Warwickshire on Wednesday, my excitement at the progress of Charlie Allison and Luc Benkenstein superseded the shellacking we had received from Ed Barnard.

Secondly, it is the closest we get to the festival cricket of my youth. The use of the Test grounds in big cities for The Hundred means this year's 50-over competition will visit Scarborough, Blackpool, Rugby, Sedburgh, York, Sookholme, Guildford, Radlett and Northwood. Other counties are going to Kibworth, Neath and Beckenham. This follows a long-standing tradition of taking the game to the

people during the summer months.

Back in the 80s, the highlights of my school holidays were going to the seaside and seeing Essex at an outground. If it was Southend, my family combined the two.

This was professional sport in a casual setting. Boundary fielders stood feet away from spectators in deckchairs with only a rope denoting the difference between hallowed turf and a

possible pitch for a picnic blanket. For kids, the autograph hunting was easy and, best of all, they got a long spell playing their own games on the outfield at the break.

I do not want to disappear down a nostalgic rabbit hole, but if the summer holidays are seen as the best time to introduce kids to the game then, forget all the hype and marketing, just get them playing on a county pitch. No other major sport offers this opportunity.

The break in the Blast is too short and games are often held in the evening when a boozey crowd might swell the coffers but does little for

younger fans who so crave activity that they will often commandeer a sliver of concrete on a concourse to continue playing.

Although the 50-over format has lost its lustre, the longer version of short-form cricket still affords space and time that T20 and The Hundred do not.

In a last desperate attempt to get one of my kids into cricket, I took my daughter Emily to a busy Chelmsford this week. Her mathematical mind likes the scoring more than the game right now but I am working on it. We found a space on a crowded outfield and bowled at each other for 20 minutes at the break, something that troubled a self-conscious 15-year-old who has barely played the game at school. We chatted, we wandered into town then watched most of Warwickshire's brilliant reply. After that, she got a bit bored so we went home. It may have been second-class cricket but this was first-class Dad-and-daughter time.

When I worked at Arsenal, Emily had little interest in football but has caught the bug due to the recent rise in the women's game. I have taken her to their matches in the plush Club Level seats at

Emirates Stadium, capacity 60,000. But she prefers standing behind the goal at Boreham Wood FC, their somewhat shabby second home. It holds a cosy 4,500 but is only down the road from me. You are closer to the action and can get selfies with the players after the game.

Cricket's marketers and hype merchants tell us bigger must be better, especially if it is sprinkled with stardust and staged in a major venue. The reality is smaller, more local and personal can work just as well. For Dads as well as daughters.



Youth: Luc Benkenstein in action for Essex

The longer version of short-form cricket still affords space and time that T20 and The Hundred do not

T20 Blast

FIVE KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE TOURNAMENT SO FAR

Rosa Simkin takes a look back at what we saw during the group stages of this year's T20 Blast

THE 2024 T20 Blast has reached its midseason break and the conclusion of its group stages as attention turns towards The Hundred and the One-Day Cup, creating the perfect opportunity to take a look back at the season so far and how things stand, focusing in on five key takeaways of the tournament so far.

The quarter-finals start on September 3, with Finals Day taking place on September 14 at Edgbaston.

Our confirmed quarter-finalists and dates are: Surrey versus Durham (Sep 3), Sussex Sharks versus Lancashire Lightning (Sep 4), Northamptonshire Steelbacks versus Somerset (Sep 5) and Birmingham Bears versus Gloucestershire (Sep 6).

1 GROWING COMPETITION

In recent years the gap between the richer, well supported counties and the smaller, more self-reliant counties has been very prevalent, especially since the introduction of The Hundred in 2021. However, this season has seen a change of tune in The Blast with competitive cricket played across the board.

Out of the eight quarter finalists, only four of the eight have Test status stadia, with the likes of Hampshire, Middlesex, Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire sitting towards the bottom of the table in their respective groups. The question stands, can the four "smaller" counties beat the giants of the county game and gain qualification to Finals Day?

2 MAMMOTH TOTALS

Year by year in The Blast the inventive and creative poses taken by the batters as well as their ability to strike a long ball is amplified and this year has been no different. From an individual perspective we have seen seven hundred plus scores since the tournament began, the highest being an incredible 135 from 74 balls by Kiran Carlson for Glamorgan versus Somerset.

From a team perspective, the story has been similar, with 28 team batting totals upwards of 200. Sussex have the most, with an impressive six coming against Surrey, Gloucestershire, Essex, Hampshire and in both of their games versus Kent.



Peppering the boundary: Michael Pepper has hit the most sixes
PICTURES: Alamy



Bear wickets: Danny Briggs has been brilliant as ever with the ball
PICTURES: Alamy



Prolific:
Aussie Daniel
Hughes is the
tournament's
leading
run-scorer
PICTURES: Alamy

3 UNPREDICTABLE COLLAPSES & LOW-TEAM TOTALS

While there's been a large number of huge team totals this Blast campaign, 2024 has also seen some quite incredible collapses and rather low totals from teams with bat in hand, often from unexpected places. The last round of group stage fixtures on July 19 acts as a key example of this. For reigning champions Somerset their visit to Glamorgan was not one for the memory banks. After losing the toss they allowed Glamorgan to reach 243-4 and followed by being bowled out for 123. The story was similar in Kent, with qualified Surrey falling to 131 all out in response to Kent's 217-5. The most embarrassing showing with bat however occurred at Trent Bridge, with Nottinghamshire being bowled out for 57 from 17.2 overs by the Bears, who proceeded to chase the total in just 32 balls.

4 THE WORLD CUP DILEMMA

The 2024 Men's T20 World Cup in June was a spectacle for cricket lovers across the globe, however with the tournament unusually taking place from June 1-29 due to it taking place in the USA and West Indies it ran side by side with the beginning and majority of The Blast, resulting with issues surrounding the availability of some of the biggest names. Out of the England squad from the tournament, only nine of the 15 players went on to represent their counties, playing 27 games between them. From an overseas perspective the absence of key international players such as Shaheen Shah Afridi, Glenn Maxwell and Daryll Mitchell who appeared in the 2023 edition was also noticeable, with a smaller pool of overseas players for teams to select from.

5 THE YEAR OF THE BEAR?

The Birmingham Bears have had quite the season in the Blast, topping the North Group table with ten wins from their fourteen games and their four members of the PCA MVP rankings top 10 in Dan Mousley, Sam Hain, Jacob Bethell & Danny Briggs are testament to the success of the side. However, their advancement to the quarter-finals following an impressive campaign is not unusual, with the side making an appearance in the last three knock-out stages with significant losses to Kent in 2021, Hampshire in 2022 and Essex in 2023. 2022 was their worst showing, being bowled out for 82 in response to Hampshire's 186-6. The components are there for a Bears victory when they face Gloucestershire in September, but will they crash out once again? Pressure is mounting on Head Coach Robinson to advance to Finals Day this time round on the fourth time of asking.

STATS

TOP 5 RUN-SCORERS

- 1. DANIEL HUGHES** (SUSSEX)
560 RUNS
- 2. SAM HAIN** (BEARS)
554 RUNS
- 3. MICHAEL PEPPER** (ESSEX)
535 RUNS
- 4. MATTHEW BREITZKE** (NORTHANTS)
460 RUNS
- 5. TOM BANTON** (SOMERSET)
440 RUNS

TOP 5 WICKET-TAKERS

- 1. DANNY BRIGGS** (BEARS)
27 WICKETS
- 2. DAVID PAYNE** (GLOUCESTERSHIRE)
25 WICKETS
- 3. TYMAL MILLS** (SUSSEX)
24 WICKETS
- 4. LUKE HOLLMAN** (MIDDLESEX)
23 WICKETS
- 5. MATT TAYLOR** (GLOUCESTERSHIRE)
23 WICKETS

TOP 5 SIX-HITTERS

- 1. MICHAEL PEPPER** (ESSEX) **32**
- 2. JAMIE SMITH** (SURREY) **24**
- 3. DANIEL HUGHES** (SUSSEX) **23**
- 4. ANEURIN DONALD** (DERBYSHIRE) **23**
- 5. JACOB BTHELL** (BEARS) **23**



Winners?:
Moeen Ali
will be key for
Birmingham
Bears in the
quarters
PICTURES: Alamy

A Cricket Life

Ian Bishop

The former Windies quick on his injury-ravaged career and the transition to becoming one of the most respected commentators in the game. **Interview by James Alder**



On the mic:
Bishop has become one of the game's most respected voices

PICTURES: Alamy

A CRICKETING EDUCATION

I was about 10 when Clive Lloyd started to formulate his four-pronged pace attack, signalling the beginning of West Indies' dominance of Test cricket. I recall myself and my brother sitting in front of a transistor radio listening to Viv Richards score a hundred in Australia, jotting down every run. We had a little scorebook, and I don't know why we did it, but we did.

At that age, we used to dine out on any cricket literature we could get our hands on. Whether it was *The Cricketer* magazine or MCC literature, we devoured the English hand-me-downs. The historical West Indies successes were learned through pictures from those magazines.

I hadn't a huge idea up to that point just what West Indies cricket meant. Following West Indies' success through the dominant years was what formed my perception of what it meant to play for West Indies during my early career. It gave me the feeling that I had high standards to live up to if I wanted to play for them.

MEETING VIV

I remember the first time I met a West Indies star. Our school in Trinidad had thrown out an invitation to the touring Australian side. Kim Hughes and Viv Richards came to our school and played softball in the yard.

As captain, I was tasked with introducing these guys to the school and I remember just standing there, looking deep into Viv's eyes – hoping that I would be able to see something in his eyes that would stand out to me and tell me why he was such a superhuman cricketer. Of course, I didn't see anything – because eyes are eyes – but that first time meeting a West Indian cricketer in person was bewildering. I tease Sir Viv about it now.

