



# SUSSEX CRICKET SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Patron: John Barclay DL

President: David Bowden MBE

Chair: Vacant

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Website:

[www.sussexcricketsociety.org](http://www.sussexcricketsociety.org)

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## **2022/2023 Society Programme**

Draft schedule :

Oct 12 – Evening meeting incl AGM  
Nov 16 – Lunch  
Dec 14 – Lunch  
Jan 11 – Lunch  
Feb 15 – Lunch  
Mar 22 – Afternoon Tea

All dates are Wednesdays.

**Renewals** – Thanks to all who have renewed including those who have done so in the last month. As is normally the case, members who have not renewed will be removed from the Society's mailing list with effect from July. We will be in contact with these people in the next few weeks.

*Any views expressed in the newsletter are those of the writer, not those of the Committee of the Society.*

**Cheteshwar Pujara**. Not often to start the newsletter with a series of numbers, so far his run of scores have been 6, 201 not out, 109, 12, 203, 16, 170 not out and 3. 720 runs at an average of 120 from five matches so far this season. Bradmanesque stats, though this year with so much high scoring around the Counties, Pujara is not alone with such a run of scores. Derby's Shan Masood (844 at 93.77), Durham's Sean Dickson (750 at 68.48) and in Division 1 Kent's Ben Compton (878 at 109.75) and Yorkshire's Harry Brook (840 at 140). The latter has deservedly earned Brook a call up to the England test squad and I hope the new management will blood him during the upcoming Test series with New Zealand.

But back to Pujara, it is not just the volume of runs, significant as they are, but also the manner in which they have been made, it has been a real delight watching him. Studious defence, leaving the ball so well and always keen to score and keep the scoreboard ticking over (even relatively good balls are scored off with care). In attack it is the range of strokeplay, deflections through the slip area, glances to fine leg which show a mastery of angles, wristy drives both off and leg, forcing shots off the back foot through the covers and even more violent hits through the leg side. And always seemingly to find gaps in the field sometimes delaying his shot, sometimes angling his bat.

A couple of other mentions, firstly when stumped against Durham a Sussex member raised his voice saying "He's out, he's out!" – such was his surprise. And then a week later against Middlesex his duel with the outstanding 22 year old Pakistan left arm quick bowler, Shaheen Shah Afridi, A true battle albeit on a batting friendly pitch between two outstanding international cricketers. Some years ago such duels were regular sights in county cricket, but rarely nowadays, certainly in Division 2. Pujara could easily have gone early – he got off the mark with an uppercut six off Afridi though not that far from the boundary fielder, from then it was Pujara the master. The young Sussex batters who have batted with him, notably Haines at Derby, Clark a couple of times and Orr will surely have learnt a lot.

A true craftsman and a pleasure to watch. His excellent run with Sussex has seen a recall to the India Test squad for the one-off test against England at Edgbaston starting on 1<sup>st</sup> July, just two days after Sussex's next home championship match with Derbyshire, this call up casts doubts on his appearance not only in that game but also in the previous one in Cardiff.

**Society News** – Likely dates for the winter season are shown in the left-hand column. The October event, the only evening one, will be our AGM followed as usual with a review of the season just past. Then its all afternoons, with the current plan for lunches with the exception of the March event which will be an "afternoon tea". David Harrison is working on booking speakers, these will be advised to you when known. We also need to finalise the arrangements for the lunches. Reasoning for the changes to mainly lunches. Firstly some of the evening events, particularly in inclement weather were on the low side, secondly the room hire fee applied by Sodexo/Sussex does not apply if we have food with the event, thirdly some other Societies, for instance neighbouring Hampshire's have moved to lunches with considerable success. An "afternoon tea" event is planned again for March as most present seemed to deem the one held last March a success.

No Presidents Day event (the intended successor to the Garden Party) this year, instead we aim to hold an "open / social event" in the Museum on 12<sup>th</sup> July during the lunch interval of the Championship game with Leicestershire. As it is in the museum there will be no food or drink, just a social get-together and opportunity to promote both the Society and Museum.

As this newsletter was being completed, came the sad news that **Jim Parks** died at the age of 90. Next month there will be an appreciation of him, he was no doubt a favourite for many. In the meantime our condolences go to his wife Jenny, children Bobby and Louise as well as to his many friends.

