

COLOURED TROUSERS No 39



NCCA CLUBBERLY COUNTY CHAMPIONS 2025 BUCKS COUNTY CRICKET CLUB NEWSLETTER

Editor: Bill Scholes

Just one away now from the 40th edition of Coloured Trousers, amazing how quickly time flies when you are having fun! The long winter wait was over as we began the 2026 campaign at the end of April. As last year, we started off with the group matches in the 50 over One Day Trophy, and are following this with the T20 competition, concluding with the Clubberly County Championship, of which we are the current champions. Unlike many previous campaigns, there is good news to report right from the start as we won all 4 of our Group matches, topping the table and thereby qualifying for the Quarter Final stage which takes place this coming Sunday at High Wycombe CC. This is actually the first time since 2009 that we have reached the Quarter Finals, so if you are free and wondering what to do on Sunday, why not pop down to High Wycombe and show your support to the lads in their quest to reach the Semi-Finals. Match commences at 11.00am.

The emphasis this season has been very much on youth development, and the team that began our T20 campaign last week against Bedfordshire was probably the youngest in our long history. Douglas Miller and/or Mike Knox will no doubt correct me if I am wrong! Also, 11 of the 12 who played against Bedfordshire have been part of the Pathway system and this is an amazing statistic, and one of which Bucks CCC/Bucks Cricket should be very proud. In cases like this, plaudits usually, and rightly, go to the players involved, but we must not forget what a tremendous group of coaches we have, starting with the very young age groups up to the not quite so young! Of course, at the top of the coaching pyramid is Bucks Head of Performance Jason Harrison, who must be immensely proud of the progress made to date.

PRE SEASON FRIENDLY

Bertie Forman made an entertaining debut for Bucks when they beat Northants Academy by 84 runs in a pre season warm-up friendly at Tring Park. The 21 year-old former Sussex all-rounder Bertie Forman smashed 40 off 26 balls, including 24 off one over as Bucks rattled up 348-9 from their 50 overs. The main contributors were Aadi Sharma, who is also registered with Northants, with 68 from 82 balls and Ed Horsley, whose 65 came off 64 balls. Another debutant Matt Pardoe, was bowled by Beaconsfield teenager Ben Taylor for 26. Archie Dodds slammed 30 from 17 balls in the closing overs.

Northants Academy's reply was led by Adam Fox (79) and Alex Corbett (73) but they never looked like reaching the stiff target, even before Foreman made his second significant contribution to the game as he wrapped the innings for 264 in 49 overs with a spell of 5-68 from his eventful ten overs.

And now onto the serious stuff.....

NCCA ONE DAY KO TROPHY _ Results and Reports

We commenced our One Day Trophy campaign with two away matches, before following on with two home matches.

1st Round Wales NC v Bucks 26 April Bucks won by 8 runs

The closest contest of the day was in the Group Four match at Usk where Buckinghamshire beat Wales NC by eight runs. Former Herefordshire captain Matt Pardoe made a half century on his competitive debut for Bucks and shared a fifth wicket partnership of 95 with another debutant Bertie Foreman who made 61 on his National Counties debut. Bertie also played an important role with three wickets as Bucks squeezed home after Rhodri Lewis (51 not out) and Alex Russell (42) had threaten to win it for Wales.

Bucks, put in to bat by the hosts, made a poor start, slumping to 39-4 to the bowling of Ollie Sherwood (4-44). They were rescued by Foreman, who hit 61 from 85 balls, and Matt Pardoe with a more measured 59 from 96 balls. Further useful contributions from Ed Bragg (34) and skipper Conner Haddow (21) helped Bucks reach 216 all out in their 50 overs. Archie Dodds (3-30) struck early for Bucks as Wales also made a poor start against the new ball, slipping to 23-3. Their innings followed a similar pattern to Bucks's as Rhodri Lewis (51) and Alex Russell (42) led a recovery. Spinners Foreman (3-25) and Haddow (2-29) worked their way through the middle order to leave Wales struggling at 177-8. The tail-enders offered resistance before they were all out for 208 - Lewis being was last man out when he was taken at long off trying to clear the ropes off seamer Archie Dodds.

2nd Round Oxfordshire v Bucks 3rd May Bucks won by 109 runs

A spectacular innings by Josh Lincoln helped Bucks hammered Oxfordshire by 109 runs in their second National Counties Trophy group game at Thame on Sunday. Having been put in to bat on a slow pitch, Bucks were really struggling at 100-6 from 32 overs before Lincoln, playing only his second game of the county, transformed the game. The

Lincoln and Ed Bragg, who scored 42 from 44 balls, added 123 for the seventh wicket in just 12 overs and enabled Bucks to reach an impressive 257-8 from their 50 overs. The hosts never looked like getting close after losing skipper Harrison Ward in the first over of their reply. Tight bowling, led by skipper Conner Haddow's 3-15 from 9.1

overs, and some brilliant fielding, highlighted by two super catches in the deep by Billy Dodds saw Oxon succumb to 148 in the 41st over. Following their two wins, Bucks top Group 4 and will be hoping to virtually seal their place in the knock-out stages of this competition when they host Dorset at Tring Park this Sunday.

