

NEWSLETTER

Dear Members,

I trust you are all having an enjoyable season. Your committee met recently and planned forthcoming training and other events (see right). One of these includes a trip to Lord's to tour the ground. Please could you let me know if you are interested and, if so, whether you would prefer a day during the week or at the weekend.



In the last newsletter, I mentioned our Chairman, Steve Hodge, was acting as an umpire (what's new, I hear you say?). For those who missed his five seconds of fame, he can be spotted holding up the door of the dressing room in the still photo above.

The MCC have recently issued the fourth edition of the Laws of Cricket 2000. Details can be found on the ECB ACO website <http://www.ecb.co.uk/ecb/ecb-association-of-cricket-officials/ecb-aco-news/fourth-edition-of-the-laws-of-cricket-approved,311115,EN.html>

Best of luck with the rest of the season and happy officiating!

John Flatley, Secretary & Webmaster ESCUSA

THE EVOLVING GAME BY JOHN MOULTON (EAST SURREY UMPIRE TUTOR)

Cricket is evolving. Ten years ago we would not have known about T20 or the reverse sweep, and twenty years ago reverse swing and the doosra would have been a complete mystery. The game of cricket has clearly not always been the same.

In the early 1700's there would have been many related versions of a similar game. We see the echoes of this in Stoolball, Rounders and other pursuits. For example, we



have an early requirement that umpires stand close to the stumps so that batsmen can register a notch by touching the umpire (or more likely the bat he habitually carried!). In a variation there was a hole between the two stumps. The bat had to be put in the hole (the popping hole) before the ball if the batter was not to be run out. There must have been many bruised hands from the ball being put in the hole just before the bat reached it! (continued over the page...)

Dates for your diary

8 September 2010

An end of season get together for umpires is being held at the Oval. This is the second day of the LV Division 2 County Championship fixture between Surrey CCC and Glamorgan CCC and we will be holding a question and answer session half an hour after the close of play (around 6pm) with the match umpires.

4 November 2010

Annual General Meeting (venue to be confirmed).

6 and 13 November 2010

Level I ECB Umpiring course is being held at Reigate Grammar School.

18 February 2011

Carvery night for members being held at Toby Inn, Redhill.

5 and 12 March 2011

Separate Level I ECB Umpiring and Scorers courses are being held at Reigate Grammar School.

February or March 2011

Tour of Lord's (date and price to be confirmed).

THE EVOLVING GAME (CONTINUED)

Those of us who have enjoyed the pleasure of heavy traffic on a journey to Hastings may well have glanced to the left just after Robertsbridge to see Poppinghole Lane.

As far as most historians are concerned, the Laws first became codified in 1744. From that sort of time, we can certainly see a unified game played to standard rules. However, just because the rules became standardised did not mean that game would no longer change. It is interesting to note that the majority of changes to the Law have been brought about by the bowler and it is to this end that I will look at the bowler and how his role has progressed.

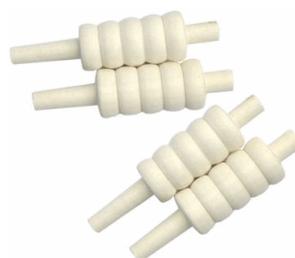
You will note that the very word “bowl” suggests that the ball was rolled along the ground. There is no doubt that this was common, but it has been suggested that length bowling also had its place. Early bats were shaped like thick hockey sticks to cope best with the rolling style. The ball would leap from the pitch just because of the bad ground that was common. As pitches improved this jumping from the pitch was replicated by length bowling. Bats had to change shape and became much more recognisable to our eyes – straight with a flat face to hit the ball with.

Bowling was underhand at this time and the first Law that we have that legislates for the method of delivery is dated before 1811. The ball is to be bowled under-hand and delivered with the hand below the elbow. This is the first attempt to obstruct the growth of “throwing bowling”. In the 18th century there had been few problems with the method of delivery although we should not think the methods were uniform. Consider this description of the Hambledon bowler David Harris – considered the greatest bowler of his age. “His mode of delivering the ball was very singular. He would bring it from under the arm by a twist, and nearly as high as his arm-pit, and with this action push it, as it were, from him. How it was that the balls acquired the velocity they did by this mode of delivery, I could never comprehend”.

From about the turn of the 19th century some bowlers began to raise their arms in order to gain extra pace and action from the pitch. Before 1817 the Law was again changed in an attempt to halt the “march of intellect” but this change was so complex that it did nothing to halt the inevitable raising of the bowlers arm. “The ball must be bowled (not thrown or jerked) and delivered

underhand, with the hand below the elbow. But if the ball be jerked, or the arm extended from the body horizontally, and any part of the back of the hand be uppermost, or the hand horizontally extended when the ball is delivered, the umpire shall call “No Ball”” Try standing at the strikers end and making any sort of judgement on that law! On May 19th 1828 as a sequel to experimental round-arm matches, the law was changed making it crystal clear that the bowler must keep his hand below the elbow. But bowlers continued to transgress to the extent where by 1835 round-arm bowling was legalised. “The ball must be bowled. If it be thrown or jerked, or if the hand be above the shoulder in the delivery, the umpire shall call “No Ball”.

In the modern game the nearest we have to this type of delivery would be Lasith Malinga. The



players of this time such as Harvey Fellows and Alfred Mynn (The Lion of Kent) achieved great pace but tended to be erratic.

By 1845 umpires must call “No Ball” if they were not “absolutely satisfied” that the hand is

below the shoulder. But the bowler continued to seek advantage by raising his hand in delivery. In 1863 a proposal to allow over-arm bowling was not accepted at a General Meeting of the MCC, but on June 10th 1864 it was approved in the terse phrase “The ball must be bowled”. This action, together with the simultaneous emergence of W G Grace ushered in the modern game.

Malinga shows that round-arm bowling did not die. Underarm bowling took its time to expire too. G H T Simpson-Hayward was plying his lonely trade as a lob bowler (underhand) up until the start of the Great War in 1914. But following the War the method had died out in the first class game although such methods were still common on the village green. Finally, on February 1st 1981 Trevor Chappell was instructed to bowl underarm (along the ground) to Brian McKechnie to deny New Zealand the chance of a win a ODI. Underarm became underhand. This outrage again changed the Law such that underarm bowling is now only allowed by special agreement before the match. I, for one, think this is a great pity.