**Sussex news** – the first batch of championship games ended without a win, three draws and three defeats. In a number of these games, including the defeats, Sussex at times were ahead of the game only to fall away. Arguably they were unfortunate to only draw at Leicester when over twenty overs were lost to rain on the last afternoon creating an opportunity for Leicestershire's tail to rescue a draw. Too often though sides were say 50 for 4 in the first innings only to recover to 300+ exposing the lack of experience in the Sussex bowling line-up, too many still learning their craft. The batters have fared slightly better. Alsop has now had a couple of good games. Youngsters Clark, who added a second century to his 100 in the opening match along with a couple of fifties, and Orr continue to show potential. Plus of course captain Haines. So team wise it is still very much work in progress, or as one player and possibly head coach Ian Salisbury said a "project".

So now the season moves on to the T20 Blast and a very different Sussex side. In addition to the likes of Ravi Bopara and Luke Wright as many as five overseas players are lined up to allow for various international commitments. (New Zealand batter/keeper Tim Seifert and West Indian left arm quick bowler Obed McCoy who played for Rajasthan Royals in the IPL, are added to the earlier announced Rashid Khan, Rizwan and Phillippe) It appears that Rashid Khan may be available for the later stages and with Mohammed Rizwan available for most of the group Sussex will have hopes of progression to the knock out stages at least assuming a decent start can be achieved. So no doubting Sussex's ambitions in the T20 Blast.

**Sussex Second Eleven's T20** side are currently top of their regional group and look almost certain to feature in the "finals day" at Arundel on 9<sup>th</sup> June (10.30am start). For many of the early games it has barely been a second eleven, indeed I saw a game at Horsham with both Rizwan and Phillippe playing along with Bopara, Finn, Beer, Mills, Lenham, Garton, Rawlins. Still I suspect that a number of counties have used this competition as a warm up for the T20 Blast. Certainly Hampshire's side that day had some first team players. Yet on that day it was Olli Carter, not one of the T20 Blast regulars, who effectively won the game with a six and four in the final three balls to earn victory. That game though was before the Blast began hence so many of the "Blast stars" playing. The following day when most of the Blast players were absent Alistair Orr shone with the bat and continued to do so in following games. It will be informative to see the sort of side Sussex field should they reach finals day, a day after the first team play Surrey at the Oval.

**"Field Of Dreams – 150 Years at The County Ground"** – by Patrick Ferriday and James Mettyear. This well researched book, published by Brighton based Von Krumm Publishing, tells the story of the current Eaton Road ground going back to 1872 when Sussex moved in from their previous Brunswick ground which was nearer the seafront through to current days. It includes some of the early pre-use planning (prior to Sussex's use it was just a field of barley). The tale recounts the various developments in terms of buildings, the Pavilion, dressing rooms (back in the early days professionals had a separate building in the South West corner whereas the amateurs had use of the main pavilion. Also mentioned are the various seating facilities which of course have changed very much over time (and are still doing so). Likewise the original hotel (and stables!) which over time became the now demolished Cricketers Pub. The book also touches on Sussex's performances over the 150 years, not only the triumphs and great players but also the low points along with various financial struggles. I also liked the section on the groundsmen over the years, a vital yet often overlooked role. The second portion of the book covers views, as told to the authors, from various people, former players John Barclay, John Spencer, Peter Graves, and then also some spectators including some Society members, many we may know personally. A couple of minor quibbles: the lack of an index in a work of this type, and the print font, well in the book I have, varies in places from the usual black to a lighter grey in colour. These notwithstanding, a thoroughly interesting and readable tale supported with a range of pictures from the 1870s through to recent years and provides much information on Sussex's history at Eaton Road. Priced £17 available either from Sussex's club shop or the publishers.

**Clubs – Sussex League.** In the Premier Division after four rounds of games East Grinstead and Roffey head the table, each having won all of their games, they are not due to meet until 25<sup>th</sup> June, then again on 27<sup>th</sup> August, the penultimate round. These could be key games depending on how both fare in other games. East Grinstead's line up had been strengthened by the acquisition of Harry Finch and return of Finn Hudson-Prentice adding to likes of Lewis Hatchett and Will Adkin, the latter made a fine 132 against Horsham. Roffey still have the impressive Rohit Jagota, allied to a fine all round team ethos. Roffey's run of wins almost came to an end in the fourth round at Three Bridges winning by just nine runs after making 268. Finally just a mention for Mike Burney who made 185 For Preston Nomads 4<sup>th</sup> team in a Division 8 Central game against Colemans Hatch at the beginning of July, a game not surprisingly Nomads won.