

FROM THE GRAVEYARD END

(Newsletter of the Sussex Seniors Cricket)



Newsletter 72
January 2021

A photograph of a path through a dense forest, illuminated by sunlight filtering through the trees, with the year '2021' overlaid in a stylized font.

2021

2020

There can be little doubt that 2020 was by far the worst and most depressing year that we have probably ever experienced. I cannot believe how the optimism that existed in January and February, both locally and nationally, dissipated into one of depression, hopelessness, misery and frustration. I can remember in January that there were high levels of enthusiasm at the nets held at the Arundel Indoor Cricket School where the participants were looking forward to a season with new Team Managers and a number of new Captains. A comprehensive fixture list, both league and friendlies, had been prepared for all of the Sussex Seniors' eight teams. But then Coronavirus appeared, allegedly from a "wet market" in Wuhan, China. In the early days when it appeared that most cases were being reported as affecting passengers on cruise liners, no-one appreciated how this virus would graduate from what appeared to be a localised infection to a pandemic. An infection that spread to every country in the world where no-one was able to stem its progress from Governments to individuals including the extraordinary emergence of a multitude of professors with disciplines of science previously unheard of, and who reported on various aspects of the virus. With the current levels of global confirmed cases at 87.25 million it is so sad that there have now been in the region of 1.88 million deaths. What is not generally known, as the figures for some reason are never reported by the media, are the numbers who have survived. A simple arithmetic calculation will show that by using these figures above there must be over 85 million survivors. So why aren't these figures reported? Or don't the media believe in good news?

But with the approval of a second vaccine there is a justifiable optimism for the future. The development of promising vaccines is an astonishing scientific feat. It may not feel it for a while yet, but these first vaccinations mark the turning point in the pandemic. Day by day, the number of protected people will climb, and the coronavirus will slowly - but surely - find it harder to spread. That light at the end of the tunnel will shine ever brighter; that prospect of a return to normal life will come ever closer. But we are still in a dark place right now and the "light at the end of the tunnel" is still a radiant speck in the distance. As an optimist, I don't believe it is the headlight of another virus accelerating towards us. It is the beacon of hope that will lift us from the hopelessness that we have felt for the past ten months. It is the light that will lead us back to a normality that has been missing for so long.

Iwrote these first two pages before the introduction of the third lockdown but my earlier optimism has been deflated by the blatant disregard of the legal restrictions imposed. What don't people understand by the words—

STAY AT HOME PROTECT THE NHS SAVE LIVES

and the advice

FACE SPACE HANDS

2021

Hopefully the beginning of the end of the pandemic, although I think the first few months will be a continuation of the 2020 experience. Still, there are reasons to remain optimistic with the vaccinations of millions against the virus and, hopefully, by this time next year we will be a lot closer to pre-Covid life and some normality. I believe there will be another lockdown in the New Year to compensate for the time people spend together at Christmas and in seeing 2021 in and booting 2020 out. It seems absolutely incredible that despite continuous warnings about the potency of the mutant strain, there are so many people who ignore the guidelines and flout the rules about meeting others outside of family bubbles. There are organised anti-lockdown groups, anti-vaccine groups and people who seem determined to do anything to frustrate all attempts at recovery. Rather than imposing a monetary fine on these sad people why not punish them a month's spell as a cleaner in a Covid ward. An intensive care unit doctor has said, people who don't follow coronavirus rules have "blood on their hands" even if they don't know it. Professor Hugh Montgomery, who works in the intensive care unit at Whittington Hospital, north London, has spoken of his fury as he keeps seeing people not wearing face masks or social distancing. He said it is "horrifying" to see families being hit by Covid-19 and added he is "angry" because many people are still not taking enough precautions to curb the spread of the virus. Prof Montgomery said he believes many don't care about following rules because "selfishness gives people an excuse to carry on". An Essex nurse begged the public to stay home after witnessing her hospital in a "very bad way". She pleaded with residents and asked them to stay at home day and night because of how bad the situation has become. She tweeted at 8pm on the 31st December after returning home from a gruelling shift, claiming that the hospital was in a very bad position. "Just come home from our hospital and I implore you believe me, we are in a very bad way," she said. "Stay home during the DAY an NIGHT".

It will be a while before we see the back of facemasks too. I imagine that even if the Government says it's safe to stop wearing them, there will be people who will still insist on using face coverings. The same with social distancing—as long as the virus is prevalent then we should be aware of the risks of transmission. But the washing of hands should be a acceptable practice at all times to maintain hygiene standards.