3rd Round Bucks v Dorset 10th May Bucks won by 76 runs

Bucks secured their place in the quarter-finals of the National Counties Trophy with a convincing 76-run victory over Dorset at Tring Park on Sunday. It was Bucks's third victory in three games and leaves them top of the group with one game to play. Victory over Cornwall at Tring next Sunday will guarantee them a home draw in the last eight on June 7th. Bucks who were put in to bat, opened uniquely with a pair of brothers Billy and Archie Dodds, the latter being promoted up the order following the withdrawal of Sheridan Gumbs. The High Wycombe lads put on 31 in eight overs before Billy, the regular opener departed for 23. Archie, normally a tailender, went on to reach a notable 50 off 90 balls, sharing a third-wicket stand of 88 with Matt Pardoe. The fluent Pardoe scored 58 from 62 balls with a six and six fours to set up a useful platform. Further contributions from George Harvey, Bertie Foreman and Josh Lincoln, whose 39 came off only 22 balls, lifted Bucks to 264-8 from their 50 overs. High Wycombe batter smashed 87 from just 44 balls with an amazing eight sixes and fours, taking particular toll on the Oxfordshire on spinners.

4th Round Bucks v Cornwall 17th May Bucks won by 2 wickets

Back at Tring Park for 4th and final group match, Bucks gained a dramatic two-wicket victory over Cornwall to end up topping the table and thereby securing top spot in the group, thus guaranteeing a home match in the Quarter Finals. There was only one over left when George Harvey struck the match-winning boundary after nail-biting contest to leave Bucks top of their group with four wins out of four.

It means that Bucks will now entertain Berkshire in the last eight of the 50-over competition at High Wycombe on Sunday June 7.

Bucks skipper Conner Haddow put Cornwall into bat and did most to restrict the visitors to 210-9 from their 50 overs. Haddow returned excellent figures of 3-16 from his ten overs. Archie Dodds took 4-52 from his ten.

Despite a robust 67 from 86 balls by Paul Smith, Devon were always struggling to set a challenging total on a flat pitch and fast outfield.

Billy Dodds, with 40 from 73 balls, laid a solid platform for Bucks's reply alongside Great Brickhill debutant Rhys Nicholas, who overcame a circumspect start to score a valuable 35.

The match was still on a knife edge with Bucks on 104-3 after 30 overs when the game was held up for 35 minutes by a shower. If they match had ended then it would have been a tie with the DLS scores level.

On resumption with no loss of overs Bucks lost wickets when they looked in a winning position before Harvey, with an unbeaten 30 from 32 balls, saw them over the line with an over to spare.

QUARTER FINAL DRAW – Sunday 7th June

Bucks v Berkshire	@ High Wycombe
Wiltshire v Oxfordshire	@ Warminster
Cumbria v Staffordshire	@ Carlisle
Norfolk v Cheshire	@ Sprowston

NCCA T20 COMPETITION

Although the One, Day Trophy has not yet reached its conclusion, the T20 competition has now begun with our first matches(2 per day) taking place last week. Our opponents were Bedfordshire, report below, and we also have Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Wales NC in our group.

Bucks staged a remarkable turn-around to share the honours with Bedfordshire in their NCCA T20 Cup double-header at Leighton Buzzard on Sunday.

After losing the first group match by seven wickets, Bucks thrashed the hosts by 107 runs in the second game to finish the day on a high note.

After being put into bat in the first game, Bucks were well-placed at 112-3 after 11 overs thanks to cameos from Rhys Nicholas (46), Josh Lincoln (35 from 14 balls) and Aadi Sharma (34). But they could not press home and collapsed to 164 all out in 19.2 overs, an under-par score on the small ground. Beds cruised home at 165-3 in 15.1 overs thanks to a spectacular 82 from 37 balls by Jamie Dunk, who hit six sixes and seven fours.

The second game also appeared to be going Bedfordshire's way when Bucks slipped to 77-5 after choosing to bat first.

But a superb stand of 107 in just 65 balls between Great Brickhill's Nicholas and Gerrards Cross captain Teddy Fleming turned the innings around.



Rhys Nicholas



Teddy Fleming

Photos; Andy Bone (Sports Shots)

Nicholas made 62 off 48 balls with three sixes and three fours, but he was outshone by Fleming whose unbeaten 66 came off just 38 balls with six sixes and three fours. Bucks reached 192-7 from their 20 overs. So many balls were lost that there were fears that there might not be enough spares to finish the game.

Once Dunk had been dismissed, the Beds reply fell away dramatically as pace-off bowling and some safe catching in the deep saw them collapse to 85 all out in 14.2 overs. Bucks skipper Conner Hadow produced outstanding figures of 3-6 in 3.2 overs.

Our next match in this competition is a double header with Oxfordshire at Marlow CC on June14.