THE ACCIDENTAL FAST BOWLER

That I became a fast bowler was purely accidental. As much as me and my brother would enjoy scoring, I wasn't into playing organised cricket at a young age. When I started to play at school, I batted for long periods without being able to score a run. They'd all shout "Boycott! Boycott!" – I've since learned that I shouldn't have been so offended.

One day we played a final against Brian Lara's team, Fatima College. My opening bowler couldn't make the game, and someone had to fill in, so I decided to bowl some off-spin.

The first few deliveries didn't turn one iota. I thought, "This is rubbish", so my run-up got longer – step by step – and I started bowling seam-up. The bowling soon overtook the batting. By the time I left school, I was definitely more of a bowler than a batter.

LEARNING FROM THE GREATS

When I was young, my action was a mishmash of different styles. Once I'd started bowling in secondary school, we had this little group that would go to the Queen's Park Savannah whenever we could and try to imitate everyone all at once. We'd run in like Michael Holding, jump like Joel Garner and deliver like Malcolm Marshall.

Along the way, I was awarded an Alf Gover Scholarship, which saw me attend the same cricket school in south London that had produced Sir Vivian Richards and Sir Andy Roberts. That experience formulated my action. I only had one other formal coaching stint, when Andy Roberts came to Trinidad & Tobago after he'd finished playing Tests.

He ran a coaching session which I pulled other little bits from. Learning from the likes of him and Malcolm Marshall was part and parcel of playing first-class cricket back then.

A PRESENT FROM PHIL

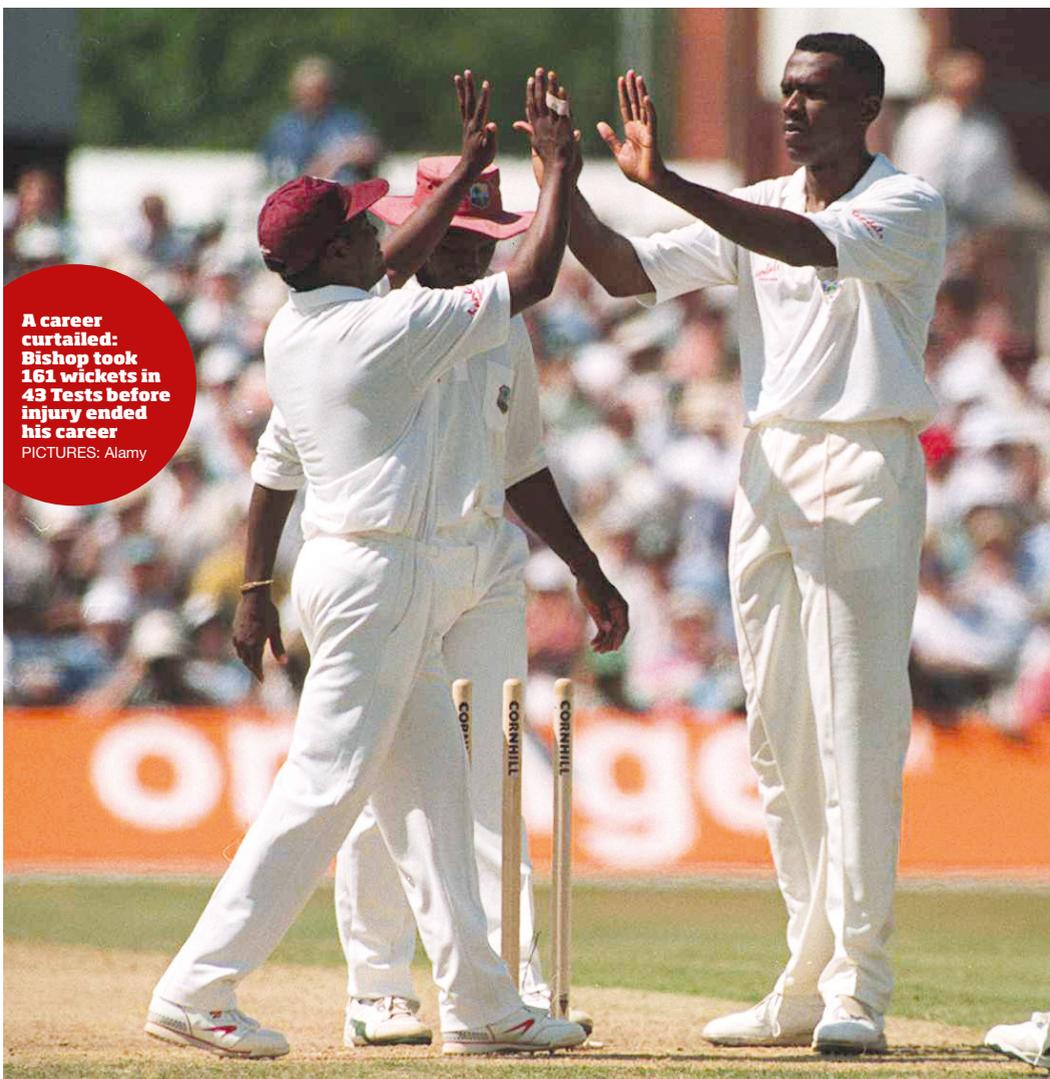
Phil Simmons took me under his wing and has been my big brother since those early days. My early interactions with him made me and my friends feel that he would give us the shirt off his back if he thought we needed it.

He was a few years older than me, played for the same club, but I'd never had the chance to meet him before. My friend once said to me, "There's Phil Simmons, just across the street". An older clubmate said, "Let's go and ask him for a bat". Phil didn't know us from Adam, but said, "No problem lads, I'll sort one out for you".

A few weeks later, a Gray-Nicolls Powerspot arrived at the club and we were overjoyed. We oiled and sandpapered that bat for years.

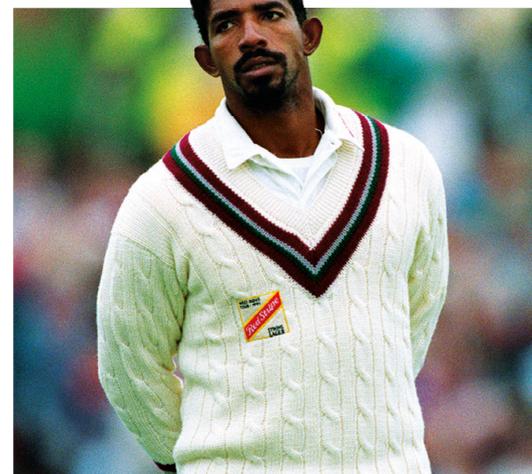
EARLY TOIL

I went to England in 1987 to play for Tynedale Cricket Club, where I learned a lot about being a professional. I came back home and made the Trinidad & Tobago senior team. At that point, I was just going along step by step and wherever the game took me, I followed it.

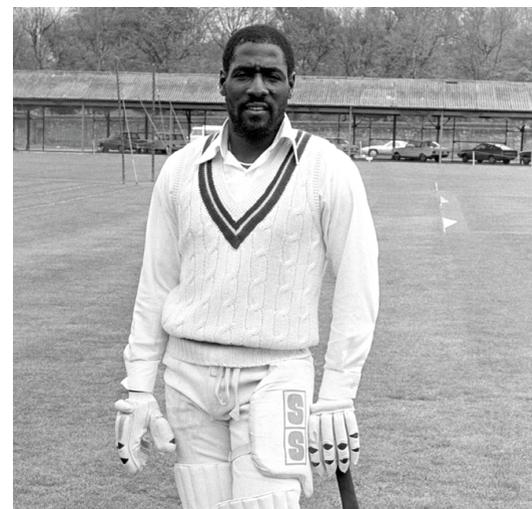


A career curtailed: Bishop took 161 wickets in 43 Tests before injury ended his career

PICTURES: Alamy



ABOVE: An early inspiration: Phil Simmons took Bishop under his wing. BELOW: Meeting the king: a childhood encounter with Sir Viv Richards fired Bishop's imagination



I had a terrible first season, though. Roger Harper scored a hundred against us in Trinidad, Gordon Greenidge scored a double-hundred against us in Barbados. I thought, 'This game is too hard, I need to find another career, seriously!' That's where Phil Simmons, in particular, helped me stay level. Phil came back from his travels to England and said to me, 'I've heard some good things about you, and I really wish you well'.

You need different people at different stages throughout your career. Just hearing that from someone I looked up to as a hero gave me the kick I needed.

THE SHOCK CALL-UP

I'd had a decent first-class season in the Caribbean in 1988, but not spectacular, and I signed a contract to play club cricket at the very tip of northern England. I arrived in this little town, having got two buses and a plane to get there.

When I got off the second bus, the guy who came to meet me from the club said, 'I'm sorry, you're not playing for the club this year.' 'Why? I've flown all this way.' He said, 'Well, you've just been selected for the West Indies.' I can't even remember the name of the club I was due to play for!

He took me to where I was supposed to stay, with a guy called Andrew Light, who'd played for Guyana and is unfortunately no longer with us. I watched the sun go down and come up again, without

sleeping a wink, before travelling to London to meet the West Indies team the next day. It was such a huge surprise to me.

FIRST STEPS IN TEST CRICKET

In my first Test, a rain-affected game against India in Guyana, the highlight of my match was getting a first-ball duck, but then I followed that up with six wickets in my second, and I was just replicating the skills that all those great bowlers had taught me. In the second innings of that match, Sanjay Manjrekar made a hundred and I took just a solitary wicket.

It was such hard work, even though we won the Test match. At that stage, I had a fleeting thought that it was too hard. But it was just a fleeting thought.

INJURY HELL

When the first stress fracture of my back came in 1991, I was devastated. I panicked about what I would do and what the future held. I went to see experts in Venezuela and then England trying to find out what my path back to playing was. Rest,

rehab and a lot of encouragement from my fiancée – now my wife – was about it.