Cricket in 2021 must still be in some doubt but the distribution of the vaccine amongst persons over the age of 50 might mean that the chances of the return of cricket, as we know it, will be possible—even if we have to bring our own teas! Elsewhere in this Newsletter reference is made to Fixtures and attached is a provisional schedule, in team order, which sets out the dates and whether the game is home or away. Venues will be decided in the near future. Many thanks to Ken Fisher for the work that he is doing to get us early knowledge of the planned fixtures.

But let us try and be optimistic and help those who are in a worse place than we are. Some are having great difficulty in facing these unprecedented times, with the restrictive guidelines and depressive news reports. Don't forget them.

ARDINGLY RECREATION GROUND

David Port, along with others, has been researching the history of the Ardingly Village sports clubs and pavilion. Below he has produced a potted history that he hopes will be interesting. He has also included photographs of previous pavilions. David has also summarised progress of the ongoing pavilion project based on the minutes of meetings .

FOOTBALL CLUB

Founded 1896. Centenary brochure updated in 2002. Pre WW1 the Club was one of the top 10 in the County. From 1950 to 1974 there was a separate Supporters Club that organised events to raise money for the club and to organize travel to away games. Today the Club has two Saturday teams playing in Divisions 1 and 5 of the Mid Sussex League and a Sunday veterans team (over 37 years of age)

CRICKET CLUB

Founded 1890 although it is known that games were played as long ago as 1867 in a field opposite the Greyhound (now the Ardingly Inn) where 'Loders' now is, as described in the Centenary brochure. Today the Club has two Saturday teams playing in Divisions 9 and 11 of the Sussex League, a Sunday friendly XI and a midweek T20 friendly XI

TENNIS CLUB

Until c1980 the club played on grass courts at Hapstead House where Turnpike Court now stands. It now plays at the Council courts in Gowers Pit.

BOWLS CLUB

Little is known about the Bowls Club other than the green was at the north west corner of the Recreation Ground

SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB

Formed 1994. Plays at Hapstead Hall during winter months. Club nights are Friday evenings and matches are generally on a Saturday afternoon.

STOOLBALL CLUB

Was pre dominantly a social club and not a match playing club like the neighbouring villages of Balcombe and Horsted Keynes. It folded c1980.

ARDINGLY VILLAGE CLUB

Incorporated in 2008 as a Company limited by Guarantee. It is a Registered Charity. It is for the benefit of the inhabitants of Ardingly and the surrounding area by providing and assisting in the provision of facilities for recreation, education and other leisure time occupation in the interest of social welfare and with the object of improving wellbeing in the area. In particular it is the umbrella organisation for the football, cricket and tennis clubs, and it supports the Annual Fete.

PAVILION AND GROUND

1887 – Hapstead Field, now called the Recreation Ground, leased from Lady Downshire (Wakehurst). Yearly rent 5/-s

Late 1920s – Wakehurst estate gifted a corrugated iron pavilion, sited at the northern boundary, comprising one large room, scorebox and machinery room. No services. Photo 1 top of next page.

1943 – Baroness Wakehurst gifted the Recreation ground to the village to be held in trust in perpetuity.

1949 – Keir Hett gifted a wooden summerhouse for use as a pavilion. It was



(?) 1934. IN FRONT OF THE CORRUGATED IRON CRICKET PAVILION ON THE NORTH BOUNDARY OF THE RECREATION GROUND:
 From L. to R.
 Sid Holman: Len Dean: Jack Setford: Geoff Dean:
 Ted Woolven: ? : George Stevens: Jack Knight:
 In front: Ron White: Arthur Thomas: Don Stride.
 An El Dorado Ice Cream Tricycle

placed where the present pavilion stands. Again no services were connected.
 Photo 2 below.



Recreation Ground, frdingly T.S. ARD. 14

1961 – A brick pavilion with one shower in each changing room was built at a cost of £2,500 using a loan of £1,500, fully repaid by 1981. Footprint 94m². Photo 3 overleaf.

1991 – Upgrading and extension of pavilion providing a social room, larger kitchen, and 3 showers and toilets for each changing room at a cost of £80,000. Footprint 136m²

May 2010 – APC resolved to refurbish the pavilion.