BUCKS 1st X1 FIXTURES 2026

NCCA 50 OVERS KNOCKOUT

Quarter Final	7 th June	BERKSHIRE	HIGH WYCOMBE
Semi Final	28 th June	TBA	
Final	19 th July	TBA	Copdock & Old Ipswichian cc

NCCA T20 COMPETITION (2 matches per day)

Date	Opposition	Venue
May 31	Bedfordshire	Leighton Buzzard
June 14	OXFORDSHIRE	MARLOW
June 21	Berkshire	Wokingham
July 5	WALES NC	MARLOW
Super 12's	9 August	
Finals Day	30 August	Wormsley

NCCA COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

Date	Opposition	Venue
July 12-14	STAFFORDSHIRE	CHESHAM
July 26-28	Northumberland	Jesmond TBC
Aug 2-4	SUFFOLK	CHESHAM
Aug 23-25	Cambridgeshire	Peterborough Town
Final Sept 6-9		West Bromwich Dartmouth

NCCA SHOWCASE MATCH – 50 OVERS

Date	Opposition	Venue
July 2	MIDDLESEX	WORMSLEY

Bertie Forman

Bucks Cricket can confirm that Bertie Foreman has joined Kent Cricket on a two-month deal covering the Rothesay County Championship and Vitality Blast, subject to ECB clearance. **The** all-rounder joined Bucks at the start of the season and has been a great addition to the Bucks Men's squad. Everybody at Bucks Cricket wishes Bertie the very best of luck.

"It's fantastic news that Bertie has secured a short-term deal with Kent. Since joining us, he has been first class in every department and fully deserves this opportunity."

National Counties cricket serves two key purposes: firstly, to provide some of the most competitive competitions just below first-class level, and secondly, to give players the opportunity to showcase their skills and move up the ladder, as Bertie has done. It's another great example of the value of NCCA cricket."

— Jason Harrison, Head of Performance

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CLUBS

Aadi Sharma has left High Wycombe to move nearer to his home in the north of the County and has joined Stony Stratford.

BUCKS WOMEN – 2026 REPORTS and FIXTURES

The new Women's Domestic Cricket Structure - a 3-tiered county-based system.- got off to a flying start last season and, no surprise, is continuing along the same lines. Tiers 1 and 2 are comprised of the First Class counties whilst Tier 3, which is where Bucks are, is made up of National Counties clubs split into a Division 1 & Division 2,. Bucks are in Division One for 2026 for both the 50 over and T20 formats.

Tier 3 Division 1: Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Devon, Hertfordshire Staffordshire, Wiltshire

Buckinghamshire Women will again compete in all 3 of these new(ish) competitions in 2026 :

1. **Metro Bank One Day Cup – Women's League Three (Div 1)**
2. **Vitality Blast – Women's League Three (Division 1 – South)**
3. **Vitality T20 Women's County Cup (open to all Tier, Tier 2 and Tier 3 teams)**

Match Reports to date

Once again under the leadership of Captain Cara Duggan, Bucks have made a strong start to this years campaigns, winning their first two rounds of the T20 Women's Cup - the equivalent to the FA Cup. A victory in the 1st Round against Suffolk, was followed by a 2nd Round win against Norfolk, thus qualifying for the 3rd Round. In the same way as the FA Cup, this is where the big guns enter the competition and Bucks have been drawn away to one of the biggest - Lancashire.

Up for the Cup

Round One: Bucks Women reached Round 2 of the Vitality T20 Women's County Cup in dramatic fashion, defeating Suffolk with just one ball to spare . After winning the toss and electing to bowl first, Bucks Women started up with a maiden over from Natasha MacBean. The first wicket fell in the fourth over after a sharp Amelia Ridgway throw was enough to run out Dia Nair (12). After an expensive third over from MacBean, a second wicket was taken by Cara Duggan, getting the ball to swing considerably into Evie Brooker's middle/leg stump. Momentum was hard to come by for the home side, and Bucks continued to mount pressure by restricting the hosts to no boundaries in 5 consecutive overs.

Eva Lewis was next to strike taking two-in-two, dismissing Charlotte Anderson (31) and Megan Haynes for a golden duck, reducing Suffolk to 63/4 after 12 overs. Sky Springett then followed up with a wicket of her own in the 13th over, before conceding 17 runs from her next over to Sophie Hughes, who was looking to push the tempo.

Hughes kept the runs flowing deep into the Suffolk innings before finally falling to MacBean for an excellent 54 from 38 balls. With just one over to go, Captain Duggan conceded just 2 runs from it, and Bucks were set 125 to win.

A very measured start saw Rosie Burton-Pye and Afra Rose Mohamed pick their moments as they put on an impressive 69-run opening partnership before Burton-Pye was run out for 39. Duggan was next in, and the steady runs continued to flow for Bucks until the skipper was trapped LBW for 15, leaving her side 24 runs to win from 22 balls. After a brief wobble of Tegan Stockdale being dismissed for 4, Tilly Fellows stepped up with a brilliant 19th over. 14 runs scored between her and Mohamed, including a high risk high reward ramp shot, took Bucks to within 4 runs of the winning total. Despite an incredibly tight over from Analise Merritt, Mohamed was able to squeeze the winning run with just one ball to spare, sealing an incredibly close victory, and booking their place in Round 2, which means a home tie against Norfolk at Ascott Park

Round Two: Annie Townsend (51) and Cara Duggan (44) steered Bucks into Round 3 of the Vitality T20 Women's County Cup with a 56-run victory over Norfolk at Ascott Estate. The victory sets up an exciting away tie against Lancashire, who are the current holders. The match is on 21 June at Neston CC.

