
THE CHEESEMAN PAPERS - PART 3

CRICKET HISTORY: FROM ITS "GOLDEN AGE" TO THE FOUNDATION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CRICKET UMPIRES

The period between the last quarter of the 19th. Century until 1914, when it was blown away by the outbreak of the first World War, has come to be regarded by Cricket historians as its "Golden Age". By any yardstick this was a time when the game at all levels enjoyed an outstanding burst of popularity with the public, with the emergence of a number of great players whose performances were beginning to rival those of Dr. W.G. Grace's fading star. Nevertheless, he was still regarded as 'first above equals', towering above all of his contemporaries. By now, several County Cricket Clubs had been formed and the most affluent of these were flourishing with the added attraction of competing in a national championship. This solid foundation did much to boost the national psyche, further enhanced by the growing international interest generated by the expansion of Test Cricket. This largesse seemed to provide the incentive to inspire its players to improved performances as Yorkshire CCC won the championship three times in the following successive seasons 1887-1889 and between 1887 and 1895 it won four out of five of all completed games.

At age 47, Dr. 'W.G.' enjoyed his own golden summer of success when, after a spell of wet pitches when, in his own words, he "was no longer master of the situation", his loss of batting form rebounded to produce yet another hundred against the

Players at Lord's – a thing he had not done since 1876 – and he went on to amass a career record of 2,346 runs with nine centuries in his first-class games.

More feats of outstanding brilliance during this Golden Age also came from such additional batting stalwarts as: The Hon. Ivo Bligh (who led the English team which recovered the 'Ashes' in Australia in 1882/83 - later, his widow presented the famous 'Ashes' Urn to MCC for safe keeping); Stanley Jackson (the first man to score five centuries against Australia in England and the fastest scorer in every team that he played in a career in which he also scored five double centuries); Albert Trott (who is still remembered for striking a ball from Monty Noble clean over the Lord's Pavilion, which is yet to be repeated - he found Life more difficult than Cricket and shot himself in 1914 !); the inimitable Col. His Highness, Sri Sir Rannjisinghi Vibhaji, Maharaja Jam Saheb of Nawawaga (more simply and affectionately known as "Ranji" of whom Neveille Cardus wrote: "All other batsmen are labourers in comparison" and C.B. Fry (the most gifted 'all-rounder' of his day, scoring six successive centuries in 1906 in a career that yielded 30,000 runs.

No less were a number of formidable bowlers of this time such as: Tom Richardson of whom Wisden wrote: "he lives in Cricket history as perhaps the finest of all fast bowlers", taking 8 wickets for 94 in the 5th. Test at Sydney in 1898 and 88 wickets in fourteen Test appearances. His prowess was such that the most prestigious fixture in the

domestic calendar – Gentlemen v the Players – at the Oval in July, 1912, was suspended on the afternoon of his funeral !; Wilfred Rhodes (taking 7 Australian wickets for 17 in the Edgbaston Test of 1901; 'Plum' Warner (for whom Cricket was a religion); Bernard Bosanquet (who invented the "googly", not only to bamboozle batsmen but also to create a new problem for umpires' assessment) and Sydney Barnes – "cussed by instinct and inclination who had the whip hand on all types of pitches".

Yes, indeed, this period was a golden age for some; of dashing batting and of innovation, development of spin and swerve but it was also the heyday of "sham-amateurism". and sharp practice that made it a difficult time for many umpires, with so little recognition and respect given to their role and competence. Many infringements of good sportsmanship, committed by players (who should have known better), were often rife. Such bent the spirit of Cricket (if not its Law) to suggest that winning was more important than playing the game. Even successful players such as 'W.G.' were not immune from displays of 'gamesmanship'. On one occasion, he ran six runs, the last three with the ball inside his shirt where fielders could not reach it. Another saw him obstructing James Lillywhite who was about to take a simple catch offered by Fred Grace when Grace's ample body got in the way. The public stature of Grace was such that, sadly, the opinions of some umpires was tempered to mere 'understanding' of his adverse behaviour and their censure was absent.

Neither could the game's principal amateur, "W.G.", claim that he never received money beyond his bare "expenses". His testimonial in 1895 earned him an unprecedented £9703 and when he arranged teams for fixtures, he charged a fee, paid his professionals of £3 per man and pocketed the balance which was often enough as much as the rest of the team altogether! However, with magisterial hypocrisy, Cricket's authorities looked away, even though amateurs 'expenses' far exceeded professional salaries.

During this period, umpires, generally, were given very little respect, confirmed by the statement of W.E. Collins in his "Leaves from an Old Country Cricketer's Diary" that they were "the most abused class of men in England." The opinions of A.G. Steel and the Hon. R.H. Lyttleton (1904) were more explicit as they wrote: "First class amateur cricketers should remember that it is impossible for them to pay too much deference to the decisions of umpires, as it is from them that the standard or tone of morality in the game is taken".

However, a correspondent in the 'Cricket' magazine was more charitable when he expressed the opinion that first-class umpiring was now much better than it had been a few years before, although it still left a lot to be desired. He would have liked to have seen the establishment of a college where the job of umpiring would be treated as a profession, with those encumbered obtaining a recognised qualification, whereby individuals would be regarded as being in a serious occupation that would make it attractive to varsity graduates or equally acceptable to those of upper

middle class, on a par with those engaged in stock-broking or accountancy. In practice, currently, most umpires in first-class, league and elitist club cricket were ex-players to a man. However, such were not generally acutely familiar with Cricket's Laws and thus did not give umpiring a professional image. Nevertheless, the ex-player connection did distinguish U.K. first-class umpires from those abroad who were not engaged full-time and thus were generally considered to be less competent (and often, allegedly partisan) in their work.

In the decade immediately before the onset of World War I, Cricket blossomed at all levels - International, County, Club, Village and League (especially in the northern counties did this version game become ever more popular). Year on Year the game grew stronger but few suspected that the conflict of War would come to put a dampener on further progress and popularity. When it did arrive, an era died for such talented personalities as Fry, Jessop, Barnes and Warner who were now veterans past their prime and would never play again in a Gentlemen v Players fixture at Lord's. Sadly, a whole generation of young men died and Cricket was not exempt from the catastrophe as 'Father Time' wielded his scythe to savage effect. Rupert Brooke, a successful bowler in his time at Marlborough School was noted by Wisden as having gained a considerable reputation as a poet as his famous lines from "The Soldier" stand as a poignant reminder of a lost generation: "If I should die, think only this of me,
That there's some corner of a

foreign field,
That is forever England."