November 2010 - Working Party set up

November 2012 – Roy Simmonds appointed to carry out a feasibility study



December 2012 – Feasibility study delivered. New build option footprint 270m² cost c£350k. Refurb existing and extension option c£140k.

June 2014 – Derek Stuchbury tabled a plan designed to reduce expenditure.

December 2015 – ML surveyors appointed to prepare a specification and drawing.

December 2016 – received ML Surveyors proposal. Footprint 179m².

March 2018 – applied for planning permission

1st May 2018 – APC agreed to amend the internal configuration to reduce costs and the appointment of a structural engineer to prepare tender drawings and specification, budget £2k.

23rd May 2018 - Planning permission granted for the pavilion to be refurbished and extended – footprint 179m². Constraint 15 children for any nursery.

28th February 2019 – Alan Sharp Ass presented tender drawings and specification with a different configuration compared with the Planning consent.

12th November 2019 – tenders received and opened by Derek Stuchbury, Jonathon Aloof and The Clerk

60+ and 70+ Constitutional Matters

In a recent Newsletter I gave a debrief on what had happened with the "virtual" AGM of the 60s/70s Championship last November. There had been the usual disruptive moves by some of the "northern" counties to propose changes both to the Officers and Committee but also to the Constitution, Rules and Regulations. There is some historic animosity fermenting within these counties who have an inherent dislike that too many "southerners" serve on the Management Committee and are involved in running the Championship. They revel in proposing change for the sake of change. It's a pity that we don't have a 25th Amendment to invoke!

One would have hoped that these objectors would have relented but no! Still the rancour continues. First, there was strong criticism that the Committee had appointed a Vice Chairman (Chris Swadkins) when there was no provision in the Constitution for this post. When I heard of this criticism I said to the Chairman that the position of a Vice Chairman does not have to be a constitutional appointment; its a sensible decision in any organisational structure to have a person who is able to deputise for the Chairman. Para 5.2 of the 60+/70+ Constitution states, inter alia, that the Officers and Members shall be allocated duties and responsibilities to maintain the effective operation of the Championship. Surely the Management Committee has made a very sensible decision that one of the members of the Committee should be allocated the role of Vice Chairman. The Vice Chairman should assist the Chairman in performing the latter's duties and responsibilities. During any period when the Chairman is absent and the normal responsibilities of the Chairman cannot be carried out, the Vice Chairman can take the role as the acting Chairman until the Chairman resumes carrying out his normal duties. I believe that the action taken by the Committee was constitutionally in order and beyond criticism.

But there is now another County representative suggesting that an Extraordinary General Meeting be called to make a series of amendments to the Constitution. He alleges that decisions taken at the "virtual" AGM were out of order and should not have been allowed to be decided because the Constitution did not permit "virtual" AGMs. It is incredible that some people have nothing better to do than see the under-mining of the management and administration of the Championship rather than concentrating on the provision of cricket for many hundreds of senior cricketers. None of the issues which are raised are sufficiently important or have any bearing on the current management and administration of the Championships as to call a special EGM (once we are permitted) when, and if considered necessary, they can wait until the next formal AGM and discussed then.

Hopefully, one day cricket will turn out to be the winner and the bureaucratic nonsense spouted by those who enjoy the sound of their own voices will be something of the past.

Fixtures

Once again, Ken Fisher, our Fixtures and Ground Manager, has been working hard sorting out fixtures and arranging grounds. Some of the fixtures have already appeared on the respective websites and venues will be added as and when they are arranged. As usual, there will be a number of early season friendlies which will give the opportunity for newcomers to show what they can do. Ken is having increasing difficulties in finding Clubs who are prepared to let the Seniors host matches. If your Club is not on the existing list of host clubs, it would certainly be a great help if you could persuade your Club to consider letting the Seniors host matches at your ground.

A copy of the draft fixture list is attached and it is hoped to be able to advise you of the venues in the not too distant future. You will note that Ken is still waiting for a number of away Counties to notify him of the venues and also some home grounds still await confirmation. The final list will be distributed in due course. Please don't use this list as to your availability. I will be circulating availability forms at the beginning of March to cover the April matches.

Membership

A Membership/Registration form is attached. It is important that Membership Forms are completed and returned to me so that all players can be registered with the appropriate Championship Registration Officers. For new players, this takes some time completing through the relevant play-cricket site and hopefully you will send me your form back as soon as possible. You will note that the fee for 2021 will be £20. However, the Match Fee will be £15 per player per game but if we are required to work with Covid-19 Guidelines as last year and provide our own teas, the Match Fee will be £10. In the present lockdown it would be much preferred if you were to pay your membership fee by a bank transfer as I will not have the desire to visit a Bank to pay in cheques.