After a superb 91-run partnership, Townsend's brilliant innings, featuring seven boundaries, came to an end following an incredible one-handed catch by Georgia Demetriou at cow corner. Duggan continued to accelerate and featured in a 19-run over alongside Tilly Fellows before eventually being dismissed for a well-made 44. Amy Morris was the pick of the bowlers for the away side, who recently defeated Tier 2 Sussex, claiming 3-26 from four overs. Bucks finished their 20 overs on 157-7, which looked a strong total on a difficult wicket.

In reply, Bucks "put in a clinical performance", as described by Head Coach Ben Ungaretti, with Zaynah Wani leading the way by taking 4-16 from four overs. Despite Niamh Rushton and Jade Hoyte scoring 23 runs each, Wani's wickets, alongside Bucks' exemplary fielding, mounted pressure on Norfolk. Tash MacBean produced a smart tip onto the stumps to dismiss opener Bella Borges, while catches from Tegan Stockdale and Fellows ensured the away side fell short of 157, as Bucks booked themselves a huge third-round clash against Lancashire.

Round Three: Lancashire v Bucks Women

Bucks have also started their 2026 Vitality T20 campaign strongly winning both matches against Hertfordshire

Batting first in both games, Bucks posted 153/7 and 163/6 respectively in front of a well-spirited crowd at Wormsley Cricket Ground. It was a debut to remember for Essex Academy loanee Amelie Bishop, as she starred with the bat, top scoring in Game One (40) and Game Two (73). Notably, in the second game, she shared an impressive 106-run partnership with Annie Townsend, who scored 46.

Debutant Afra Rose Mohamed opened up with 21 runs, and Tilly Fellows smashed 37 from just 22 balls in Game One, finding the boundary six times on her way to posting 153.

After a steady start from Hertfordshire, Bucks took 3 wickets in 4 overs through Natasha MacBean and a Tegan Stockdale run out, which restricted the visitors to 24/3 in the power play. Bishop followed up with a wicket in her first over, and Herts found themselves 39/4 at the halfway stage. The clinical bowling continued, with MacBean finishing her 4-over spell with 3-17, and debutant Eva Lewis opened her account for Bucks with 2 wickets. It was a brilliant all-round display from Bucks Women in Game One, and they sealed a comfortable 69-run victory.

After batting first once again, it was the Townsend and Bishop show as they ran up the total in an explosive 71-ball partnership, bringing Bucks up to an improved total of 163/6. Elizabeth Clune was the pick of the bowlers for Hertfordshire as she picked up 3-25 from 4 overs. Once again, it was a steady start from Herts before losing 3 wickets in one eventful MacBean over, with Bishop taking two catches and Cara Duggan running out Reese Nash with a direct hit.

That didn't stop the away side's momentum for too long as they reached 55/3 with 10 overs to go, before Lewis struck with back-to-back LBWs, reducing Hertfordshire to 58/5.

There was hope for the visitors after a costly Stockdale over went for 15 runs before she made amends with a wicket on the final ball of the 14th over. After a spirited effort from Eva Cullen (39), she fell in the final over of the run chase to Charlie Mailey, and they fell 47 runs short of the total.

Next up was a trip up to Warrington to face Cheshire where the honours were shared between the two clubs.. Bucks won the first game by 5 wkts, Capt Cara Duggan starring with 34 as Bucks chased down 71-9, but lost the second game by 46 runs. The hosts posted 133-6 but Bucks were all out for 87.

After 5 wins and one loss, Bucks sit proudly at top of the table with 26 points, including the 10 bonus points.

Next up was Staffordshire at home in the lovely setting of Ascott Park.

.Game One saw Bucks Women asked to bat by the travelling side, and they set a very competitive 166. Runs from Cara Duggan (43) and Annie Townsend (31) set up a score which could have been larger if not for a superb four-over spell from Anusha Chauhan, who conceded only 19 runs with her spin bowling. Despite early wickets from Charlie Mailey, who dismissed both openers for 12 and 1 respectively, Megan Pittman (70*) and Ava Clive (75*) showed their class with a formidable 148-run partnership to secure the win in Game One.

With both teams on 26 points, it was all to play for in the second game, the prize for the winners being a place in the Vitality Blast Final at Arundel.

Once again, Bucks batted first in Game Two, and this time it was Tilly Fellows (84*) (below) coming in at No5 who produced a standout unbeaten innings of 84. Tilly struck 13 boundaries in a fluent display steering her side to an improved total of 171 with some incredible ball striking around Ascott Estate, a brilliant innings off just 40 balls.



Photo by Luke Stafford

Chauhan was once again the pick of the bowlers for the away side, taking three wickets from four overs. A victory for either side would be enough to secure a place in the final but unfortunately for Bucks, a sensational knock from Lexie Cantrill (92) was supported by Pittman (57), as Staffordshire took control from the early stages, applying pressure throughout the innings.

Full credit to Staffordshire, who came out winners in Game Two and secured first place in **League 3 - Division 1B**, with Bucks Women finishing their T20 campaign in second place, just one point adrift.