The young Worcestershire all-rounder, Frank Chester, was more fortunate, to lose only his right arm at Salonica and able to return to continue his brilliantly promising career in Cricket to become one of the greatest first-class umpires. In 1922, when he was appointed to the first-class list, he was aged twenty six years old, twenty years younger than most of his contemporaries. He set a new standard in Umpiring and over the next thirty-three years, was to stand in more Test Matches than any other official.

Although some 'greats' of pre-war Cricket were now absent, others, such as Jack Hobbs - aged 35 in 1918 and retiring from first-class Cricket after a further 18 years: Wilfred Rhodes and Frank Woolley - began playing for Kent in 1906, not retiring until he was 51; Herbert Strudwick and Tom Hearne also carried on as before, soon to be joined by new talented rising stars such as Patsy Hendren, Herbert Sutcliffe, Maurice Leyland and Harold Larwood.

County Cricket recovered after World War I far sooner than was anticipated, although the low standard of national cricket as a whole at that time was shown by England losing eight Tests in succession in 1920/21. By 1930, English Cricket was again robust and widely travelled and it was only umpires that were left at home. The Minor Counties Championship also restarted in 1920 and village and small cricket clubs were still plagued with bumbling old officials whom everyone regarded with affection but shown very little respect.

England's major opponent in the '30s was Australia, armed with its

ballistic weapon, Don Bradman, who was successfully countered in the infamous MCC tour 'down under' by Douglas Jardine, who used Harold Larwood to deliver short-pitched fast bowling straight to the body, with a packed leg-side field to catch deflected balls. The tour was grim for the Australian umpires since, legally, 'bodyline' bowling could not be faulted other than the umpires were being put under pressure in being 'the sole judges of fair and unfair play' and having to decide accordingly. In his biography, Frank Chester opined that he could see nothing in the current Laws to prevent the nature of this attack and he regarded Larwood as being a very fair bowler who never appealed inappropriately. Frank Lee, another fine English umpire in later years who started his career in 1931, held a contrary view of 'bumpers' and 'bouncers'. The following year, M.C.C. reduced the bitterly hostile international feelings engendered by passing the resolution: 'That any form of bowling which is obviously a direct attack by the bowler upon the batsman would be an offence against the spirit of the game' and pledged support to umpires who took action against it under the Law relating to 'fair and unfair play'. These proposals were accepted by both the U.K. County Captains and the Imperial Cricket Conference.

The advent of the Second World War (1939-1945) again brought an abrupt end to organised Cricket for the duration of hostilities, although some semblance of a game with bat and ball was still being played throughout this period on a recreational basis whenever off-duty presented itself to serving personnel in His Majesty's Forces, both at home

and overseas. Indeed wherever items of 'proper' equipment of bats, balls and stumps might have been salvaged from pre-war archives, more sophisticated "fixtures" were arranged sporadically during this enforced hiatus (particularly at Lord's and the Oval). Whilst umpires (and Scorers) were necessary for the conduct of such encounters, officials with sufficient knowledge of the Laws and experience in applying them were notably absent and substitutes were usually recruited from players of the batting side who took it in turns to stand either before or after their individual innings took place.

The position was somewhat similar in those few schools that still struggled to provide time devoted to traditional sporting activity in their wartime curricula. Those who were fortunate to inherit a treasure trove of equipment hoarded in their pavilion storerooms, continued to arrange competitive fixtures, at least until the supply of serviceable balls, particularly, ran out. Most fit and well staff within the 18-50 year age group, who would normally have supervised such activities, had been mobilised in H.M. Services, so that those school fixtures that were arranged were umpired by such members of staff as might have been available at the particular time. Few of these would have known much about the finer points of the game. Fewer still would have developed the powers of concentration necessary in applying them and virtually none would have had any formal training for the role or experience of 'real' match atmosphere. However, the limitations imposed by this less than satisfactory state of affairs

"was the same for both sides" and to the extent of being able to arrange a match or not, such compromise was regarded as being mutually acceptable to all concerned.

However, with hostilities finally over, 1946-47 saw an astonishing re-birth of interest in the game of Cricket throughout the U.K., with thousands of spectators forming queues to gain entry to County grounds to fete the return of former pre-war sporting heroes. This upsurge of interest and enthusiasm in the first-class game had an inevitable knock-on effect in the lower echelons, with membership at Clubs soon reaching record levels. Thus, it was readily understandable why the supply of competent match officials could not match this sudden vast demand and this serious shortfall was never satisfactorily addressed for several years to come. Meanwhile, a serious decline in the standard of umpiring at all levels of the game had become all too apparent.

Indeed, in England, even at first-class County level, the standard of umpiring in respect of detailed collective knowledge of MCC approved Laws, their practical application, field technique and match control were all very much lower than had been the case in pre-war seasons. There were several reasons for this, not least because of the low esteem in which umpires were generally held, as witnessed by the poor level of remuneration (under £10 per fixture), no guarantee of continued employment during long winter months, long hours on duty during the playing season and a fear of lack of support from the controlling bodies.

Finally, individual appraisal in early September, with the

possibility of not being invited back for employment the following season (frequently, even without the added courtesy of explanation) did little to improve individual umpires' morale.

Equally, at League, Club and School levels, although for different reasons, the standard of umpiring, with few exceptions, was abysmal. The exceptions were those appointed officials of the Club Cricket Conference, the Leagues (mainly in the northern counties), a few local organisations and those elitist Clubs who laid down criteria for the entry of officials to their registers. Commendable as these attempts were, only a very small number of umpires were involved, so it was generally accepted that the overall standard of umpiring at recreational levels was at a very low ebb.

At this time, even few of the more competent officials were afforded professional respect. More often than not they were caricatured and portrayed as fun figures – cloth-capped men, heavily loaded with caps and sweaters who might possibly be able count to six but otherwise were not thought to be endowed with much intelligence.

Unfortunately, it was common place to meet too many of these genial souls who had either volunteered their services or, more likely, had been press-ganged from around the boundary into officiating as match controllers.

These coerced officials knew little of the finer points of the Laws or, indeed, very little of the Laws at all! It was even doubtful that many had known of the existence of an official publication of the Laws by MCC,

let alone be familiar with the book's contents. Certainly, the niceties of field technique would have been unknown to these willing or co-opted characters. Notwithstanding that they might have been innocently doing their best, innocent or not, most were more than ready to raise their index finger in answering any appeal of strength, in the deeply rooted belief that players of experience knew right enough when a batsman was out. The thought (or expectation) in some player's minds was that the louder and more widespread the appeal, the greater was the chance of an affirmative decision being awarded in their favour.