I got better, but when the injury came back in 1992/93, it was tougher as I wasn't sure if it would heal. I met Dennis Lillee in Australia, someone who'd been

through it himself. We met in Perth where I bowled some balls and we chatted.

That meeting encouraged me, but it was becoming clear that I had to change my action.

I was never the same after that. My bowling became mechanical and I lost the ability to find what had come so

naturally earlier in my career. I had some wonderful moments, though. England's tour in 1990, for all its controversy, was one of the most memorable times – the calypso music becoming entwined with our style of cricket. The 6-40 against Australia at Perth in 1993 stands out as well, a wicket I always enjoyed.

A SECOND HOME AT DERBY

I loved my time in county cricket [playing three seasons for Derbyshire

between 1989 and 1992]. I chose Derby, in the face of interest from Surrey and a few other clubs, because Mikey Holding was there. I've never been one for the bright lights.

Even though I'd played some cricket in England before, I hadn't quite grasped the length to bowl in county cricket by 1989. I was bowling too short. But interacting with guys like Devon Malcolm and Mikey, and playing a high volume of cricket, was invaluable.

I remember picking up the paper every day to see what Allan Donald and Waqar Younis had managed the day before, using that to spur me on to do better than they did.

POST-PLAYING CAREER

As I was winding down from playing, I made a promise to myself that I wouldn't be anywhere near cricket. Professional and international sport is full of strong personalities and big characters. If I wanted to be a coach, I felt that I didn't have the strength of conviction to deal with those personalities or the confidence in myself.

Even with broadcasting, I thought, 'What if I have to go and ask the best batsman in the team for an interview?' Then, having done a few stints of radio commentary, Michael Holding didn't take his contract to commentate on West Indies cricket one year and the producers asked me to fill in.

I did that home season, then Channel 4 asked me to do the West

Indies tour of England [in 2000] after I'd sent a demo to a friend working as a football agent in England, never expecting anything to come to pass. I didn't know at the time, but they'd asked Mikey Holding what he thought of my commentary, and he'd been complimentary. I don't know why!

"REMEMBER THE NAME"

I was at a Q&A with Sourav Ganguly the night before the 2016 World T20 final. One question posed to me was, 'Who should we look forward to seeing from the West Indies apart from Chris Gayle?' My answer was: 'Carlos Brathwaite, remember that name.'

Bumble was on lead comms at the start of the final over and he said to me, 'Your call, mate' – which was kind of him. Finally, when the winning moment came, I didn't have time to think about it. 'Remember the name' just flowed subconsciously in that moment.

I get people on social media, whether they're being jocular or not, asking if I'm disappointed given where Ben Stokes' and Carlos' careers have gone since then. I maintain that my pronouncement at the end was not about where Carlos or Stokes would go afterwards. It was about what Carlos did there – it was his moment.

History will remember him, forever, for getting us over the line for a second consecutive World Cup, unprecedented in T20 cricket.

When I started to play at school, I batted for long periods without being able to score a run. They'd all shout "Boycott! Boycott!" - I've since learned that I shouldn't have been so offended

26 ECB PREMIER LEAGUES

BIRMINGHAM & DISTRICT

Barnards Green v Knowle & Dorridge 203-3 (O Curriel 75) - match abandoned

Halesowen 254-6 dec (C Whittock 76) drew with West Bromwich Dartmouth 150-4 (B Thompson 69)

Kenilworth Wardens 188-8 (R Evidts 64) drew with Himley 157-9

Moseley 219 (A Mohammed 67) v Smethwick - match abandoned

Omersley 215-2 (S Gunarathne 101) v Berkswell - match abandoned

Wolverhampton 29-0 v Barnt Green 236-7 - match abandoned

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	D	L	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Smethwick	13	7	3	1	2	11	12	0	200
Barnt Green	13	5	2	2	4	13	13	0	168
Knowle & Dorridge	13	4	5	2	2	23	21	0	167
Berkswell	13	3	4	1	5	16	16	0	163
Barnards Green	13	4	2	4	3	20	14	0	162
Himley	13	4	5	4	0	16	24	0	159
Halesowen	13	5	3	3	2	8	15	0	152
Moseley	13	2	4	5	2	20	31	0	131
Kenilworth Wardens	13	3	3	6	1	17	21	0	121
Omersley	13	3	1	5	4	15	16	0	117
Wolverhampton	13	2	3	4	4	17	17	0	115
West Brom D'mouth	13	1	5	6	1	21	20	1	97

BRADFORD

Farsley 231-6 (S Brown 71) lost to Townville 233-9 by 1 wicket

Jer Lane 234-8 (M Hussain 90) beat Pudsey St Lawrence 209 (J Mighell 54) by 25 runs

Methley 234-9 (T Cornall 63) beat Bradford & Bingley 223 (B Waite 5-56) by 11 runs

New Farnley 340-6 (A Lilley 112) beat Pudsey Congs 125 by 215 runs

Ossett 237 lost to Cleckheaton 270-5 (Y Baber 129) by 33 runs

Undercliffe 128 (T Clee 7-44) lost to Woodlands 260-7 (M Bilal 69) by 132 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	T	A	Bat	Bl	Pen	Pts
Jer Lane	14	10	3	0	0	54	58	217	
Woodlands	14	10	2	0	1	51	50	211	
New Farnley	14	9	4	0	0	57	49	201	
Townville	13	8	4	0	1	51	49	195	
Methley	14	8	4	1	1	50	51	191	
Undercliffe	14	6	6	0	2	41	44	155	
Pudsey St Lawrence	14	5	7	0	2	45	48	153	
Ossett	14	5	8	0	1	44	51	150	
Cleckheaton	14	5	6	1	2	43	42	150	
Bradford & Bingley	14	4	8	1	1	46	39	135	
Farsley	14	3	9	1	1	43	45	128	
Pudsey Congs	14	0	13	0	1	33	32	70	

CHESHIRE

Alderley Edge 218 (P Ashling 64) beat Oxton 85 (E Foster 6-34) by 133 runs

Didsbury 166 lost to Chester Boughton Hall 298-8 (A Money 81) by 132 runs

Neston 81-3 v Bowdon 257 (J Sanders 71) - match abandoned

Timperley 119 (J Warrington 5-28) lost to Nantwich 188 (B Wright 70) by 69 runs

Toft 177 lost to Grappenhall 180-3 (T MacRury 76) by 7 wickets

Widnes 104-6 drew with Hyde 324-5 dec (P Partridge 169)

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D/TA	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts	
Hyde	13	9	1	2	1	10	11	243	
Nantwich	13	10	2	0	1	4	3	229	
Chester B'ton Hall	13	9	1	1	2	5	4	219	
Didsbury	13	7	5	1	0	11	13	194	
Oxton	13	4	5	3	1	16	25	0	161
Widnes	13	5	3	2	2	16	15	0	155
Alderley Edge	13	4	3	3	3	15	15	0	154
Grappenhall	13	4	7	3	0	15	22	0	131
Bowdon	13	2	5	2	4	20	26	0	122
Timperley	13	2	7	3	1	26	27	0	107
Neston	13	2	10	0	1	25	31	0	102
Toft	13	1	9	1	2	14	22	0	74

CORNWALL

Helston v Camborne - match abandoned

Redruth v Werrington - match abandoned

St Austell v Wadebridge - match abandoned

St Just v Penzance - match abandoned

Truro v Callington - match abandoned

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	A	C	T	Bt	Bl	Pts
Penzance	11	7	2	2	0	0	42	39	163
Callington	11	5	2	3	0	1	35	37	147
Wadebridge	11	6	3	2	0	0	33	38	143
St Austell	11	5	4	2	0	0	28	42	132
Redruth	11	5	4	2	0	0	30	36	128
Truro	11	5	4	2	0	0	29	33	124
Werrington	11	4	6	1	0	0	28	32	106
Helston	11	2	6	3	0	0	29	35	102
Camborne	11	2	6	2	0	1	28	33	100
St Just	11	2	6	3	0	0	27	35	100

DERBYSHIRE

Denby 228-8 (A Haleem 58) beat Alrewas 181 (J Islam 77) by 47 runs

Ockbrook & Borrowash 125 lost to Belper Meadows 126-4 by 6 wickets

Rollleston 131-5 beat Dunstall 128 by 5 wickets

Sawley 24 (D Wheelton 7-16) lost to Sandiacre Town 192 (R All 60) by 168 runs

Spondon 125 lost to Alvaston & Boulton 265-5 (M Wagstaff 125) by 140 runs

Swarkestone 111 (S Patel 5-36) lost to Cutthorpe 237-8 (J Powell 79) by 126 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	Td	C	Ab	L	BP	Pen	Pts
Alvaston & B'tn	13	10	0	0	0	3	19	0	239
O'b'r'k & B'wash	13	9	0	0	1	3	12	0	216
Swarkestone	13	8	0	1	0	4	21	0	203
Sandiacre Town	13	8	0	1	0	4	19	0	201
Denby	13	7	0	1	0	5	14	0	174
Spondon	13	6	0	1	0	6	34	0	172
Cutthorpe	13	6	1	2	0	4	20	0	170
Rollleston	13	5	1	1	0	6	29	0	151
Alrewas	13	5	0	0	0	8	40	0	150
Sawley	13	3	0	1	0	9	47	0	119
Belper Meadows	13	3	0	0	0	10	38	0	104
Dunstall	13	2	0	1	0	10	38	0	88