Coloured Trousers caught up with Ben Ungaretti , Bucks Women's Head Coach, to reflect on the season so far

Bucks Women have made a good positive start to the season, (almost twice as many matches played as the Mens !), with 7 wins from the 10 matches played. Overall, how do you feel the season has gone to date,

Overall, we're very pleased with how the season has started. Winning our opening few games and progressing in the county cup has given us a strong platform, and the squad has shown a lot of commitment and consistency. There are always areas we can improve, but the players have worked hard throughout the winter and it's been encouraging to see that reflected in our performances on the field

Firstly in the T20 County Cup cup competition with two good wins and a big game to look forward to – almost certainly the biggest game in Bucks Womens history to date ! And as we know from the FA Cup, upsets in the 3rd Round do happen!

The T20 County Cup has been a real highlight so far. We've put in two excellent performances to reach this stage and now have a fantastic opportunity ahead of us. It's certainly one of the biggest fixtures Buckinghamshire Women's cricket has been involved in. We know we'll be underdogs, but cup competitions have a habit of producing surprises and we'll go into the game believing we can compete and give a very good account of ourselves

Secondly in T20 Blast campaign., a good positive start but disappointment at narrowly failing to make the Final again.. You have introduced a few new faces into the squad this season, how have they settled in so far ?

The league campaign was a little frustrating in some respects. We made a strong start and played some very good cricket, so naturally we were disappointed to narrowly miss out on another finals day appearance. However, there were plenty of positives to take from the competition. We continued to develop our style of play, several players stepped up when needed, and the overall standard of cricket was very encouraging. The new players have settled in extremely well. They've fitted into the group quickly, brought fresh energy and competition for places, and have already made valuable contributions both on and off the field. Having greater depth within the squad is important over a long season, and we're pleased with how all of the new additions have adapted

And now looking forward to the 50 over One Day Cup after what was a positive start to this format last season. How do you view the new campaign, presumably aiming to build on the progress shown last season.

We're really looking forward to the 50-over competition. Last season we showed that we can be competitive in this format and there were some very positive performances to build on. The aim this year is to continue developing as a team, improve our consistency and challenge ourselves against every opponent we face. If we keep progressing and playing the brand of cricket we know we're capable of, there's no reason why we can't enjoy another successful campaign.

Success isn't just measured by results. Of course we want to win matches and compete for trophies, but we also want to continue developing players, strengthening the squad and building a positive culture around Buckinghamshire Women's cricket. If we can do those things while remaining competitive in every competition, we'll be very satisfied with how the season develops.

BUCKS WOMEN REMAINING FIXTURES 2026

FRIENDLIES

Date	Opposition	Venue
Aug 18	MCC Women	Wormsley

VITALITY BLAST – LEAGUE 3 NORTH T20 COMPETITION (2 per day)

Date	Opposition	Venue
June 28 FINAL	Staffordshire v Winner Div South	Arundel

VITALITY T20 WOMENS COUNTY CUP

Date	Opposition	Venue
June 7 Round 3	Lancashire	Neston CC

METRO BANK ONE DAY CUP - LEAGUE 3 DIVISION ONE- 50 OVERS

Date	Opposition	Venue
June 14	Devon	Budleigh Salterton
July 12	SHROPSHIRE	HIGH WYCOMBE
July 26	WILTSHIRE	HIGH WYCOMBE
Aug 2	CHESHIRE	HIGH WYCOMBE
Aug 16	Staffordshire	Little Stoke CC
Aug 30	Berkshire	Finchampsted
Sept 6	Cambridgeshire	Fenners

What is the future of County Cricket?

A thoughtful article by Jonathan Lilley, a life member of both Bucks and Middlesex.

The game of professional cricket radically changed in 2003 not only in Britain but throughout the cricketing world. The introduction of 20/20 has found a completely new audience, an audience which enjoys sport to be over as quickly as possible. The 'success' of 20/20 can be seen in the growth of the IPL in India, the Big Bash in Australia and just about all test playing countries having their own versions

While new crowds have certainly been attracted, it has also attracted the double edged sword of money. It is somewhat gratifying that money has been to increase pay of the pool of world class players.

It is also important to note while The 100 is played only in England and Wales it has attracted millions of pounds in sponsorship of the various teams. The ECB has indicated that this windfall will be shared with the first class counties, the national counties and perhaps the community level of cricket. As I understand this money will have strings attached as to what it could be used for.

The effects of these many changes to the game has in essence demonstrated that one day cricket is the main and most important product that cricket has.

The question of the future of Test cricket is also in doubt. One has only to look at the poor crowds in the West Indies, South Africa etc to see that interest is waning. Test cricket remains popular in England, Australia and India. I would however question how long the Ashes can continue in its present form. The Australia tour of this country in 2024 was symbolic that all five tests were played before the start of The 100.

As for England's recent performance last winter, well words fail me.

When Angus Fraser was Director of Cricket at Middlesex he said the main job of the county was to produce players for England. While this is an admirable sentiment I am not sure if all county players would subscribe to this ethos.

What is more important, playing for England or earning thousands of pounds playing one day cricket? I accept the two may not be mutually exclusive.

In this country, county cricket has been pushed to the margins of the season rather than been played throughout the season. While most counties would say winning the county championship is still the blue ribbon competition, in reality some counties specialise in playing one day cricket.