Although sad to relate, at any period of history, the standard of detailed knowledge of the Laws of the game among players at all levels has been, at best, superficial. That said, it is of course unreasonable to expect players to acquire that degree of knowledge necessary for competent umpiring.

Nevertheless, it is essential for the maximum enjoyment of their game that players (their Captains particularly) to develop a reasonable understanding of the Laws. Again, unfortunately, at the time currently being reviewed, the limited number of officials who did possess copies of the updated Laws, as approved by MCC, and were competent in their practical application, often had to accept irritation and even anger from that uninformed majority of players who had become accustomed to inefficient and not always neutral umpiring. And so the vicious circle went on endlesslyand on.

In 1953, the renowned Cricket commentator, John Arlott, wrote:

“The essential truths about umpiring do not change. It is still true that an umpire is the only single person who, alone, can make or ruin a game of Cricket. If he makes it, your average Cricketer takes the fact for granted. If he ruins it, he grumbles, forgetting that for far too long cricketers have paid too little attention to the umpiring of their matches. Many a team who would not dream of turning up a player short, is carelessly content to recruit an umpire on the spot, yet umpiring is far harder, even for a man who has played some cricket, than simply making up an eleven.”

What Arlott said more than half a century ago remains so undeniably true, even today but the fact that so little had been done in attempted correction of the malaise for so long was astounding. In the immediate post-war years it would have been an exception in the recreational game to have arrived for a match with an umpire appointed to the fixture. The hope would have been that someone on the ground could have been inveigled on the spot, or that “old Bob”, a committee man, or, (if the team had one) the ‘twelfth man would stand in. At this time, it was even not unknown for the solitary member of the “ground staff” to carry out a spell ‘in the middle’ until an alternative ‘volunteer’ could be found.

It was against such a chaotic background that many young cricketers became discouraged and lost to the game because of indifferent standards of umpiring, especially where cricket was played at club and school levels. If a master-in-charge was not a true enthusiast of the game, the temptation

would be to ensure that all wickets fell in time for the close of play to coincide with the normal hour for other school activities to finish.

It was against such anachronistic circumstances, too, in the early '50s, that the now legendary Tom Smith, after many years as a player, football referee and cricket umpire, had in mind the expressed thoughts made some 18 years earlier of his idol, Jack Hobbs (referred to in the second paper of this series), and came to the conclusion that the latter game could not afford to lose such young potential and that some attempt should be made to educate, train and examine umpires (and those aspiring to become umpires) with the opportunity of obtaining a qualification related to the art that would be recognised universally.

Hitherto, there had been little or no opportunity for either practising umpires nor beginners to meet, interpret Laws and discuss field problems. No one before Tom had the vision to see what was needed, allied to the "nous" to put matters right. He was the first to motivate officials to receive both theoretical and practical training and to be refreshed at intervals in much the same way that players receive coaching to improve and maintain their personal skills and performances. He was not only determined that Cricket deserved better, he devised an action plan to ensure that this would be achieved.

Author's Note: It is at this point that I hope the reader might forgive me for temporarily digressing from continuation with the historical narrative to include a short pen-portrait of Tom Smith's early life

since many lovers of the game have come to regard him as being not only the Founder of ACU but also as part of Cricket itself:

Wisdom – courage, or perhaps better, valour – pilgrimage – these are certainly words that one would associate with Tom Smith. He was in a sense, born into Cricket, for his birthplace was in the Harleyford Road, within sight of the Surrey CCC Oval where he earned his pocket money there as a youngster, collecting and stacking the cushions that in those days the spectators tossed onto the field of play at the end of the day. Certainly, his love of the game, his ideas of skill, concentration, manners, and respect for opponents were all born of many hours spent watching his hero, Jack Hobbs, playing there.

His earliest recollections were of Cricket played in the back streets of Kennington, with a lamppost as a wicket. As a youth, he haunted the Oval ground, admiring all the Surrey "Greats" of that era, but reserving his primary adulation for the immortal "Master" of technical perfection, the first Knight of Cricket, Sir John Berry Hobbs.

Tom eventually graduated to playing "proper Cricket" on grass in what he then regarded as the height of luxury – pitches on Clapham Common – where he displayed great patience as a batsman and a mixture of brilliance and unreliability in the field. Initially, he also played soccer in the winter but there was never any misunderstanding that if and when the seasons overlapped – a sporting tragedy – his allegiance to Cricket was always his priority.

However, at an early age he found that he preferred

officiating to the playing of the twin games and so he became both a soccer referee and a cricket umpire. Primarily and loyally, he played and umpired at Valley Road with Streatham Wanderers at a ground shared for a pepper-corn rent with United Dairies! Having umpired with this Club with distinction from 1932 to 1960 he was presented with an inscribed trophy of which he was modestly proud.

With the outbreak of World War II, he joined the Royal Artillery where his administrative talents were nurtured. He rose to the rank of Battery Sergeant major in charge of searchlight units. This experience contributed to his understanding of handling people and of the greater efficiency that came with planned teamwork, skills that later were to become so vital on the field of play and in ACU administration. Most of his time in the Army was spent at postings at camps at Norton Fitzwarren – a rural outpost on the western perimeter of Taunton, Somerset – and, later, at Rhyl, North Wales. Not surprisingly, at both postings he continued to find plenty of scope to further his sporting inclinations. It was here that his earlier perception of sound contributions from isolated talented individuals, when grouped together as a team, working towards a common purpose, became very much more effective, were confirmed. These attributes – the value and development of teamwork – were the very principles which were to serve ACU so well in later years.

Subconsciously, perhaps, these teamwork skills were further enhanced when he performed as an excellent pianist (in the Charlie Kunz mode) in a dance band on Saturday nights. It was

at one of these “hops” that he was destined to meet and marry his life-long partner, Win. His son, Tony, tells of row on row of pints of beer being stacked upon the piano top in these halls by dancers keen to show their encouragement and appreciation of him providing hours of continuous melody and tempo for their enjoyment. Presumably, his taste for alcoholic refreshment must have abated over the years, for by the time he became Hon. General Secretary of ACU, he was notably abstemious at post-meeting gatherings, almost to the point of being teetotal. Probably his earlier experiences had taught him that “enough is as good as a feast !”

Upon his return to civilian life, Tom returned to complete his forty years service with the North-Thames Gas Board for which he was presented with the traditional gold watch. In “retirement”, he set up his own School of Driving” from his second home at Kenley, with himself as sole instructor and his tutorial skills now came to the fore. (Two of his “first-time” successes as pupils were recorded by Leslie Cheesman’s son, John, and Bill Ainsworth’s (currently ACU’s Exam. Secretary) daughter, June – the love for the game of Cricket (and those associated with it) opened many unexpected doors!)