DEVON

Bovey Tracey v Heathcoat - match abandoned

Bradninch & Kentisbeare v Sidmouth - match abandoned

Cornwood v Plympton - match abandoned

Exeter v Exmouth - match abandoned

Sandford v Paignton - match abandoned

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	T/A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts	
Bradninch & K'beare	12	10	1	0	1	42	53	0	203
Sandford	12	9	2	0	1	47	49	0	194
Exmouth	12	7	3	0	2	39	43	0	168
Exeter	12	6	4	0	2	40	45	0	161
Cornwood	12	6	4	0	2	36	46	0	158
Sidmouth	12	5	6	0	1	39	39	0	136
Heathcoat	12	4	7	0	1	39	37	0	124
Paignton	12	3	8	0	1	32	43	0	113
Bovey Tracey	12	2	9	0	1	31	35	0	94
Plympton CC	12	1	9	0	2	30	19	0	73

DORSET

Broadstone 88-3 (N Cherry 51) v Bere Regis - match abandoned

Poole Town v Sherborne 126-2 - match abandoned

Wimborne v Dorchester 58-1 - match abandoned

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	D	L	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Ave
Dorchester	9	6	0	0	3	17	20	10	18.50
Wimborne	9	5	2	1	1	16	22	0	14.00
Bere Regis	9	3	1	2	3	25	27	0	14.00

Poole Town	9	4	0	4	1	17	25	0	13.25
Sherborne	9	2	1	5	1	27	29	0	10.13
Broadstone	9	1	0	7	1	15	20	0	6.88

EAST ANGLIAN

Ashmanhaugh and Barton Wanderers 277-8 (J Everett 103) drew with Horsford 275-8 (N Hornbuckle 68)

Great Witchingham 273 (J Weatherald 73) beat Swardston 175 by 98 runs

Saffron Walden 173 (K Cariappa 5-57) lost to Mildenhall 174-8 (J Tetley 78) by 2 wickets

Sawston and Babraham 197-2 9C Guest 86) beat Copdock & Old Ipswichian 195 (J Vandeppeer 6-56) by 8 wickets

Sudbury 255 (M De Silva 85, A Wijesuriya 6-52) lost to Frinton On Sea 261-6 (C Bennett 51) by 4 wickets

Witham 264-8 (L Georgeson 100) drew with Bury St Edmunds 219-9 (B Whittaker 51)

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	C	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Mildenhall	14	7	3	1	0	3	21	14	0	234
C'dock & O'chian	14	7	2	1	0	4	15	10	0	231
Horsford	14	6	3	1	2	2	29	8	0	218
Sawston and B'ham 14	6	2	4	0	2	19	19	0	214	
Swardston	14	6	3	0	3	2	18	11	0	214
Bury St Edmunds	14	6	2	2	2	2	8	12	0	204
Great Witchingham	14	4	6	1	1	2	19	27	0	170
Sudbury	14	2	4	3	2	3	32	21	0	147
A'haugh & B'on W	14	2	6	4	1	1	37	26	0	138
Witham	14	2	6	2	2	2	29	24	0	137
Saffron Walden	14	2	8	0	2	2	26	25	0	125
Frinton On Sea	14	1	6	2	3	2	34	22	2	119

ESSEX

Brentwood 246-1 (E Ballard 106) beat Frinton On Sea 243-8 (J Wagstaff 87) by 9 wickets

Buckhurst Hill 80 (K Velani 7-29) lost to Wanstead & Snaresbrook 81-3 by 7 wickets

Hornchurch 201-3 (L Edwards 92) beat Colchester and East Essex 198-9 (M Jones 69, H Hankins 5-43) by 7 wickets

Hutton 197-3 (C Tredgett 101) beat Chingford 193 (J Koop 66) by 7 wickets

Loughton 184 (B Waring 5-31) lost to Chelmsford 195 (G Saini 5-43) by 11 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D/T/C	
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Bradford top three all in with a shout

LEAGUE LEADERS Jer Lane, champions Woodlands and third place New Farnley all recorded wins last weekend to stay in contention to take the Bradford Premier League title.

Jer Lane defeated Pudsey St Lawrence by 25 runs, bowling them out for 209 to defend 234-8. Ex England Under-19s batter Mosun Hussain top scored with 90 as leg-spinner Archie Scott took 4-82, before Adal Islam bagged 4-31 to help dismiss Pudsey in the 48th over. Jonty Mighell's 54 went in vain for the Saints.

Woodlands stormed to a convincing 132-run victory over Undercliffe, closing the gap between them and Jer Lane to six points.

Woodlands posted 260-7, an innings headlined by a 24-ball 69 from Muhammad Bilal, including eight sixes, while there were also half-centuries for Thomas Clee (53) and Sam Frankland (51).

Spinners Simon Lambert (3-47) and Jude Roberts (3-60) shared six wickets between them for Undercliffe.

In response, Undercliffe were bowled out for 128 as Thomas Clee ripped through their batting lineup to finish with 7-44.

New Farnley are 16 points off the top of the table after demolishing Pudsey Congs by 215 runs.

Skipper Alex Lilley made 112

and Steven Bullen 90 in New Farnley's total of 340-6. Adam Pearson (3-72) and left-arm wrist spinner Sam Wisniewski (3-92) both bagged three for Congs.

Farnley's total proved more than enough as another former England Under-19 international, Gurman Randhawa, took 4-42 as Congs were 125 all out.



Skip: New Farnley captain Alex Lilley made a hundred

PICTURE: Ray Spencer

Wagstaff in the runs for Derbyshire leaders



Scourge of Spondon: Mitch Wagstaff scored a ton

PICTURE: Alamy

DERBYSHIRE ALL-ROUNDER Mitchell Wagstaff struck a ton for Derbyshire County League leaders Alvaston & Boulton in their 140-run win over Spondon.

Wagstaff hit 125 from 127 balls in Alvaston & Boulton's 265-5 before picking up 2-19 with his leg-breaks as Spondon were bowled out for 125.

Seasoned all-rounder Garry Park, formerly of Durham and Derbyshire, led the way with the ball for Alvaston & Boulton, picking up 4-38 to see Spondon all out in the 32nd over.

Spondon will be sick of the sight of Wagstaff this season, the 20-year-old having scored 82 and taken 4-29 against them back in May.

Alvaston & Boulton are 23 points clear of second place Ockbrook & Borrowwash who dropped points after losing to Belper Meadows by six wickets.

Ockbrook & Borrowwash were bowled out for 125, Belper Meadows comfortably reaching their target with 15.3 overs to spare.

Bradshaw	14	4	10	0	0	0	-1.40	20
Westhoughton	14	3	9	0	2	0	-1.23	19
Woodbank	14	0	12	0	2	0	-0.98	4

HERTFORDSHIRE

Harpden 283 (A Neal 75) beat Bishop's Stortford 218 (J Hawkins 51, H Seagrave 6-51) by 65 runs
Hertford 212 (B Eustance 58, I Saxena 5-41) beat Totteridge Millhillians 98 (A Carlson 7-47) by 114 runs
North Mymms 159-6 beat Shenley Village 153 (W Thomson 50, W Jones 6-36) by 4 wickets

Potters Bars 121 (J Wickham 5-65) drew with Old Owens 120-9
Radlett 249-8 (K Toor 106) drew with West Herts 183-9

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Harpden	11	9	1	0	1	0	7	0	263
Potters Bar	11	7	2	1	1	8	13	0	228
North Mymms	11	7	3	0	1	7	16	0	224
West Herts	11	5	3	1	2	17	16	0	182
Radlett	11	5	4	1	1	18	16	0	181
Totteridge M'illians	11	5	4	0	2	10	20	0	167
Hertford	11	3	6	1	1	21	23	0	135
Bishop's S'ford	11	2	6	0	3	28	25	0	98
Old Owens	11	2	7	1	1	7	21	0	84
Shenley Village	11	1	9	0	1	22	20	0	78

HOME COUNTIES

Aston Rowant 233-7 (B Le Bas 57) beat Wokingham 232-9 (S Khan 87) by 3 wickets
Banbury 109-7 drew with Datchet 297-7 (J Thomas 94)
Great Brickhill 130 (J Carter 52, C Haddow 5-29) lost to High Wycombe 133-6 (E Callis 78*, N Kavikara 5-54) by 4 wickets
Henley 157-9 drew with Oxford Downs 258-8 (W Watts 80)

Wargrave 240-8 (R Lewis 87) drew with Finchampstead 320-8 (C Britz 131, E Woods 5-64)

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	NR	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Finchampstead	11	5	2	2	0	15	32	0	173
High Wycombe	11	5	2	3	0	13	30	0	164
Henley	11	5	2	2	1	8	25	0	163
Aston Rowant	11	4	2	3	1	14	31	0	152
Wargrave	11	4	3	2	1	11	26	0	147
Oxford Downs	11	4	3	3	0	17	39	8	144
Great Brickhill	11	3	4	2	1	18	37	0	135
Datchet	11	3	4	2	1	18	27	1	129
Banbury	11	2	5	3	1	16	34	0	111
Wokingham	11	0	8	3	0	21	41	1	67

KENT

Bexley 257-7 (M Stiddard 84) beat Minster (Sheppey) 103 by 154 runs
Blackheath 183-5 (M Golding 78*, R Smith 5-17) beat Sandwich Town 181 (R Smith 67, A Bhuiyan 5-40) by 5 wickets
Lordswood 120 (I Baharami 5-38) beat Bickley Park 113 by 7 runs
St Lawrence & Highland Court 235-7 (W Hilton 51) beat Canterbury 234-7 (B Marsh 50) by 3 wickets
Tunbridge Wells 72 lost to Hayes 78-4 by 6 wickets

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Minster	11	9	2	0	0	1	7	0	170
Hayes	11	8	3	0	0	8	7	0	159
St L'rence & H Ct	11	6	5	0	0	17	11	0	136
Lordswood	11	5	5	0	1	12	12	0	123
Blackheath	11	5	5	0	1	10	13	0	122
Bexley	11	4	6	0	0	16	28	0	118
Sandwich Town	11	4	7	0	0	24	17	0	113
Tunbridge Wells	11	5	6	0	0	10	13	0	113
Canterbury	11	3	7	0	1	25	16	0	104
Bickley Park	11	3	6	0	2	13	15	0	100