The county championship allows players to develop and learn their trades and I believe this is being lost in the pursuit of money. Unless the DoECB, the eighteen counties and the MCC can agree a correct balance between the county championship and one day cricket then within ten years the county championships will cease to exist and we shall all be poorer for it.

Jonathan Lilley

May 2026

Thanks very much, Jonathan – interesting views. Do **YOU** agree or disagree. Either way, why not write an article and email me. It will be published....unless it's rude??

A Minefield – D R S

Another interesting article from Yahoo Over Cow Corner on a topic currently under general discussion....in both cricket and football.

The Decision Review System. When it was introduced the general ethos was that the process involved would highlight those split second umpiring decisions (think Lauren Winfield-Hill at the Oval a couple of weeks ago) that clearly were human error with the intention of rectifying said error and maintaining some sort of unwritten integrity to the sport. Instead, the DRS is now more famous for its rocking and rolling, is it, is it not, umpire's call, the tracking isn't realistic minutiae and uncertainty that has rendered the whole process a tedious sideshow that threatens to take over the main event.

So it has come to pass for injury substitutes in cricket. Albeit at a significantly quicker speed than DRS. Less than a month after the 2026 county season took its first steps, the injury substitution policy has become entrenched in a minefield of technicalities and subcultures that have tired supporters and the like even before the first tranche of fixtures have reached their conclusion. Is the system required? Undoubtedly so, it is a modern development of the game as DRS was. Examples of teams being disadvantaged because of family bereavements and horrific injuries (Simon Jones at the start of the 2002-03 Ashes or Jordan Cox's bout of appendicitis after a match had begun for instance) need no longer effect matches. But, as with DRS, the policy threatens to be undermined by instances that it wasn't designed for in the first place.

Do the regulations need tightening up? Very much so, although quite why this wasn't foreseen prior to the start of the season is mystifying, but the like for like minefield threatens to provoke many to opine that the system should just be done away with and not introduced in the first place. Which would be rather pointless. How do you decide what is like for like? No two players are the same. Each has different levels of experience, different techniques, different strengths and weaknesses, different aptitudes, different personalities and temperaments, different ways of dealing with particular situations. It is farcical that a county can replace a more experienced player with a lesser equivalent but not the other way round. If 18 year old Ben Mayes breaks his leg are Hampshire to be denied replacing him with an older replacement because they have more experience? If 43 year old Jimmy Anderson pulls up injured is there any outcome that would be deemed suitable? The result of such stringent regulations is surely that teams will start naming larger and larger squads in order to cover as many substitution scenarios as possible. Which is not why the policy was designed.

Some will no doubt retort that had Lancashire been permitted to use Tom Bailey as a substitute during the match against Gloucestershire then the integrity of the contest would have been upset or affected. But the integrity of the game is one of those nebulous entities such as the spirit of cricket that is oft quoted but rarely quantified. One is not advocating that a team should be able to replace an injured batter with a bowler, or vice versa, in order to manipulate a particular match situation, but simply that a little common sense is utilised to ameliorate an unfortunate situation. Cricket may be dominated by numbers and obsesses with statistics and information but the squidgy, organic individuals around which the whole circus hangs are not so binary.

Journalist Ali Martin highlighted in a recent piece for the Guardian that England began the 2019 Ashes with a not fully fit Jimmy Anderson whose injury then flared up during the first test. Curiously, cricket had a precedent for such a scenario if it now took place in a county match. In previous generations a batting team could be denied a runner if the injured batter had begun the game with the injury that now required a runner. Surely an equivalent could be concocted for injured players. However, the flip side is that teams would probably subtly keep a half-fit player's situation under wraps but rules and regulations rarely cover each and every scenario that is concocted by the more creative or Machiavellian members of any particular society.

Nevertheless, nobody who witnessed Luke Wells' excruciating shoulder injury at Bristol would deny that this was a definitive example of why the policy was implemented. But already one suspects that situations are being manipulated and scenarios have arisen where teams would have simply just got on with playing and taken a slight inconvenience on the chin in previous seasons. One coach has even joked about using laxatives. Illness is likely to prove a particularly difficult area upon which to prescribe a particular set of parameters. The effects of physical injuries tend to be a little more obvious and visible but illnesses are open to interpretation and manipulation. Unlike a physical injury, such as a broken bone or a hamstring injury, some illnesses could conceivably pass within a few hours or overnight; any absence covered by a substitute fielder rather than a replacement. One ponders whether tactical illnesses could become a feature where the difficulty in disagreeing with a claim may result in exploitation of such vagaries.

Another cause celebre that unfolded recently was that of Fergus O'Neill during the match between Nottinghamshire and Glamorgan and the forthright comments made in light of the substitution of the Australian that his replacement was in a fresher state. Such a scenario is inevitable though and a natural corollary of the substitution policy as, in the majority of cases, the replacement will be fresher

than the player they are replacing. On the flip side of the O'Neill case, an opening or top order batter could field for a day and a half and pick up an injury in the process that requires them being replaced. Naturally, the replacement will be fresher due to not having to field for such a considerable amount of time. If one is in agreement for the substitution policy then this is a scenario that is unavoidable. As to whether these particular scenarios would be manipulated is a separate matter for conjecture.