Immediately post-war, he had given up on soccer and dedicated himself to his primary love of cricket umpiring. Soon he was to become one of the most respected senior umpires in Surrey – at this time there were all too few of these anywhere in the country. He, himself was honoured by selection to stand in

numbers of Club Cricket Conference Representative Matches, later in the County 2nd XI championship, Public School Fixtures and with such famous Clubs as I Zingari, Butterflies, Cross Arrows and, of course, those involving the Royal Artillery.

(Author’s note: following the hopefully acceptable above digression, concerning Tom Smith’s early background, this narrative now resumes its former historical sequence).

During his stint as an Army Instructor (in charge of a searchlight unit), Tom Smith had continued his refereeing and umpiring and had not only built up fairly wide practical experience but he had also made an in-depth study of the Laws of games, especially those that applying to Cricket. During the 1952 season, he had spoken of his plan to organise to some of the more thoughtful and capable colleagues he had met on the field and, much to his surprise, he received only enthusiastic encouragement to turn his thoughts into a positive action plan.

His first strategic blueprint included an attempt to form an Association on a County-wide (Surrey) basis around the aims and objectives previously described. Accordingly, in February, 1953, he wrote from his home at 59, St. Georges Road, Mitcham, to all umpires then listed on the Club Cricket Conference Register (on which his own name had appeared since the time he had been accepted as one of its officials some years earlier).

From the 42 letters sent, encouraging responses came from 30 umpires wishing to be

advised in more detail of Tom Smith’s laudable intentions. This supportive riposte was sufficient for him to risk convening a meeting and with the help of his wife, Winnie, appropriate invitations were distributed to all those who had expressed a positive interest to attend an inaugural meeting. This was scheduled for the evening of Thursday, 19th. March, 1953, at the King’s Head Hotel, Mitcham Green. (N.B. The hotel premises remain little altered in character as this narrative is written 58 years later, but the hotel has long since been renamed as the “Burn Bullock” in memory of a well respected local cricketer who also happened to be the resident landlord at the time of the Association’s inaugural meeting.)

The attendance at this meeting was certainly larger than Tom had expected and the mood and warmth of the reception given to him by those Founder Members matched his own enthusiasm and were ample recompense for his initial work in formation of the Association. It was not so much that he and his fellow conspirators decided to form a locally-based association of umpires – that had already been done by others elsewhere. Rather was his perception to form a body offering education, training, qualification by examination, vocational experience and post-graduate refreshment that would be an inspirational landmark in the development of Cricket. His pilgrimage had now begun on the long road “From Chaos to Credibility”.

The Founder Members were:

W.J. Arthur, L.J.E. Barnes, A.A. Brown, F.W. Carr, C.A. Cassie, C.H. Connolly, G.T.F. Coates, M.R. Cruse, B.G. Curtis,

T.J.S. Darke, C.G. Deighton, D.Field, C.H. Hager, J.G. Ketcher, F.A. Lewendon, F.J. Martin, F.R. Parker, S.E. Phelan, J.W. Roberts, H.E. Robinson, A.E.D. Smith, T.E. Smith, G.P. Staniford, P.V. Udall.

The meeting agreed with Tom's suggestion that Mr. H.E. Robinson, a Head Teacher at a school in West Byfleet, be invited to take the Chair. Tom, himself, became the first General Secretary; Mr. M.R. Cruse and Mr. Geoffrey Staniford (of Dulwich) were appointed as the first Hon. Treasurer and Press Officers, respectively.

This quartet was soon to become affectionately known as "The Smith Family Robinson"! and were officially recognised as ex-officio members of the first Executive Committee to be joined by four additional elected members: L.J.E Barnes (Wimbledon), T.J.S. Darke (Kingston). Fred R. Parker (Sutton) and another Smith, (A.E.D.) "Dave"(who was no relation to Tom) from Tooting. All were to serve until the first Annual General Meeting when no restriction would be placed upon their possible re-election.

Executive Committee Meetings were to be held monthly during the playing season and at two-monthly meetings during the closed season. It was further agreed that the Association should hold at least four General Meetings per annum, including the AGM, with the latter convened not later than 30th. April each year.

It was also agreed that the initial subscription for Full Members should be ten shillings and sixpence (after decimalisation, corrected to 52 and one half pence) annually. The subscription

for Associate Membership should be five shillings (later 25p per annum), to be raised to ten shillings and sixpence on admission to Full Membership. Private Members (i.e. those persons interested in supporting the Association but having no intention of qualifying as a field umpire) should pay seven shillings and sixpence per year.

A second motion, proposed by Mr. F.R. Parker, seconded by Mr. A.E.D. Smith, that an Association of Surrey Umpires be formed was also carried unanimously. After lengthy discussion it was further agreed that this embryo organisation should have the following as its aims and objectives:-

1. To improve, as far as possible, the standard of umpiring
2. To improve the status of umpires.
3. To promote a closer relationship between Umpires and Cricket Associations
4. To assist such organisations in promoting the best interests of the game.
5. To assist umpires' Societies and Associations in their educational and general work.
6. To watch over and promote the interests of umpires in general.
7. To protect members from injustice or unfair treatment.
8. To make such representation to the governing bodies as may be thought necessary for the good of the game and the benefit of umpires and umpiring in particular

After further discussion, the Executive Committee was empowered to prepare Draft Rules for active consideration and for a report on progress

made to a future General Meeting.

Notwithstanding the part he had already played in preparation leading to this inaugural meeting, the Founder, Tom Smith, had accepted office as the Association's first General Secretary with some trepidation. Even at this stage of early formation, he was already apprehensive about the amount of future work that would be necessary, little realising that he was to hold the same office for the ensuing 25 years and to see development from this very small beginning (of only 24 members) to an Association of some thousands which would become recognised the world over as the parent body for Umpires and Umpiring. "From little acorns, massive Oak trees grow" !

During the weeks that followed the inaugural meeting, the Press Officer, Geoffrey Staniford, worked immensely hard, in conjunction with Tom Smith, on an initial Public Relations exercise.

He spent many hours submitting the details of the Association formation, with press releases identifying the agreed aims and objectives. The following extract from the sporting columns of the "Mitcham News and Mercury", dated 3rd. April, 1953, is a typical example of this very effective publicity drive:

"THE BIG CLEAN UP IN UMPIRING STARTS"

Said Mr. Smith: "We like to think a little bit of history was written at the "King's Head"

It's a hope a few hundred club cricketers are going to join him in. At the Mitcham Club a short time ago, Mr. T.E. Smith became Founder Member and first

General Secretary of the Surrey Association of Cricket Umpires.