LANCASHIRE

Burnley 131-3 (D Pickup 61*) beat Middleton 130 (J Price 67, O Erasmus 5-20) by 7 wickets
Clitheroe 67-1 beat Rochdale 66 by 9 wickets
Darwen 94-0 (S Friend 54*) beat Enfield 91 by 10 wickets
Littleborough 156 (D Salpietro 6-42) lost to Lowerhouse 227-6 (F Haasbroek 100*) by 71 runs
Norden 130-5 beat Haslingden 128 by 5 wickets
Todmorden 178 (E Moore 53, A Bentley 5-70) lost to Church & Oswaldtwistle 236-6 (Z Abbas 68) by 58 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	T	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Darwen	14	12	1	0	0	1	0	17	0	142
Burnley	14	9	3	0	1	1	9	16	1	126
Lowerhouse	14	8	4	0	0	2	0	19	0	109
Norden	14	7	5	0	0	2	4	12	0	96
Rochdale	14	7	5	0	0	2	0	16	0	96
Clitheroe	14	6	6	0	0	2	5	18	0	93
Todmorden	14	7	6	0	0	1	5	12	0	92
Middleton	14	5	7	0	0	2	1	6	0	67
Littleborough	14	4	8	0	0	2	3	6	0	59
Haslingden	14	3	8	0	1	2	0	11	0	58
Ch'ch & O'twistle	14	2	10	0	0	2	10	13	0	53
Enfield	14	2	9	0	0	3	3	13	0	51

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND

Cropston 115 lost to Newtown Linford 116-2 by 8 wickets
Kibworth 238-3 (M Craven 93*) beat Sibley Town 235-8 (J Winterton 64*) by 7 wickets
Leicester Ivanhoe 112-2 beat Loughborough 111 by 8 wickets
Lutterworth 208 lost to Langtons 209 by 1 run
Oakham 303 (R Taylor 92) beat Houghton & Thumby 300 (A Reynoldson 108*) by 3 runs
Rothley Park 307-8 (S Patel 193) beat Barrow Town 173 (D Arvind 68) by 134 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	T	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Rothley Park	14	11	3	0	0	14	12	0	301
Lutterworth	14	9	3	1	1	18	12	0	278
Leicester Ivanhoe	14	9	4	0	1	27	15	0	275
Newtown Linford	14	8	4	0	2	9	18	0	243
Sibley Town	14	7	4	1	2	18	15	0	239
Kibworth	14	7	6	0	1	31	26	0	237
H'ton & Thumby	14	6	7	0	1	36	27	0	221
Oakham	14	5	7	0	2	27	34	0	202
Cropston	14	6	5	0	3	4	22	0	200
Langtons	14	3	10	0	1	42	45	0	170
L'borough Town	14	4	9	0	1	25	39	3	169
Barrow Town	14	0	13	0	1	37	55	1	99

LINCOLNSHIRE

Bourne 256-4 (J Cheer 112*) beat Nettleham 251-6 (R Yarwood-Paintal 53) by 4 wickets
Bracebridge Heath 84 lost to Lindum 164 by 80 runs
Grantham 249 (Q Haider 52) lost to Scunthorpe Town 278-8 (P Khanduri 111*) by 29 runs
Market Deeping 221 (H Niazi 85) lost to Spalding 321-9 (D Vaseeharan 124) by 100 runs
Sleaford 243-5 (D Smith 75) beats Grimsby Town 242-7 (N Snell 67) by 5 wickets
Woodhall Spa 301-9 (M Carter 86) beat Long Sutton 76 (P Jaywardene 5-30) by 225 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	T	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Lindum	14	10	2	1	0	11	53	2	228
Woodhall Spa	14	9	3	1	1	15	53	0	219
S'thorpe Town	14	9	2	0	3	7	47	0	213
Grantham	14	8	3	0	3	15	43	0	202
Bourne	14	8	5	0	1	19	45	0	192
Sleaford	14	8	5	1	0	15	43	0	186
B'bridge Heath	14	6	6	0	2	11	46	0	163
Market Deeping	14	5	9	0	0	22	38	0	143
Nettleham	14	5	8	0	1	20	35	0	137
Spalding	14	2	9	0	3	19	30	0	103
Grimsby Town	14	0	9	0	5	27	16	0	83
Long Sutton	14	1	10	0	3	22	19	0	80

28 ECB PREMIER LEAGUES

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT

New Brighton 166-8 (D Silva 89*, G Burrows 5-48) beat Formby 163-5 dec (I Cockbain 86*) by 2 wickets

Northern 161-4 dec beat Birkenhead Park 76 (A Vincent 5-36) by 85 runs

Ormskirk 190-8 (G Knight 77*) beat Wigan 158 (A Miakheil 77) by 32 runs

Rainhill 75-1 beat Leigh 73 by 9 wickets

Southport & Birkdale 203-6 dec (J Stanley 63) drew with Rainford 142-3 (P Farrar 63*)

Wallasey 164-6 dec (G Beaver 77) beat Newton-le-Willows 152 by 12 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Ormskirk	13	9	1	2	1	31	15	0	231
Northern	13	9	1	2	1	21	20	0	226
Rainford	13	7	2	2	2	25	23	0	198
Wallasey	13	6	5	2	1	10	34	0	169
Formby	13	5	7	0	1	25	28	0	158
Newton-le-Willows	13	5	6	1	1	16	22	0	143
Rainhill	13	5	4	2	2	9	15	0	134
Wigan	13	3	6	2	1	17	27	0	134
Leigh	13	4	7	1	1	11	19	0	115
Southport & B'dale	13	3	6	3	1	20	29	0	114
Birkenhead Park	13	3	8	0	1	10	33	0	108
New Brighton	13	2	9	1	1	10	29	10	74

MIDDLESEX

Bronesbury 176 (J Hughes 5-49) beat North Middlesex 88 (A Patel 5-34) by 88 runs

Crouch End 252 (S Patel 92) lost to Stanmore 255 (R Ratnakumar 64) by 3 runs

Ealing 181-9 drew with Hornsey 252-8 (H Killoran 66*)

Finchley 199-8 (M McGowan 63, A Easton 5-74) drew with Shepherds Bush 243-9 (L Matthews 64)

Teddington 98 lost to Richmond 244-8 dec by 146 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	D	L	C	A	T	Pen	Pts
North Middlesex	11	7	0	2	0	2	0	0	80
Crouch End	11	7	1	3	0	0	0	5	73
Shepherds Bush	11	6	2	3	0	0	0	0	72
Ealing	11	5	3	2	0	1	0	0	68
Teddington	11	5	0	4	0	2	0	0	61
Richmond	11	4	1	5	0	1	0	1	48
Hornsey	11	2	3	5	0	1	0	0	41
Stanmore	11	2	2	6	0	1	0	0	36
Finchley	11	1	4	5	0	1	0	0	27
Bronesbury	11	2	0	8	0	1	0	5	25

NORTH EAST

Ashington 184-3 (J McCarthy 63*) beat South Northumberland 181 (S Tindale 80) by 7 wickets

Benwell Hill 210-6 (A Heather 59) drew with Chester-Le-Street 319-7 dec (A Smith 162)

Burnopfield 179 (J Oswell 59) beat Castle Eden 133 (A Ulhaq 5-58) by 46 runs

Felling 218-9 dec (S Allison 83) lost to Newcastle 223-4 (A Hart 80*) by 6 wickets

Sunderland 146 (C Coulthard 53, G Bridge 6-30) lost to Burnmoor 147-7 by 3 wickets

Tynedale 125 (J Moores 6-34) lost to Tynemouth 128-2 (M Kimmitt 82*) by 8 wickets

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	D	L	A	C	BP	Pen	Pts
Burnmoor	13	8	0	0	3	2	37	0	224
Ashington	13	7	0	3	3	0	50	0	203
Tynemouth	13	5	2	2	3	0	35	0	177
Chester Le Street	13	5	1	3	3	1	42	0	174
Sunderland	13	5	0	4	3	1	41	0	163
Burnopfield	13	5	0	4	2	2	40	0	156
Felling	13	4	0	5	3	1	56	0	154
South North'land	13	4	0	5	2	2	40	0	151
Newcastle	13	3	0	6	2	2	54	0	137
Tynedale	13	3	1	6	3	0	33	0	104
Castle Eden	13	2	1	7	3	0	22	0	99
Benwell Hill	13	1	1	7	3	1	38	0	86

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE & SOUTH CHESHIRE

Audley 183-7 (F Riaz 97*) lost to J G Meakin 188-5 by 5 wickets

Burslem 127 lost to Checkley 131-7 (A Shaw 6-45) by 3 wickets

Cheadle 268-6 dec (A Coxon 61) drew with Bagnall Norton 118-7

Leek 135-7 (A Mellor 70*) beat Hem Heath 131 (L Banks 80, R Corden 5-45) by 3 wickets

Moddershall & Oulton 160-9 v Porthill Park 51-0 - match abandoned

Stone SP 130-3 drew with Longton 235-6 (A Jotin 68)

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Leek	14	10	3	1	0	15	15	2	239
Porthill Park	14	9	3	0	2	16	16	1	229
Checkley	14	9	3	1	1	16	14	4	220
Stone SP	14	7	5	2	0	28	20	0	207
Hem Heath	14	8	5	0	1	8	18	0	197
J G Meakin	14	6	6	2	0	32	23	0	197
Mudd' & Oulton	14	7	4	1	2	22	22	0	197
Bagnall Norton	14	7	4	2	1	21	23	0	189
Cheadle	13	3	7	2	1	40	24	0	139
Longton	14	3	7	4	0	42	31	0	150
Audley	14	2	11	1	0	44	37	0	124
Burslem	14	0	13	1	0	51	33	0	88