Unfortunately, cricket's unique circumstances of two or four distinct passages of play render the issue of substitutes a trickier notion than other sports. And there are a myriad of scenarios and occurrences that will slip through the cracks of whatever rules and regulations are put in place. This, again, is another area where the policy mimics DRS. Will any policy prove perfect and resolve the situation? Undoubtedly not, but there is the opportunity to improve an aspect of the game that has arguably required some adjustment for many a year. Unfortunately, one suspects that, akin to DRS, the policy will descend into one controversy after another regarding marginal decisions and questionable tactics provoked by chicanery. Marginal gains is now a hackneyed aphorism in modern professional sports after all.

SPONSOR A BUCKS PLAYER

A great big thank you to all those members/ supporters or companies who have sponsored a Bucks player over the past 8/9 seasons. Going forward, the administration of this initiative will in future be administered by Bucks Cricket. The two ads below have already been appearing on Bucks social media channels, so if you would like to, or continue to, sponsor a player, please use the contact details below.

For further information please contact (admin@bucks cricket.co.uk)



PLAYER SPONSOR
Bucks Men and Women

25+
PLAYERS TO
CHOOSE FROM

£120
SPONSOR PER
PLAYER

2.3M
VIEWS ON SOCIAL
MEDIA IN 2025

YOUR LOGO
WEBSITE PRESENCE &
SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS*

PLAYER SPONSOR
Bucks Men and Women

£120 per Player
All proceeds to Player Kit/Clothing

Logo Presence
Feature on Website Player Profile
1x Thank You Social Media post

*Additional Social Media coverage if player reaches
match milestone (100+ runs and/or 5 wicket haul)

Annual Agreement
Player Sponsorship will be maintained
until end of 2026



BUCKS CRICKET SPONORS 2026

In addition to the recent announcement that Bloom Health Hospitals will be the new Headline Sponsors for the upcoming 2026 season,



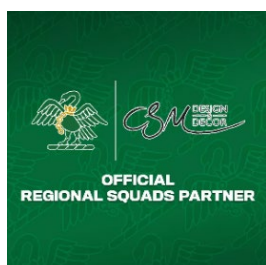
Bucks Cricket are delighted to announce 3 new additional sponsorships, as outlined below:-



Bucks Cricket is proud to announce a new partnership with MK Buffet Village, who will become the County Squads Partner for the 2026 season. The partnership will see [MK Buffet Village](#) take placement on all playing shirt sleeves, from our Boys and Girls U13 Pathway, up to our senior Men's and Women's teams. The support of MK Buffet Village is vital in helping Bucks Cricket grow the game locally, strengthening community ties while supporting the development of players at many levels. Rich Hudson, CEO at Bucks

Cricket, said: ***"We are delighted to welcome MK Buffet Village as our playing shirt sleeve sponsor across our pathway from U13 boys and girls through to our senior men's and women's teams.***

"Their backing will play an important role in strengthening our player pathway, helping us provide consistent opportunities for development, performance, and enjoyment of the game across Buckinghamshire. It's brilliant to have a local business supporting both our emerging talent and established players, and we're proud to showcase their support on our playing kits throughout the season."



Bucks Cricket is proud to announce a new partnership with CSM Design & Decor, who will become the Regional Squads Partner for the 2026 season. The partnership will see [CSM Design & Decor](#) take placement on the sleeves of all Bucks Regional Squad playing shirts. Having a local business support Bucks Cricket is crucial, as it continues to create opportunities for young talent in the community

Rich Hudson, CEO at Bucks Cricket, said: ***"We're delighted to welcome CSM Design & Decor as the regional shirt sponsor for our U10 to U12 teams. Supporting young players at the start of their cricketing journey is essential to the future of the game, and this partnership will help us provide the best possible environment for them to learn, develop, and enjoy cricket.***

"It's fantastic to have a local business backing our next generation of players, and we look forward to seeing their support proudly represented across our junior teams this season."

Bucks Cricket is delighted to announce a new partnership with Steven Eagell Toyota, who will become the Disability Partner for the 2026 season. The agreement will see [Steven Eagell Toyota](#) take placement on the front of all Bucks Disability playing shirts. The partnership unites a committed and inclusive National County with an award-winning company, recognised as a leading Toyota dealer group in the UK. Steven Eagell Toyota is the UK's largest Toyota retailer, operating 32 Centres across the East of England, South East, South West Midlands and West Midlands. Rich Hudson, CEO at Bucks Cricket, said: ***"We're incredibly proud to welcome Steven Eagell Toyota as the official partner of our disability teams. Having supported our MK Cricket Festival last year, it's fantastic to continue building on that relationship."***



"Their backing reflects a shared commitment to inclusivity and to ensuring cricket is a game for everyone, regardless of ability. This partnership will play a key role in expanding opportunities, enhancing player experiences, and strengthening a truly inclusive cricketing community across Buckinghamshire. We're excited to work together to make a lasting impact"

SUPPORT BUCKS CRICKET



The County Club and Bucks Cricket are working actively to promote and develop cricket at all levels and ages throughout the county . You can support these efforts by either by joining Bucks County Cricket Club or becoming a Patron of Bucks. Becoming a Patron automatically qualifies you to become a member of Bucks CCC. Essentially we are encouraging people to become patrons going forward and provide gift aid through that means as a benefit to both the CIO and the patron. Clearly for all existing members nothing changes.