Object of this: the only organisation of its kind in the County, is to improve the standard of umpiring and act as liaison between the men in the white coats, the Clubs and the CCC.

From such a body, there can come nothing but good, especially, if in time, it can spread its influence into the lower regions of Club Cricket. There, the standard is positively infernal.

But first things first. The Association at present consists of over 30 members, all on the CCC Panel. As there are only 42 registered CCC Umpires in the County, the response shows the umpires' own opinion of the need for such an organisation.

Next step is to widen scope to take in umpires generally but no membership will be granted until theoretical and practical examinations have been passed. After that, they will start hunting out potential umpires for "educating and training". The Standard? "At least level with that of the Club Cricket Conference", said Mr. Smith.

For the man who plays his cricket at the week-end, this news is to compare only in importance with the Relief of Mafeking.

Enough atrocities are committed in the name of Umpiring in Club Cricket to amount to a persecution. Occasionally there are fierce whispers of poor Umpiring in good class games, but wait until Mr. Smith and his merry men get down among the not-so-goods. After all, it is there that most cricket is played and it is there that most bad decisions

are given. In those games, Mr. Smith, the leg-break outside the leg stump claims hundreds of victims; a slip fielder can take his catch first bounce and general lawlessness can become acceptable behaviour.

So good luck to the Association in its years of labour ahead. Meanwhile, if any men of Surrey feel the crusading spirit, contact Mr. Smith at 59 St. George's Road, Mitcham.
CLIVE TAYLOR.

On 16th. April, 1953, Tom responded to an invitation to address officers of the Club Cricket Conference which also promised its full support and backing to the newly formed Association. At this meeting, a number of principles were clarified and agreed. Firstly, that the Association's Register of umpires would be kept quite apart from the names of those listed by CCC on its Panel but that if any ACU members became desirous of having their names included on the list held by CCC, the time would come when, if an individual application was strongly recommended by ACU, appropriate details would be included on the CCC Register without further question. Secondly, it would be the intention to conduct the affairs of the Association as an entity quite separate from the Club Cricket Conference. It was further agreed that the fullest co-operation would be forthcoming from this latter body.

Tom Smith's appeal for support had been so vast and the interested generated became so widespread that he began to receive enquiries, not only from within his immediate County of Surrey but also from other parts of the United Kingdom and even

from overseas. Mr. E.A. Stirton, a senior umpire from South Africa on a visit to England asked to met the General Secretary. He expressed fraternal greetings on behalf of the Associations of umpires from, Natal and Durban. Their good wishes had been coupled with sincere offers of future co-operation. Many applicants who resided beyond the County boundaries of Surrey wrote to say that they were prepared to travel long distances to take part in organised training activities even though they were not geographically eligible for membership at that time.

This dilemma was soon to be resolved when, at the first General Meeting, held at the Southern Railway Sports Club, Raynes Park, on Thursday, 14th. May, 1953, it became obvious that the Association already had to widen its range of activity and recruitment by extending opportunity of membership to a national or even international basis.

As a result, it was decided, by vote, that the new body should be named as THE Association of Cricket Umpires, to encompass all applications to be received worldwide. Thus, ACU had now been formed as an international body and soon went from strength to strength to become increasingly recognised as The representative body for all umpires.

It was at this point that the Chairman, Mr. H.E. Robinson stated that the Executive Committee had agreed that all those attending this first General Meeting were to be immediately accepted as Full Members of the Association.

A further significant point of interest from the General

Secretary's Report included mention of a letter received from the Assistant Secretary of the MCC, Mr. S.C. Griffith, stating that he had read of the formation of the Association with great interest and also promised recognition and support from this august body.

Following the request made to it by the inaugural meeting, the Draft Rules of the Association, as formulated by the Executive Committee, were then approved after lengthy discussion with several amendments being agreed. The substantive version of this first set of rules were as follows:

1. TITLE. This Association be called "The Association of Cricket Umpires".
2. OBJECTS. The objects of the Association shall be:-
 - (a) To improve as far as possible the standard of Umpiring.
 - (b) To improve the status of Umpires.
 - (c) To promote a closer relationship between Umpires, Cricket Associations and kindred bodies.
 - (d) To assist all such Associations in promoting the best interests of the game.
 - (e) To assist Cricket Associations and Societies in their education and general work.
 - (f) To watch over and promote the interests of Umpires in general.
 - (g) To protect members from injustice or unfair treatment.
 - (h) To make such representation to the governing bodies as may be thought necessary for the good of the game and the benefit of umpires and umpiring.

3. MEMBERSHIP. This Association shall consist of Full Members, Associate Members and Private Members. Full members shall be confined to those who are, or have been, actively connected to Cricket as Umpires. Associate Members may only be admitted after election by the Executive Committee following application in writing by the candidate and/or written nomination by a Full member. They shall have no voting powers on matters of major domestic policy at General Meetings of the Association.

4. QUALIFICATION OF MEMBERSHIP. The qualification for Full Membership shall be a standard of Umpiring, to the Laws of Cricket as governed by the MCC of a quality approved by the Association. The qualification of Associate Members shall be practising Umpires recommended by Clubs or Full members of the Association, as worthy of the consideration of the Executive Committee for ultimate admission to Full membership. The qualification of Private Members shall be an interest and devotion to Cricket.

5. SUBSCRIPTION. The subscription for Full Members shall be ten shillings and sixpence per year. The subscription for Associate Members shall be five shillings per year, to be raised to ten shillings and sixpence per year on admission to Full Membership. Private Members shall pay at least seven shillings and sixpence per year.

6. MANAGEMENT. The affairs of the Association shall be managed by an Executive Committee, the members of which shall hold office from AGM to AGM but shall be

eligible for election or re-nomination from year to year. The Executive Committee shall consist of not more than seven Full Members, including ex-officio members. It shall have the power to co-opt up to four additional Full Members who shall hold office from appointment to the AGM next ensuing.

7. OFFICERS. The Officers of the Association shall be: President, Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer. The Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee and shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and be eligible for election or re-nomination at an AGM for the ensuing year.

8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The Executive Committee shall meet as and when necessary and five members shall form a quorum. Minutes will be taken. All casual vacancies may be filled by the Executive Committee until the AGM next ensuing.