NORTH WALES

Brymbo 139 (C Taylor 64, O Reilly 5-27) lost to Bangor 143-4 by 6 wickets

Gresford 105 lost to Northop 170-6 by 65 runs

Llandudno 151-8 v Gwersyllt Park - match abandoned

Mochdre 152-6 (M Humphreys 58*) v Menai Bridge - match abandoned

St Asaph v Denbigh 233-3 (S Lewis 85) - match abandoned

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	T	C	A	B	Pen	Pts
Mochdre	10	8	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	115
Northop	10	6	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	98
Brymbo	10	5	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	84
St Asaph	10	5	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	82
Bangor	10	4	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	69
Denbigh	10	4	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	67
Menai Bridge	10	5	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	67
Gwersyllt Park	10	4	5	0	0	1	0	1	56	
Gresford	10	1	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	28
Llandudno	10	1	8	0	0	1	0	4	25	

NORTH YORKSHIRE & SOUTH DURHAM

Barnard Castle 108 (A Wardell 7-43) beat Marton 98 by 10 runs

Hartlepool 144-4 (H Crawshaw 72*) beat Normanby Hall 143 (J Salahuddin 60, M Maloy 5-31) by 6 wickets

Middlesbrough 104-6 beat Darlington 103 by 4 wickets

Richmondshire 161-3 (R Carr 69*) beat Bishop Auckland 160 (C George 54, S Ghafari 5-28) by 7 wickets

Saltburn 173 (R Midgley 54) beat Darlington RA 118 (H Bukhari 8-54) by 55 runs

Stockton 232-4 (A Hickey 117*) beat Stokesley 212 (J Weighell 64) by 20 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	T	D	NR	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Richmondshire	13	10	1	0	1	1	6	4	0	249
Hartlepool	13	6	1	0	2	3	13	10	0	205
Stockton	13	6	1	0	3	3	14	14	0	192
Marton	13	6	1	0	1	5	7	12	0	181
Stokesley	13	4	6	0	1	2	21	20	0	159
Saltburn	13	4	4	0	2	3	17	20	0	156
Barnard Castle	12	4	5	0	0	3	17	19	0	149
Middlesbrough	13	4	6	0	1	2	18	21	0	146
Bishop Auckland	13	3	7	0	2	1	26	26	0	135
Darlington RA	12	4	7	0	0	1	15	16	0	127
Darlington	13	2	9	0	0	2	23	28	0	103
Normanby Hall	13	1	7	0	1	4	21	11	0	85

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

No fixtures - T20 break

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	NR	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Finedon Dolben	9	6	0	3	0	9	6	0	171

Oundle Town	9	5	2	2	0	4	13	0	136
P'borough Town	9	4	3	2	0	17	16	0	131
D'borough Town	9	3	2	4	0	16	16	0	123
Brigstock	9	4	4	1	0	11	9	0	116
Geddington	9	5	3	1	0	9	10	20	116
K'bury Temperance	9	4	4	1	0	9	13	0	109
R'den & Higham T	9	3	5	1	0	7	8	0	81
Old N'ptonians	9	1	7	1	0	15	15	0	63
Wollaston	9	1	6	2	0	14	21	0	63

NORTHERN

Blackpool 48-1 v Leyland 161-8 - match abandoned

Fleetwood 37-3 v Fulwood and Broughton 205 (Rosbottom 84, Amor 5-46) - match abandoned

Garstang 117-6 drew with Chorley 174-7 (Childs 56)

Longridge 251-4 (Platt 67*) drew with Netherfield 186-6 (Vernon 55*)

Mawdesley 102-6 drew with Settle 164

St Annes 298-4 (De Silva 151) beat Euxton 80 by 218 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D/T	NR	A	BP	Pen	Pts
Fleetwood	15	9	1	3	0	2	16	0	174
Chorley	15	7	3	2	1	2	12	0	139
Leyland	15	6	3	3	0	3	21	0	139
Kendal	14	6	4	3	0	1	24	0	132
Longridge	15	5	5	2	1	1	23	0	130
Blackpool	15	6	3	0	1	5	8	0	128
Netherfield	15	7	5	2	1	1	12	0	127
Garstang	14	5	4	2	0	3	23	5	115
F'wood & B'ton	15	5	5	2	0	3	17	15	99
Settle	15	3	7	1	1	3	15	0	91
Euxton	15	2	6	3	2	2	15	0	78
St Annes	15	2	10	2	0	1	25	6	56
Mawdesley	15	1	10	2	0	1	22	5	45

Weather can't dampen first NPLC weekend

HOW MANY first-class or List A games were played last weekend? Quite simply, none.

By a quirk of the calendar, the competitive cricketing landscape for the weekend was left totally to the 32 ECB Premier League's to deliver high quality cricket up and down the country, which in the best part they did as always, except for in those areas where the rain intervened (again).

With no play whatsoever in the Cornwall, Devon, and Dorset leagues, together with abandonments throughout the South Wales, Southern, and West of England leagues, it was left to the leagues in the Midlands, the North and the East to provide the entertainment and headline makers.

140 games were played in total across the National Premier

League Cricket Weekend with 28 tons scored and 54 five-fors taken around the country.

Leading those headline makers was Sunny Patel in the Leicestershire & Rutland League who hit 193 off 165 balls, one of the highest Premier League scores of the season, in Rothley Park's comfortable win over Barrow Turn to maintain their lead at the head of the table.

Patel is now second in their league's batting table behind Sam Evans, who with 839 runs is the leading run scorer across all 32 Premier Leagues. Evans continued his brilliant form with 132 not out last Sunday in Lincolnshire's defeat of Nottinghamshire in their NCCA showcase game.

The best bowling of the weekend went to Ishan Abeysekara in the Yorkshire Premier League North.

He couldn't repeat his season's best of 9-30 but did take 8-41 in 12 overs in Harrogate's win over Stamford Bridge. Ishan now has 39 wickets for the season but is a little behind league leader David Wainwright who has 47 wickets for Castleford.

Another notable performance was former India batter Mandeep Singh making 107 for Hull Zingari on debut just 48 hours after arriving in the country.

And spare a thought for Sawley in the Derbyshire Premier League, who were bowled out for just 24 by their local rivals Sandiacre with Dan Wheeldon taking a very impressive 7-16 in just seven overs – slightly better than the miserable 14 they were bowled out in June by Rolleston though. **Ian Livo • The Premier League Cricket Show**



Strong start: Mandeep Singh scored a century on debut for Hull Zingari
PICTURE: Alamy

SOUTHERN

Basingstoke & North Hants 212 (B Neal 89) lost to Alton 216-2 (Harris 94) by 8 wickets

Hampshire Academy 44-2 v Burridge 187 - match abandoned

Havant 246-9 (Clayton 71) drew with Bashley (Rydal) 62-6

Lymington 24-1 v Bournemouth 192 (Rogers 67, Berg 6-23) - match abandoned

South Wits 48-5 v St Cross Symondians 323-5 dec (McKenzie 95*) - match abandoned

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Ave
Bashley	12	7	1	2	2	31	42	0	16.50
Hants Academy	12	6	1	1	4	31	34	5	16.00
South Wits	12	6	3	0	3	26	42	0	15.56
Burridge	12	4	4	1	3	22	37	0	12.78
St Cross S'dians	12	3	3	4	2	31	41	0	12.70
Bournemouth	12	3	3	2	4	19	28	0	11.88
Lymington	12	5	5	1	1	25	31	0	11.64
Alton	12	3	7	0	2	28	38	0	10.20
B'stoke & N Hants	12	3	6	1	2	24	37	0	9.40
Havant	12	2	7	2	1	26	34	0	9.09

SURREY

Ashtead 194 (Young 87) beat Guildford 145 by 49 runs

Reigate Priory 187 (Crosthwaite 60, Dahl 54) beat East Molesey 98 (Sheat 5-40) by 89 runs

Sutton 140-6 beat Sunbury 139 (Jackson 6-38) by 4 wickets

Weybridge 281-3 dec (Tilley 87*, Van Der Merwe 83) beat Banstead 271 (Gill 78) by 10 runs

Wimbledon 182-7 (Sewell 58*) drew with Esher 274-5 dec (Wyllie 91)

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	T	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Reigate Priory	11	6	1	1	3	5	3	0	0	164
East Molesey	11	6	3	1	1	2	8	0	0	154
Wimbledon	11	6	3	1	1	4	5	0	0	149
Esher	11	4	2	3	2	19	9	0	0	138
Ashtead	11	5	5	0	1	5	6	0	0	125
Sutton	11	4	4	2	1	13	10	0	0	113
Banstead	11	3	5	2	1	21	12	0	0	111
Guildford	11	3	5	1	2	16	11	0	0	105
Sunbury	11	3	5	2	1	17	6	0	0	101
Weybridge	11	1	8	1	1	11	10	0	0	53

SUSSEX

Cuckfield 290 (Rogers 118) lost to Horsham 294-5 (Goodwin 122) by 5 wickets

East Grinstead 151 (Riley 50*, Morgan 7-49) lost to Hastings & St Leonards Priory 152-3 (Scowen 78*) by 7 wickets

Middleton 225-3 (Wood 64*) beat Bognor Regis 222 (Dabinett-Jays 88*) by 7 wickets

Roffey 246-4 (Davies 115*) beat Worthing 245 (Macmillan 80) by 6 wickets

Three Bridges 206 (Boyle 53, Faith 5-34) lost to Preston Nomads 209-6 (Herft 53) by 4 wickets