Players are treated slightly differently currently as they have to be members for the benefit of the insurance cover so we are leaving them at the £25 per annum level.

As a Bucks member, you will be entitled to :-

Free access to a new enlarged on line copy of the Bucks Cricket Handbook encompassing all aspects of the organization

A Hard copy of a reduced content Bucks CCC Handbook on application to the Membership Secretary

Free entry to all Bucks home matches including the Showcase game

A regular bi monthly on line newsletter with up to date results/fixtures/ news and information

The Annual Subscription is :-

£25 for individuals

£35 for partners living at the same address

£10 for juniors (aged under 18)

£15 for students in full time education (aged under 24)

Life membership is also available

Membership forms are available from Rachel Hudson Email: (admin@bucksccricket.co.uk)

CAN'T GET TO A GAME

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH BUCKS C.C.C. ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Do not despair, help is at hand. Don't miss a moment

Website: bucks cricket.co.uk

Twitter : @BucksCricket

Facebook: [https:// www. facebook.com/BucksCricket](https://www.facebook.com/BucksCricket)

Instagram: [bucks cricket.official](https://www.instagram.com/bucks cricket.official)

All of Bucks 1st XI games will be streamed live on our YouTube channel, and from this season all clubs will be required to have a camera at both ends of the ground, so that the view will always be from behind the bowlers arm.

RON HEDLEY'S SPONSORED CHARITY WALKS

Ron's March with England Cricket Seniors Walks 2026

We have two walks in June.

On Tuesday 12th June at The cinch County Ground, Wantage Road, Northampton NN1 4PR
This is also former players day and there will be several former Northamptonshire players around on the day.

I have had a call from Tim Lamb, Middlesex and Northamptonshire to say he is looking to be on our walk.

Meet time to be confirmed. Walkers receive a free ticket for the days play against Gloucestershire. We would love Buckinghamshire players to join the walk, Aylesbury, Buckingham and MK players, it is on your doorstep lol

Please let me know asap so I can book you a match ticket.

BBC Three Counties Radio are hoping to join the walk and to interview walkers.

On Friday 19th June we walk to The Cloud County Ground, Writtle Street, Chelmsford CM2 0PG with Essex Over 60s/70s.

This walk is in honour of Duncan Blackie, who was an organiser and great supporter of our previous three walks to The Cloud County Ground.

His family will be very much part of this walk.

We are honoured that the BBC have chosen to come and film this walk and to conduct interviews, to get the message of Prostate Cancer Awareness to a wider audience.

The walk will be featured on SONGS OF PRAISE and is due to be broadcast on Sunday 9th August 2026.

There will also be a slot on the BBC Radio Essex Cricket show on Wednesday 17th August which airs from 6pm

Nina Blackie, Duncan's daughter will be interviewed.

If you would like to join the walk and require a ticket for the days play v Nottinghamshire, please let me know asap.

On Friday July 10th we have a very special walk, locally, in honour of Chris Harding who lost his life to prostate cancer recently.

Chris's family will be very much part of this walk.

It is a Berkshire walk and the meet is at The Rowbarge Inn, Woolhampton RG7 5SH at 10.30am, walking along the Kennet & Avon canal and returning to the Rowbarge Inn for lunch.

I know that Chris's family and Berkshire Over 70s are very hopeful that as many Buckinghamshire Over 70s who played in the joint team along side Chris will be able to join the walk

Kind Regards

On Friday 7th August we will be taking part in another first walk, this time with Leicestershire CCC Seniors. The details are yet to be confirmed. Our other walks to County Grounds are to a County Championships first day of four. The Leicestershire walk is for their One Day match against Warwickshire CCC. We will forward details as soon as possible.

Cornwall CCC have invited us, along with Cornwall CCC Seniors, to attend their friendly match v Somerset CCC on **Friday 3rd July 2026**. At the moment this will consist of us having a table at The Wadebridge CC ground to hand out booklets, sell badges, caps etc. We have been invited to hold a bucket collection at this match. We hope to confirm a walk in memory of another special man, Chris Harding of Berkshire CCC Seniors. Chris was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer, shortly before Ron, and sadly lost his life recently. A lovely man who was a great support to Ron over the past years fighting this awful disease. Details as soon as they are confirmed.

Ron Hedley
07710 987 950

Once again, I would like to thank all those who have helped and contributed to Coloured Trousers with interviews and articles over the past year, particularly Andy Bone and Sports Shots, Jason Harrison, Mike Knox, Ron Hedley, Jonathan Lilley, Annie Chave, County Cricket Matters, Yahoo Over Cow Corner, Steve Peart, Paul Dean, Anna Harris, Simon Parbery Rich Hudson, Rachel Hudson, George Halfhide., , Conner Haddow, Carla Duggan and Ben Ungaretti. We are of course obviously very grateful to all our sponsors and especially to Andy Bone and Luke Stafford of Sports Shots for their excellent media coverage. All contributions are gratefully received of course -why not join our happy band of literary contributors.

Billscholes

billscholes@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: 01420 560290

The views expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of Bucks C.C.C