The final matter discussed at this first General Meeting included thoughts on nominations to be made for the Honours of President and Vice-Presidents. Bearing in mind that all 24 founding members had their residential origins in Surrey, it was understandable why the preponderance of names with all embracing connections to the Surrey County Cricket Club came up for consideration. The approaches made to such individuals were fascinating in that, at this time, it was possible to send reply-paid telegrams inviting those approached as potential Vice-Presidents to

respond the same evening.

To everyone's surprise, the first reply of acceptance came from Douglas Jardine, which prompted the immediate dispatch of a second telegram, apologising that a mistake had been made and that the original invitation should have made clear that it was for the office as President, rather than Vice-President, that it was hoped Mr. Jardine would consider!

Tom Smith followed this up with confirmation of the appointment in writing. In his reply, Mr. Jardine replied at once with a most friendly letter, inviting the General Secretary to lunch with him at his Club – the University Club in Pall Mall. In retrospect, how very strange it was that this historic meeting should have been held co-incidentally at a location so very close to where, two centuries earlier, the original Laws of the game were drawn up at that well known Cricket hostelry: "The Star and Garter"!

Never having met the great man in person before but knowing full well of his alleged reputation of being both austere and uncompromising, Tom Smith journeyed to Pall Mall in a state of considerable nervousness. His concern was not eased by the fact that never in his life had he entered such a Club, let alone dined in one. In the event, Tom's fears were groundless. Mr. Jardine met him at the door and was a charming host; kind and considerate in every way. At Mr. Jardine's request, Tom explained the present position, emphasising that he cared passionately that umpires should both know and understand the Laws and outlined his plans for the Association's future. He intended using the medium of a

future newsletter; "How's That" to publicise the finer points that were the potential sources of Law controversy. It was his dictum that anyone could sometimes make an error of judgment but he opined that there was no excuse for making an error through ignorance of Law. He was equally tenacious that the Laws should make sense (and, later, he was to fight resolutely at the highest levels to have the same Laws applicable for all grades of Cricket.)

The General Secretary was to put his whole energy behind these ideals. If umpires should know and understand the Laws and Scorers should be able to record a match correctly, then they must have a text-book which set it all out. He was to achieve this, first, by assisting Col. Rait-Kerr at Lords, (with later revisions on his own) by producing his unrivaled book: "Cricket Umpiring and Scoring, now the classic reference text recognised by ESCUA members more simply, in précis, as "Tom Smith's". With the later agreement of his son and heir, Tony, he permanently assigned to ACU all publisher's royalties from future sales of the book and earnings from public lending rights.).

The President was full of enthusiasm and support for Tom's plans for the future of the Association. Indeed, as the General Secretary left Jardine's Club at the conclusion of their first meeting, the latter immediately telephoned Frank Chester who was the leading Test Umpire at that time and told Frank that he had become a Vice-President of the Association! Few people ever argued to the contrary with Douglas Jardine

and Frank Chester accepted the Vice-Presidency with alacrity

Armed with the news of these two astonishing acceptances, Press Officer, Geoffrey Staniford, again did commendable work with publicity in both local and national newspapers. Several similar announcements were also made on B.B.C. news bulletins, as a result of which, John Arlott (Cricket correspondent), Mr. Garland Wells (former Surrey CCC President) and Ken McCanlis (Head Teacher in Bedfordshire and a First-class Umpire) also accepted invitations to become Vice-Presidents. All were keen to be active and became involved in giving much appreciated technical help in the production of a first Training Manual.

With all this heady activity going on, it was decided to call a first "Open Meeting" for the 23rd. October, 1953, at "The Three Nuns" Hotel, Aldgate, London. It was a huge success. The hall became packed to over-capacity and despite extra seating being sent for, many people were forced to stand. Those attending included representatives of the MCC, the Club Cricket Conference, Cricket Societies, elitist Clubs and umpires from all over the country. It was a very proud and somewhat emotional General Secretary who was invited by the Chairman to give an outline of the Association's progress to date and to formally introduce the first President as "the greatest Captain England has ever had to lead us and the greatest possible team of Vice Presidents to advise us".

Mr. Douglas Jardine was given a great ovation and in his address praised the aims and objectives of the Association and the work

that had already been carried out leading to its formation. He showed his delight that it had been formed and organised by umpires themselves with the altruistic purpose of improving the standard of umpiring. "This group of umpires", Mr. Jardine went on, "had not waited for other people to do something about the standard of umpiring, but had taken the initiative themselves which is unusual these days". This was praise indeed. In continuation, Mr. Jardine said there remained much work to be done at all levels of the game but, especially, in minor Cricket and at schools where teachers had a great involvement. He stressed the dangers of damage done to players by indifferent umpiring with many lost to the game as a result.

The President also issued a reminder that thought should soon be directed to financial considerations, as these would become important factors in the Association coaching and training schemes for the future and, not least, the arrangements to be made for the conduct of examinations and subsequent field assessments. As such work progressed, it would also mean that consideration might have to be given to the seeking of goodwill grants from outside sources who would have no intention of dictating policy. The meeting stood in acclamation at the conclusion of the President's address.

Continuing with a report of recent Executive Committee activity, the General Secretary announced that the Education and Training Committee with David Smith as Chairman, Leslie Barnes as Examinations

Secretary, assisted by Douglas Field, Fred Parker, Frank Carr and Tom Smith, himself, had already been active, with progress being made on the production of a standard Training Manual, vetted by the experienced Frank Chester and Ken McCanlis. This manual would probably have trial periods in duplicated form before it was passed for printing in more permanent format.

In response to several suggestions from members, a "Cricket Umpires' Appointments Bureau" was also intended for the next season, commencing in April, 1954. Members seeking engagements were asked to write to Tom Smith with details of their vacant dates. In this work, Tom was most ably assisted by his wife, Winnie, who endeavoured to put Clubs in need of Umpires in touch with applicants.

The early promise of rapid recruitment over the first few weeks built up with dramatic suddenness, with the pace of development increasing to a crusade by October, as witnessed by the splendid attendance at the first Open Meeting. By the end of this month, the No. 1 issue of the Association's Journal: "How's That?" had been published and distributed, with Geoffrey Staniford as its editor. Jim Dear had also very kindly arranged for it to be printed at minimum cost via his close connections with Messrs G.S. Skelton Ltd., of Godalming and this satisfactory arrangement was to continue over the first three years.

In this first issue, the General Secretary stressed how very keen he was that the Association should always be active in every sense of the word and how

essential he believed it was to have a two-way flow of information. It was his earnest hope that whoever future officers might be and however large the Association might grow in future, these two axioms would remain. The Newsletter editorial element would demonstrate the flow of outward information and members letters of constructive criticism, giving helpful suggestions and advice, the provisions of challenges to technical matters and with news and queries welcomed from any quarter, would provide the flow back from the grass roots. For members abroad, it should be the ideal medium for keeping up to date with activities and news of other members.