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	D	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Preston Nomads	11	8	1	1	1	7	12	0	269
Three Bridges	11	7	3	0	1	18	12	0	250
Cuckfield	11	6	3	2	0	34	29	0	243
Horsham	11	5	2	0	3	11	24	0	215
Middleton	11	5	6	0	0	40	16	0	206
Bognor Regis	11	4	5	1	1	27	32	0	189
Roffey	11	4	5	1	1	28	26	0	184
East Grinstead	11	4	5	0	2	17	22	0	179
H'gs & St L Priory	11	4	5	1	1	32	13	0	165
Worthing	11	0	11	0	0	44	23	0	77

WEST OF ENGLAND

Bath v Bristol 254-7 (Heaphy 130, Shaw 54) - match abandoned

Bishopston 119-3 (Shetty 65*) beat Burbage & Easton Royal 143-3 by 7 wickets DLS

Bridgwater 164 (Taylor 55) v Bedminster 37-0 - match abandoned

Frocester 158 (Simon 6-27) lost to Potterne 154-5 (Akram 103*) by 5 wickets DLS

Taunton St Andrews 194-6 (Galman-Findlay 55) v Lansdown 29-2 - match abandoned

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	C	A/Bt	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Bridgwater	12	9	2	1	3	7	0	0	198
Bath	12	8	2	2	7	8	0	0	189
Bristol	12	6	4	2	14	9	0	0	160
Potterne	12	6	6	0	10	18	8	0	157
B'bage & E'n Royal	12	5	5	2	22	17	0	0	151
Taunton St A'ws	12	5	6	1	23	22	0	0	151
Bedminster	12	5	5	2	12	22	0	0	146
Lansdown	12	4	7	1	22	29	0	2	135
Bishopston	12	5	7	0	13	21	0	0	134
Frocester	12	1	10	1	24	34	12	0	96

YORKSHIRE NORTH

Driffield Town 162 (Kelly 55) lost to Castleford 163-7 by 3 wickets

Harrogate 118-2 (Thompson 52*) beat Stamford Bridge 115 (Abeysekara 8-41) by 8 wickets

Hull Zingari 277-7 (Singh 107) beat Easingwold 252 (Skilbeck 62) by 25 runs

Scarborough 168-9 lost to Sheriff Hutton 169 by 1 run

Sessay 232 (Jackson 90) lost to Woodhouse Grange 233-5 (Hall 96*) by 5 wickets

York 227-8 (Snell 100) lost to Clifton Alliance 283-7 (Wade 98) by 56 runs

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	T	A	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts
Clifton Alliance	14	13	1	0	0	0	0	0	130
Castleford	14	12	2	0	0	2	0	0	122
Harrogate	14	9	3	0	2	2	2	0	102
W'house Grange	14	6	5	0	3	3	6	0	84
Sheriff H'n Bridge	14	6	3	1	3	6	0	0	83
York	14	6	4	0	4	2	2	0	80
Driffield Town	14	5	7	0	2	8	2	0	68
Sessay	14	3	6	0	5	2	4	0	56
Scarborough	14	3	9	0	2	10	6	0	54
Hull Zingari	14	3	9	1	1	6	8	0	53
Stamford Bridge	14	3	9	0	2	2	0	0	40
Easingwold	14	1	11	0	2	18	0	0	36

YORKSHIRE SOUTH

Cleethorpes 110-6 (Jackson 5-55) beat Barnsley Woolley Miners 109 (Mishra 6-37) by 4 wickets

Doncaster Town 260-6 (Bhatia 131) beat Sheffield Collegiate 209 (Choudhry 65) by 51 runs

Elsecar 167 (Aziz 5-26) lost to Cawthorne 239-6 (Aziz 73) by 72 runs

Shiregreen 48 (Fisher 5-16) lost to Tickhill 49-0 by 10 wickets

Treeton 217-8 (Drury 77) lost to Wakefield Thomes 221-4 (Billings 64) by 6 wickets

Whitley Hall 154 lost to Appleby Frodingham 155-4 (Lindley 58) by 6 wickets

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	L	NR	Bt	Bl	Pen	Pts	
Tickhill	13	9	0	2	2	4	4	0	124
Cleethorpes	13	9	0	2	2	0	6	0	122
Wakefield Thomes	13	8	0	3	2	10	6	0	120
Doncaster Town	13	8	0	4	1	10	4	0	114
Whitley Hall	13	6	0	4	2	6	0	0	92
Appleby F'dingham	13	5	0	6	2	18	4	0	90
Sheffield C'giate	13	4	0	5	4	16	8	0	88
Cawthorne	13	4	0	7	2	10	6	0	72
Barnsley W Miners	13	4	0	7	2	12	4	0	70
Shiregreen	13	4	0	8	1	0	16	0	68
Treeton	13	3	0	9	1	2	11	0	53
Elsecar	13	2	0	9	2	10	10	0	52

30 ROUND THE WORLD

Cassell takes record figures on debut

SCOTLAND SEAMER Charlie Cassell had an ODI debut to remember, taking figures of 7-21 against Oman in Dundee.

Oman were dismissed for 91, a total that Scotland chased down easily with eight wickets in hand.

Cassell broke the record for best figures on men's ODI debut that was previously held by Kagiso Rabada who took 6-16 against Bangladesh in 2015.

Freedom to face Unicorns in MLC final

WASHINGTON FREEDOM will take on San Francisco Unicorns in the final of this year's edition of Major League Cricket in Dallas tonight, with Aussie stars Travis Head, Steve Smith and Glenn Maxwell facing off against their Test captain Pat Cummins.

Freedom are favourites having defeated Unicorns by seven wickets in the Qualifier, but Unicorns bounced back to beat Texas Super Kings by 10 runs in the Challenger match and earn a spot in the final.

Finn Allen will be the big wicket for the Freedom to take, the Kiwi batter having blasted a ton in the Challenger, hitting 101 from 53 balls.

Global T20 underway in Canada

THERE ARE currently two franchise tournaments happening simultaneously in North America with the Global T20 Canada having kicked off in Brampton on Thursday.

The tournament will briefly run alongside the USA's Major League Cricket which will come to a conclusion on Sunday with international stars such as Travis Head and Glenn Maxwell expected to take centre stage in the final in Dallas.

Vancouver Knights won the inaugural Global T20 Canada back in 2018 before Winnipeg Hawks beat them in a super-over in the final the following year. The pandemic then saw the tournament shelved until 2023, with Montreal Tigers taking the crown when the competition returned. There was talk of the 2021 edition being relocated to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, but it never came to fruition due to evolving COVID concerns and regulations put in place by the Malaysian government.

The opening match of this year's edition saw Toronto Nationals easily beat Vancouver Knights by eight wickets. Canadian international leg-spinner Junaid Siddiqui took

4-25 as a Vancouver lineup including Usman Khawaja and Reeza Hendricks were dismissed for 110.

Colin Munro (44) and Rassie van der Dussen (33*) then made light work of the run chase, getting Toronto home in the 15th over.

The Vancouver side included Mohammed Amir, who two days earlier turned out for Oval Invincibles in the opening match of the men's Hundred. The Pakistani left-armer was signed by Invincibles on a one-game deal and has been replaced at The Oval by Aussie Spencer Johnson.

Pakistani international trio Shaheen Shah Afridi, Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan had desires to play in Canada this year but the Pakistan Cricket Board refused them No-Objection Certificates (NOCs) "after consulting with the three players and the selection committee."

The reason behind this was Pakistan's packed international schedule over the next few months with all three players featuring for Pakistan in all three formats.

Other overseas players who will feature in this year's Global Canada T20 include Chris Lynn, Shakib Al Hasan, Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Odeon Smith, David Warner, Marcus Stoinis and Sumil Narine.



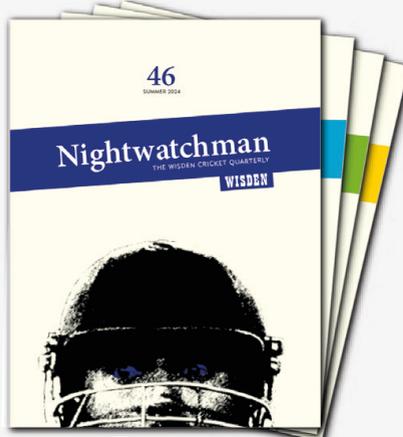
Global game: Steve Smith faces Tim Southee in the inaugural tournament in 2018

PICTURES: Alamy

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Standings

THE HUNDRED TABLES

MEN

	M	W	L	T	N/R	NRR	PT
1 Welsh Fire	1	1	0	0	0	+3.332	2
2 Trent Rockets	1	1	0	0	0	+2.35	2
3 Oval Invincibles	1	1	0	0	0	+2.289	2
4 Southern Brave	1	1	0	0	0	+0.909	2
5 Birmingham Phoenix	2	1	1	0	0	-0.981	2
6 London Spirit	2	0	2	0	0	-0.556	0
7 Northern Superchargers	1	0	1	0	0	-2.350	0
8 Manchester Originals	1	0	1	0	0	-3.332	0

WOMEN

	M	W	L	T	N/R	NRR	PT
1 London Spirit	2	2	0	0	0	+0.664	4
2 Oval Invincibles	1	1	0	0	0	+2.250	2
3 Welsh Fire	1	1	0	0	0	+0.444	2
4 Trent Rockets	1	1	0	0	0	+1.000	2
5 Southern Brave	1	0	1	0	0	-0.337	0
6 Manchester Originals	1	0	1	0	0	-0.444	0
7 Northern Superchargers	1	0	1	0	0	-1.000	0
8 Birmingham Phoenix	2	0	2	0	0	-1.625	0

ONE-DAY CUP TABLES

GROUP A

	M	W	L	T	N/R	NRR	PT
1 Derbyshire	2	2	0	0	0	+0.477	4
2 Worcestershire	1	1	0	0	0	+3.813	2
3 Hampshire	1	1	0	0	0	+1.420	2
4 Durham	1	1	0	0	0	+1.140	2
5 Somerset	1	1	0	0	0	+0.466	2
6 Kent	1	0	1	0	0	-0.466	0
7 Northamptonshire	2	0	2	0	0	-0.79	0
8 Lancashire	1	0	1	0	0	-1.14	0
9 Middlesex	2	0	2	0	0	-2.378	0