Cricket Kit

Many enquiries are received during the year about Sussex Seniors cricket kit and where it can be obtained. The kit is obtained from Game, Set and Match of Chichester. The shop is at Unit 1, Beaver Trade Park, Quarry Lane, Chichester, PO19 8NY. The online link to the shop and the Seniors page is [Sussex Seniors Cricket Club \(gsam.co.uk\)](http://Sussex Seniors Cricket Club (gsam.co.uk)) Telephone—01243 538800. All kit will bear the logo of our sponsors—Seevent, plus the Sussex Seniors badge. In addition, you can have your initials included as well at an additional cost. Game Set and Match has a direct link to the Sussex Seniors website—[Sussex 50+ \(play-cricket.com\)](http://Sussex 50+ (play-cricket.com))

Select or Elect?

In November 2014 and again in February 2019 consideration was given to how Managers and Captains should be appointed. I am aware of the following appointments for 2021 and you will note that there are apparently four vacancies —

Director of Sussex Seniors—Hugh Milner

Fixtures and Grounds Manager—Ken Fisher

Umpires Manager—John Holland

50+ Manager—Ian Jones

60+ 1st and 2nd Manager—

60+ 3rd and 4th Manager—

70+ 1st and 2nd Manager—

50+ 1st Captain—Scott Stratton

50+ 2nd Captain—To be finalised

60+ 1st Captain—Russ Varney

60+ 2nd Captain— Uncertain whether Bob Page wishes to continue

60+ 3rd Captain—

60+ 4th Captain—Brian Booth

70+ 1st Captain—Roger Tidyman

70+ 2nd Captain—Hugh Milner unless there is someone else interested

It is probably worthwhile to repeat the article that was included in Newsletter 47 in November 2014.

"Historically, and probably from the date the Sussex 50+ started playing competitive cricket, captains have been appointed by consensus. It has been generally accepted that when a current captain wishes to stand down he speaks to his vice-captain and other "senior" players in his team and agrees a successor. The problem with this method is that a captain can remain in post indefinitely and the players have no say in the appointment. Under the present arrangements the appointed captains have, with their vice-captains and with some input from the Managers, responsibility for team selection. The captain has no other administrative responsibility other than ensuring that match fees are collected. The major responsibility of the captain involves on-field duties. There are perhaps three alternative options relating to captains' appointments—

Maintain the status quo

Captains can remain in post indefinitely and may retain this position despite performance. Players have no say in the appointment. Easiest method to manage.

Director to appoint

Again with this method the players have no say in the appointment. Great responsibility on the Director.

Players to elect.

There are three options – first option, all players vote for all age group captains; the second options is for players to only vote for captains in their own age group; and the third option is for players who have played regularly for a team to vote for their team captain. With the former, although the players select the captain, other age group players can influence the appointment of a captain in another

age group. The second option would give the players of an age the opportunity to elect their "own" captain. The third option would give a more specific opportunity for individual team players to select their own captain.

Preferred Option

My preferred option is to permit players to elect their own age-group captain. Whilst this might logistically be difficult to arrange it should be possible to conduct a ballot amongst appropriately qualified players. Whether this ballot would be at a General Meeting or by a postal vote would need to be decided. Attendance at a General Meeting is likely to be poor. Whatever method is chosen it would be necessary for nominees to be proposed and seconded after first obtaining the agreement of the candidate to stand. In the case of a single nomination the nominee would be automatically appointed."

For 2021, some appointments have already been confirmed but there are a few vacancies. I would appreciate your views on how these vacancies should be filled. Are there any nominations or volunteers? The Responsibilities of all posts are set out in the next article.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Director of Sussex Seniors

Role

- Responsible to the Head of Community Cricket for Sussex for delivering Seniors Cricket in Sussex.
- To assist the age-group Managers in undertaking their responsibilities.
- To assist the Fixtures and Grounds Manager and the Officials Manager in undertaking their responsibilities.
- To represent Sussex Cricket at all relevant meetings.