The first article of a non-administrative nature dealt with the origin and history of the Cricket Umpire's White Coat and the first ever clarification of points arising from the Laws covering Note 1 to Law 30. (N.B. At this time, this referred to "Dead Ball" and answered the question of "When does a batsman's innings begin" and various considerations of situations arising from Law 22 - the Result).

A first inter-county quiz was arranged by the Education and Training Committee at the United Services Club, Old Devonshire Road, Balham, London, on Thursday, 19th. November, 1953, commencing at 7.15.p.m. Two teams competed resulting in a narrow win by the "Odd Bods" (50 points) over the Combined Counties (47 points).

More in hope than expectation, Tom Smith also arranged for members to visit Lords on Saturday 14th. November, 1953, for the party to be conducted

over the Pavilion and Memorial Gallery. Tom had been uncertain of the enthusiasm for such a gathering but to his astonishment, 53 members turned up, some from long distances. The President, Mr. Douglas Jardine, arrived, too, and the members had a memorable morning and were given an outline of the history of Lords and a commentary on the museum artefacts and treasures present by the Curator, Miss Diana Rait-Kerr.

In addition to the appointment of the Education and Training Committee, the first year also saw the establishment of the Association's Examination Board which was designed to arrange for Associate members to be tested on their theoretical knowledge in, at first, written form and, subsequently, both orally and practically as the Association extended its activities. The first of these combined sessions were held on specific Thursday evenings of 7th., 14th. and 21st. January, 1954, at "The Crown", 64, Brewer Street, London, W1., only a short distance from Piccadilly Circus.

The first evening was devoted to lectures covering the groundwork of the training syllabus prepared by the Training Committee. The second evening saw the first (written) examination paper based upon the fundamentals of the previous lecture and the Laws (1947 Code) of the game. No trick or hypothetical questions were used throughout this session. On the third evening, the candidates came up for Oral interrogation, during which attention was directed to any unsatisfactory answers given in the earlier written paper as well as to the candidates' bearing

and personality. Tom Smith well remembered the extreme nervousness of the candidates who presented on this momentous occasion and the lecturers and examiners, consisting of Leslie Barnes, David Smith, Fred Parker and Tom Smith himself, were also more than a little tense. Nevertheless, all went well and of the 23 candidates who attended, eleven were eventually passed to Full Membership of the Association.

On March 24th, Dave and Tom Smith invigilated at what was to be a revised (but from thereon standardised) written and oral examinations at the Air Ministry for a group of R.A.F. Association Umpires brought in from various parts of the country. On the same day, another team of examiners was conducting tests in theory at King Alfred's College, Winchester. Students leave college to take charge as Masters at schools and this particular group was anxious to obtain the recognised ACU qualification before doing so. The University of Manchester had also applied for similar facilities and details for this were being arranged. Each successful candidate at both written and Oral examinations was then to be watched and assessed on the field of play at least once during the following playing season. This format was to be the initial routine procedure laid down for elevation to Full Membership.

Earlier in the year (1953), the General Secretary had written to Ayton Whitaker, a well known producer at the B.B.C., who doubled as Chairman of the Cricket Society, who had responded with friendliness and encouragement with the further

promise of future co-operation with the newly formed Association. This happy liaison was to continue over the years with A.E.D. (Dave) Smith, the Association's very lively Executive Committee Member and Chairman of the Education and Training Committee also having been elected to the Committee of the Cricket Society.

A first joint function arranged between the two bodies was "A Grand Match" on 16th. February, 1954. Play was to take place at the Irving Theatre, Irving Street, London, W.C.2. with "wickets" pitched at 7.00 p.m. As a result of excellent pre-challenge publicity in the local and national press and an announcement made on the B.B.C. Sports Report, the theatre was packed to capacity. The genial Ayton Whitaker acted as question master with members of the ACU team answering questions on the History of Cricket and those representatives from the Cricket Society were tested on their knowledge of Cricket Laws. It is pleasing to note that after a most enjoyable evening, the umpires emerged victorious.

At this early time, issues of the Association Newsletter: "How's That?" did not bear the date of circulation, but issue No. 2 must have been distributed sometime during the first three months of 1954, since Issue No. 3. contained a resume of the Annual General Meeting held on March 27th of that Spring. Issue 2 contained an interesting article by Major A..F.J.G Jackson on "Cricket in Berlin" where a very full season was well organised. All grounds were of high quality and in the area of the Olympic Stadium which had been the venue chosen

by Hitler for his mass demonstrations and major speeches.

Local Berlin Cricket consisted of two leagues of twenty teams altogether. Apart from Service sides, there were also civilian XLs formed as long ago as 1870 by English people living in Berlin on business, or, in British Government Service. In addition to the arrangement of local matches, nearly every week-end there was a Services Combined two-day match. The standard of this was good, with fixtures arranged with tourists representing the Green Jackets, Free Foresters, Butterflies, Royal Navy and R.M.A. Sandhurst. With as many as eleven matches taking place at one week-end, an acute problem was to find the requisite number of competent umpires to control these matches. Thus it was readily understandable why Major Jackson became excited when he first saw a notice in "The Times" about the formation of ACU and the courses of instruction for officials that it was intending to provide.

With the President in the chair, the first Annual General Meeting of the Association took place on Saturday, 27th March, 1954 at "The Three Nuns" Hotel, Aldgate, London, commencing at 5.30. p.m. Prior to the business of the meeting proper, a general discussion had taken place until 4.30.p.m. when tea had been taken. Following the tea interval, an appreciative audience was entertained by brilliant addresses given by Douglas R. Jardine, Col. Rait-Kerr, G.O. (Gubby) Allen, Frank Lee and Ken Mc Canlis.

The Executive Committee had been of the opinion that the General Secretary, Tom Smith,

had been more than a little too optimistic calling an Annual General Meeting in the City of London on, of all evenings in the week, a Saturday ! Tom had, however, persisted and, in the event, his confidence was vindicated with the Hall quite inadequate to accommodate an attendance of over 200 people. The Association was privileged to have as guests many distinguished personalia of the Cricket World, including John Arlott, Laurie Grey and Fred Price (both first-Class Umpires) in addition to the eminent speakers referred to in the preceding paragraph.