GROUP B

	M	W	L	T	N/R	NRR	PT
1 Warwickshire	2	2	0	0	0	+2.342	4
2 Glamorgan	1	1	0	0	0	+0.818	2
3 Yorkshire	1	1	0	0	0	+0.758	2
4 Nottinghamshire	2	1	1	0	0	+0.497	2
5 Leicestershire	2	1	1	0	0	-2.777	2
6 Essex	1	0	1	0	0	-0.401	0
7 Surrey	1	0	1	0	0	-0.758	0
8 Gloucestershire	1	0	1	0	0	-0.818	0
9 Sussex	1	0	1	0	0	-0.888	0

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP TABLES

DIVISION 1

	M	W	L	D	Bt	Bwl	Pt
1 Surrey	9	6	1	2	20	25	157
2 Somerset	9	3	1	5	21	25	134
3 Essex	9	4	2	3	17	23	128
4 Hampshire	9	3	1	5	15	19	120
5 Durham	9	2	2	5	14	17	102
6 Nottinghamshire	9	1	2	6	14	25	102
7 Lancashire	9	2	3	4	15	22	101
8 Warwickshire	9	0	3	6	24	24	96
9 Worcestershire	9	1	3	5	13	22	91
10 Kent	9	1	5	3	9	17	66

DIVISION 2

	M	W	L	D	Bt	Bwl	Pt
1 Sussex	9	5	1	3	24	25	150
2 Middlesex	9	3	1	5	18	21	127
3 Yorkshire	9	2	2	5	24	27	123
4 Leicestershire	9	1	1	7	22	21	115
5 Glamorgan	9	1	1	6	16	20	108
6 Gloucestershire	9	1	2	5	20	19	103
7 Northamptonshire	9	0	2	7	19	22	97
8 Derbyshire	9	0	3	6	14	17	78

Fixtures

MONDAY JULY 29

International

England v West Indies (3rd Test, Day 4 of 5, Edgbaston, 11am)

The Hundred

Manchester Originals Women v Trent Rockets Women (Old Trafford, 3pm)
Manchester Originals Men v Trent Rockets Men (Old Trafford, 6.35pm)

One Day Cup

Middlesex v Northamptonshire (Radlett, 11am)

TUESDAY JULY 30

International

England v West Indies (Day 5 of 5, 11am)

The Hundred

Northern Superchargers Men v Southern Brave Men (Headingley, 3pm)
Northern Superchargers Men v Southern Brave Men (Headingley, 6.35pm)

One Day Cup

Surrey v Gloucestershire (The Oval, 11am)

WEDNESDAY JULY 31

The Hundred

Trent Rockets Women v Birmingham Phoenix Women (Trent Bridge, 3pm)
Trent Rockets Men v Birmingham Phoenix Men (Trent Bridge, 6.30pm)

One Day Cup

Yorkshire v Sussex (York, 11am)
Glamorgan v Nottinghamshire (Neath, 11am)
Derbyshire v Lancashire (Derby, 11am)
Essex v Leicestershire (Chelmsford, 11am)
Durham v Somerset (Chester-le-Street, 11am)
Kent v Hampshire (Beckenham, 11am)

THURSDAY AUGUST 1

The Hundred

London Spirit Women v Welsh Fire Women (Lord's, 11.30am)
London Spirit Men v Welsh Fire Men (Lord's, 3pm)

FRIDAY AUGUST 2

The Hundred

Oval Invincibles Women v Northern Superchargers Women (The Oval, 11am)
Oval Invincibles Men v Northern Superchargers Men (The Oval, 6.30pm)

One Day Cup

Yorkshire v Gloucestershire (York, 11am)
Warwickshire v Surrey (TBC, 11am)
Glamorgan v Sussex (Neath, 11am)



Up for the cup: It's another big week of One-Day Cup clashes

Derbyshire v Worcestershire (Derby, 11am)
Durham v Northamptonshire (Chester-le-Street, 11am)
Somerset v Lancashire (Taunton, 11am)

SATURDAY AUGUST 3

The Hundred

Birmingham Phoenix Women v Southern Brave Women (Edgbaston, 11am)
Birmingham Phoenix Men v Southern Brave Men (Edgbaston, 2.30pm)
Trent Rockets Women v Welsh Fire Women (Trent Bridge, 2.30pm)
Trent Rockets Men v Welsh Fire Men (Trent Bridge, 6pm)

SUNDAY AUGUST 4

The Hundred

London Spirit Women v Oval Invincibles Women (Lord's, 11am)
London Spirit Men v Oval Invincibles Men (Lord's, 2.30pm)
Northern Superchargers Women v Manchester Originals Women (Headingley, 2.30pm)
Northern Superchargers Men v Manchester Originals Men (Headingley, 6pm)

One Day Cup

Gloucestershire v Sussex (Bristol, 11am)
Northamptonshire v Worcestershire (Northampton, 11am)
Essex v Glamorgan (Chelmsford, 11am)
Somerset v Derbyshire (Taunton, 11am)
Surrey v Nottinghamshire (Guildford, 11am)
Kent v Middlesex (Beckenham, 11am)
Hampshire v Lancashire (Southampton, 11am)
Sussex v Leicestershire (Hove, 11am)



Franchise action: The Hundred continues



Urgent reform needed on contaminants says player association

THE PCA and its affiliates the World Players Association (WPA) and the World Cricketers' Association (WCA) are reiterating calls for the World Anti-Doping Agency to revise its anti-doping rules and implement a fair and effective regime for known contaminants following the draconian sanctioning of English cricketer Chris Wright.

Wright was forced to accept a nine-month suspension for an inadvertent Adverse Analytical Finding arising from Ostarine, despite the panel

finding he had not intended to breach anti-doping rules.

Wright's case is the latest example of WADA's flawed regulation for known contaminants that continues to erode athlete trust and confidence in the system. Issues connected to contamination arising from Ostarine have long been known, yet to date WADA has failed to meaningfully reform its rules and processes.

"I'm not a drugs cheat, it's proven," Wright told *The Guardian*.

A longer suspension, which was more than a possibility, would have been curtains for Wright's career. "At my age to stop playing cricket for, say, 12 months, I don't think I could come back from that physical-

ly. You need to keep moving and keep the bones greased. If the regulator had their way and they got an obscene 20 to 24 months then, absolutely, I'd have hung the boots up."

The root cause of this is anti-doping science has evolved much faster than WADA's rules which lag behind industry best practice. Substances prohibited under the Code can be detected at levels as low as a trillionth of a gram or a 'picogram'.

Two fundamental changes would resolve most issues connected to known contaminants: Introducing reporting thresholds for the full range of substances that are known to be contaminants, such as Ostarine. In cases where athletes

test positive for substances below these thresholds, there should be an appropriate investigation and the burden of proof should be reversed onto the anti-doping authority.

The World Players Association, which through its affiliates represents 85,000 professional athletes worldwide, outlined this in correspondence to the senior leadership of WADA in November 2023 where it shared a number of Best Practice Improvements that would enhance the regulation of anti-doping worldwide.

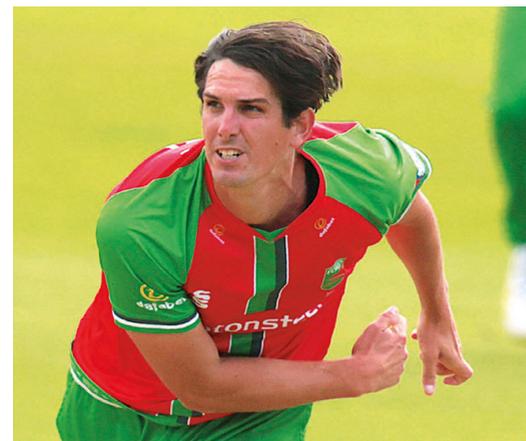
In its letter World Players emphasized: many of the systemic causes [of injustice] remain unaddressed in the Code and Standards, and we sadly continue to see cases that may take years to resolve, including athletes wrongly labelled as cheats before positive tests have been confirmed and due process afforded, and often career-ending sanctions being imposed in cases of inadvertent doping, such as through contaminated supplements.

To date the correspondence

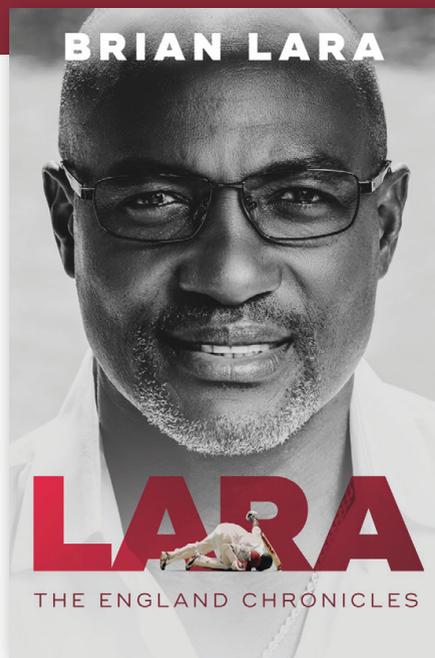
has not been acknowledged and the issue at large remains unaddressed continuing to leave athletes like Wright stranded as they have to prove their innocence in an incredibly complex, costly and often inconsistent system.

Player associations world-

wide will continue to advocate for an evidence-based global anti-doping system that keeps pace with best practice developments. The reputations, careers and livelihoods of athletes should not be collateral damage because of the failures in WADA's regulatory regime.



Ridiculous: Chris Wright received a nine-month ban



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