Duties

- Prepare income/expenditure budget and balance accounts on a weekly basis. Pay all liabilities as required. Produce balanced accounts for the year ended 30th September and submit to the Head of Community Cricket for Sussex.
- Attend meetings of the South East Seniors Group and attend any meeting of the 60+/70+ National Championship as required, including the Annual General Meeting.
- Collate and promote matters from Managers and Captains for discussion at the South East Seniors Group and at the AGM of the 60+/70+ National Championship.
- Manage the annual meeting of Managers and Captains.
- Maintain an up-to-date and master record of all registered players and non-players to include contact information, dates of birth and club affiliation all in accordance with GDPR.
- Register all players with the appropriate League as required through "Play-Cricket" or other means.

- Ensure the appointment of Managers and Captains.
- Recruitment of new players for each age group.
- Ensure that all defibrillators are operational and batteries and pads are in date. Arrange courses for CPR and the use of defibrillators.
- Invite sponsorship as necessary.
- Deal with Press enquiries and public relations.
- Produce and distribute Newsletters as appropriate.

Age-Group Managers

Role

- To assist the Director of Sussex Seniors in the smooth running of the organisation by taking responsibility for particular teams and/or age groups.

Duties

- To liaise closely with each of their captains.
- Agree selected sides with appropriate captain; advise selected players of selection and venue; distribute team sheets by email/post to all registered players and supporters.
- In the event of cancelled matches, liaise with home ground authorities or opposition contacts as appropriate. Notify the Sussex players and officials (including the Officials Manager) of the cancellation. Notify the Competition Organiser of the cancellation. Inform the Fixtures and Grounds Manager of any need for the fixture to be re-arranged.
- When appropriate, up-date the master copy of the players availability spreadsheet controlled by the Fixture and Grounds Manager.

Fixture and Grounds Manager

Role

- Arrange and confirm all fixtures—League and Friendlies.
- Source grounds for all Sussex home fixtures.

Duties

- Agree dates for all fixtures ensuring that there is no conflict between age groups. Advise Director of Sussex Seniors of all agreed fixtures. Confirm arrangements with all appropriate Managers and Captains and opponents. Advise Website Administrator of agreed fixtures.
- Arrange early season friendlies for each age group and, where appropriate, mid-season and end-of-season friendlies where required.
- Produce annual fixtures schedule and provide the Director of Sussex Cricket with a monthly availability schedule for circulation to all players, supporters and officials.
- Source grounds for all home fixtures, negotiating an acceptable price for the use of the ground and for teas.
- Seek new grounds in Sussex, negotiating an acceptable price for the ground and teas.
- Ensure that complete information relating to all fixtures is notified to the Competition Organisers, opponents and Sussex Seniors and the information is entered onto the Play-Cricket web site.
- Re-arrange cancelled and abandoned fixtures as necessary informing opposition, Competitions Organisers, Officials Manager, appropriate Captains and all registered players and supporters.

- Maintain a master copy of the players availability spreadsheet for use by Managers and Captains.

Officials Manager

Role

- Maintain a record of all umpires who have indicated a wish to stand in Seniors matches.

Duties

- Liaise with Director of Sussex Seniors on umpires fees.
- Appoint qualified umpires for all fixtures; notifying the Director of Sussex Seniors, the Managers and Captains of the appointed umpire together with contact information.

Captains

Role

- Ensure that all matches are played in accordance with the rules and traditions of the game and that the Spirit of Cricket is upheld at all times by all players in his team.
- The players selected are representing Sussex and the captain must demonstrate the importance of this to all his players.

Duties

- Comply with the Selection Policy. Ensure that the best side is selected at all times.
- Ensure that selection is completed and notified to the appropriate Manager at least five days before the match to ensure prompt circulation.
- Ensure that umpires decisions are not questioned; opponents are not abused; no player berated for failure. Always explain to players who are not selected or dropped the reason for the decision.
- Ensure that you have telephone numbers for players, opponents and umpires with you at the match, together with the match fee sheet, result sheets, scorebook, match balls and sufficient spares.
- Ensure that a defibrillator and first aid kit is present.
- Ensure your players allow visitors to get their teas first.
- Ensure that all players thank opponents, umpires and scorers.
- Collect and document match fees. Ensure fees are passed to the Director or are promptly banked.
- Ascertain and document player availability for next fixture(s).
- Retrieve the match balls and spares. Retrieve scorebook.
- Complete result sheet and ensure the result is advised to the appropriate Championship official.
- Complete full score sheet on play-cricket promptly, including cancelled and abandoned matches.