Giving his first verbal Annual Report, the General Secretary drew attention to the phenomenal growth of Association membership and related advances made over the year (1953/54). Numbers joining had increased almost daily and had exceeded the most optimistic expectations. Applications had been dealt with promptly, thus enhancing the Association's growing reputation for efficiency. Most of this early progress in recruitment had been due to the magnificent work of Geoffrey Staniford, Press Officer, whose skill and timing had been crucial factors in the advances made. Publicity had also been achieved through the activities of the Education and Training Committee and further recruitment had also been accelerated following Frank Chester's interview on B.B.C. Radio Newsreel and knowledge of John Arlott's enthusiastic interest in the affairs of the Association.

Membership now consisted of umpires from Test, First-Class Counties, Minor Counties,

MCC, the Club Cricket Conference, Yorkshire and Lancashire Leagues, the three branches of the Armed Services, through to Club members, trainees and even those with no previous field experience. In fact, the Association could already boast of individual membership in all countries of the world where Cricket was played.

The General Secretary's Report at this first Annual General Meeting was one of outstanding success in one year of life, with the record of progress made nothing less than astonishing. Relations with the MCC, the Club Cricket Conference and numerous Cricket Associations and Societies had been strengthened during the year.

Mention was also made of the formation of a Cricket Umpires Council in Trinidad, specifically convened to disseminate news from the Association of Cricket Umpires. Arrangements had been made to hold examinations in Trinidad and for the candidates written papers to be sent to England for marking by the Association's Board of Examiners.

The General Secretary also referred to the rapid growth of Law queries and problems received from individuals and Cricket bodies which were continually being dealt with, in most cases, by return of post. Throughout the year, the General Secretary had been in regular contact with Colonel Rait-Kerr, former Secretary of the MCC, and had provided him with assistance in the preparation of a first training text book and it was hoped that a first edition would be printed and published in the near future.

Colonel Rait-Kerr had made such an intense study of the problems of modern County Cricket as well as the Laws of the game, that he was the ideal person to act as author of this proposed guide.

The General Secretary also said that great forward strides had been made towards the development of the training pathway. Members would soon be hearing of the intention to encourage and foster local discussion groups. It had been felt that many members might be willing to hold group meetings of 3 or 4 members who live conveniently near to one another at their homes. The Association Education and Training Committee would be sending out topics and guidance for discussion within these groups and would hope to receive resultant feedback.

The General Secretary had been very carefully into the arrangements necessary for the production of an instructional film on Umpiring and had reported back his findings to the Executive Committee.

Unfortunately, the estimated cost of such an initiative at this time would have been in excess of £600 and thus further progress on this laudable intention had to remain on the table for the time being.

In conjunction with Douglas Field, Tom Smith had also devised an administrative system of three stages for the introduction for new applicants to qualified membership and this procedure was to stand the test for many future years.

At this time of development, the need for the appointments of a "Despatch Officer" and a "Registrar" had not been

immediately apparent but Bert Woodford (known as "Woody") had started to assume the mantle of an incipient officer to be subsequently identified for the former function. "Woody" was a commercial traveller and a great ACU enthusiast. On his long journeys around the country he would think little of pulling into a lay-by and addressing numerous envelopes. Indeed, virtually all who regularly attended Association meetings in these early days took part in addressing envelopes for the distribution of the newsletter "How's That?"

Concluding his Report, The General Secretary said that fourteen public meetings had been convened in the year, which, with the additional numerous Executive and sub-committee meetings, meant that all officers and Committee members had been worked to the full. Certainly, much more had been achieved over this very short period than had ever been visualised at the inaugural meeting and the prevailing mood overall was one of high optimism for the future.

In presenting his Financial Accounts for approval, the Hon. Treasurer, Maurice Cruse, said how finely balanced the financial affairs of the Association were. Incredible though it might seem in later years, at the end of its first year of its life the Association remained solvent with a credit balance of £4 and its wide-ranging affairs had been conducted with a total income of just over £60. To have ended such an active year with a credit balance, however small, was a remarkable achievement in itself but this had been only due to the generosity of members when "a hat had been passed round" at

meetings to offset the cost of room hire and to the benevolence of officers and committee members spending freely from their own pockets.

The very limited financial reserves referred to in the presentation of the first year's financial accounts hindered some aspects of desired development and an appeal letter, signed personally by the President, would shortly be circulated to Clubs and Cricket Associations to elicit hopeful support.

Mr. R.C.H. Connolly also suggested that consideration should be given to an additional category of Life Membership. This was agreed in principle and should become effective coincident with the introduction of the next revision of Association Rules.

Further discussion also highlighted the suggestion that, in equity, it would be only reasonable to levy fees for entry to the Association's examinations (hitherto, at no cost to aspiring candidates as an incentive to Association recruitment). An undertaking was given that such a recommendation would be referred to the Executive Committee for further thought with a view to its subsequent implementation.

All former Officers and Executive Committee members were re-elected unopposed. The General Secretary was made very happy when under "Any other business", a resolution, proposed by Douglas Field, supported by Douglas Jardine, that "The appreciation and thanks of the Association should be conveyed to the wife of the General Secretary for the assistance she had so unselfishly given in

furthering the affairs and success of the Association. “Winnie” had been both a football and Cricket “widow” for many years but over recent months had uncomplainingly given much time to the telephone and correspondence (even to callers during the day) and on several occasions had acted as hostess to ACU working parties held at 59, St. Georges Road, Mitcham, during evenings and week-ends.

In retrospect, it is difficult to grasp that all that has been written up to this point has referred to activity undertaken by ACU in its first year. It is equally difficult to find the appropriate epithet to describe the volume, intensity and variety of all that had been achieved – remarkable, impressive, extraordinary, miraculous, outstanding, phenomenal, and wonderful are some alternative possibilities. Certainly, the Association’s numerical growth and range of activities in its first twelve months had been all of these.

Suffice to say, there is no doubt that ACU’s first steps away from the chaos which had existed in Cricket Umpiring prior to its formation had been arduous. There was little doubt, either, that the direction taken by the Association had been correct. ACU had by now been well on its way to being recognised by all powers as the authoritative body on all matters related to umpires and umpiring; their education, training, qualification, post graduate refreshment, status, welfare and general interests. The amount of time and dedicated effort expended by its officers, its Executive Committee and individual members themselves had exceeded all expectations

and the intangible and unquenchable enthusiasm that was evident in all facets of the embryo organisation over this period became an incentive for others to emulate on the long journey towards credibility that lay ahead. All could look forward to continuing the pilgrimage with great optimism.

(Authors Note: This is a convenient point at which to conclude the third installment of the current series of papers. The next issue of the ESCUA Newsletter will feature the next stage of ACUs development as its strides lengthen and the gradient becomes steeper).

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