

FREE ADMISSION TO LORD'S

Welcome to the spring edition of the regular newsletter produced by Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) - the owner of Lord's. The next three pages contain articles about improvements at 'the home of cricket' and an update on our efforts to identify and nurture talented young players, for the long-term good of the game. On this page, we are delighted to bring you news of several days when you can come to Lord's to watch some outstanding cricket - completely free of charge.

Middlesex v Kent, Friday 30th June

First, MCC is offering 125 pairs of free tickets to readers of this newsletter who would like to attend the early evening 'Twenty20' match between Middlesex and Kent at the end of June.

To obtain your tickets (which normally cost £20 each), simply complete the form on page three and post it to Lord's. Applications will be handled in the order in which they arrive so, to avoid disappointment, we would advise you to submit yours as soon as possible.

Varsity matches, Saturday 1st July

Secondly, MCC is delighted that everyone will be entitled to free admission to the Varsity matches - Oxford University v Cambridge University - which will be played at Lord's at the start of July. As usual, the men's match will be played on the main ground while the women's fixture will take place on the Nursery Ground.

Once again, MCC hopes that local residents will take this opportunity to watch the cricket and see Lord's for themselves. No tickets are necessary; simply come to the ground any time after 10.00am when the gates will open. (Play is scheduled to begin an hour later.)

England v India, Monday 14th August

Thirdly, MCC is offering free admission to a one-day international between England and India, in the NatWest Women's Series, in mid-August. (Play is scheduled to start at 10.45am.)

Originally, this free admission offer applied only to children; however, MCC has since extended it so that everyone can watch this match - in which England will be led by Charlotte Edwards (see right) - free of charge.



Charlotte Edwards, the new England captain, at Lord's

National Village Final, Monday 4th September

There will also be free entry, for everyone, to the npower National Village Final in early September.

This is always one of the most atmospheric matches of the season at Lord's, with each team being supported by a large proportion of the village's entire population!

For this fixture, the gates to Lord's will open at 10.00am. (Play is due to start an hour later.)

Free admission for MCC matches

Finally, MCC is offering free admission to all four of the fixtures that its teams will be playing at Lord's between now and the end of the season. Three of these matches will be staged on the first three days in May; the remaining game - MCC v Ireland - will be played on Tuesday 15th August. (In each case, play is due to begin at 11.00am.)

For further details on all this season's matches at 'the home of cricket', please see the posters at the entrances to Lord's or visit the 'Fixtures' section of www.lords.org.

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KEEPING LORD'S WORLD-CLASS

Acclaim for Lord's in lighting awards

The new Pavilion and ground illuminations at Lord's were accorded 'highly commended' status during last month's National Lighting Design Awards.

The pitch and Pavilion lighting systems - commissioned by MCC and devised by Lighting Design International - were installed as part of the Club's £8 million Pavilion refurbishment project, which was completed last year.

The system installed within the Pavilion helps to create an outstanding atmosphere for the wide range of events held in the Long Room and the Long Room Bar. It also showcases the unrivalled collection of cricket art which adorns the rooms' walls - including portraits of players ranging from WG Grace to Shane Warne.

Outside the Pavilion, the pitch lighting system highlights both the cricket square and, at the Nursery End of Lord's, the futuristic NatWest Media Centre (see below).

The director of the Pavilion refurbishment project, MCC's Deputy Chief Executive, David Batts, commented: "I am delighted that the stunning new systems, by Lighting Design International, have received such well-deserved praise. Their designs helped to provide the perfect finishing touches to our Pavilion refurbishment project, so this commendation is well deserved."

Chris Lewis, from Lighting Design International, said: "It was a real pleasure to work on this prestigious project at 'the home of cricket'. I am delighted that the judges, like our clients, really appreciated the improvements that we were able to bring about."



The NatWest Media Centre, seen from the Long Room, at night

New roof built on time and below budget

The latest ground improvement project at Lord's - the installation of a new roof over the Mound Stand (see below) - was completed in February, below budget and ahead of schedule.

The five-month, £500,000-plus project was undertaken for MCC by a Bristol-based firm, Base Structures Ltd.

The new roof shares the acclaimed 'tented' look of its predecessor which, after eighteen years, had reached the end of its scheduled lifespan. Thanks to the use of more advanced materials, the new surface is expected to last appreciably longer.

David Batts, who oversaw the project, said: "Thanks to its 'tented' roof, the Mound Stand has long been regarded as one of the iconic buildings at Lord's. We're delighted that, once again, it's looking back to its best."

Next winter, MCC intends to spend a similar amount on another refurbishment project which will improve the rest of the Mound Stand - from top to bottom, inside and out. This reflects the Club's policy of continuous investment in Lord's, to ensure that it remains not only world-famous but world-class.



MCC plans next Lord's improvement project

MCC is already planning its next ground improvement project. A budget of around £1 million will be made available to fund the refurbishment of the Tavern Banqueting Suite, located above the Lord's Tavern Bar & Brasserie (off St John's Wood Road).

The project will greatly upgrade this 1960s-built building. For example, its entrances will be enhanced, its accessibility to disabled visitors will be improved and its windows will be double-glazed - both to increase the building's energy efficiency and to reduce the amount of sound that can leak into neighbouring areas.

The refurbishment work is scheduled to last from late July until November. Full details of the project will be sent to local residents as soon as possible.

PERSONNEL CHANGES AT LORD'S



Next MCC Chief Executive: Keith Bradshaw

MCC has selected Keith Bradshaw, from a very large and extremely strong field of candidates, to succeed Roger Knight (who will retire in late September) as its Secretary & Chief Executive.

A 42 year-old Australian who played first-class cricket for Tasmania (and also earned a cricketing scholarship in Sussex), Keith retired from the sport in 1988 to complete his studies at the University of Tasmania, where he graduated in commerce, and to pursue a business career which has included spells with both PriceWaterhouse and Deloitte. This has led to Keith (see above) working on a wide variety of projects in Australia and elsewhere, and in both the public and the private sectors.

Commenting on his appointment, Keith said: "I am delighted and extremely honoured to have been selected as the next Secretary & Chief Executive. I have long regarded MCC as the most active and most respected cricket club in the world. I am determined to play my part in maintaining its values, upholding its traditions and continuing to improve Lord's - which is not only MCC's home, but the spiritual home of world cricket."

He continued: "On a personal note, my family and I are all excited to be re-locating to St John's Wood. I have many treasured memories of my previous times in Britain, as a professional cricketer, and I look forward to making or renewing many friendships."

Keith will become only the fourteenth Secretary of MCC in the 219 year history of the Club.

Lifetime membership for Stephanie Lawrence

MCC has awarded Honorary Life Membership to Stephanie Lawrence, who retired at the end of March after 39 years of loyal and distinguished service at Lord's.

Steph had started working at Lord's in March 1967 as a junior secretary. For the last thirteen years, she has been personal assistant to MCC's Secretary & Chief Executive, Roger Knight, who will himself retire later this year.

Roger said: "It has been a pleasure to have worked with Steph. I am indebted to her for the great efficiency and good humour which have always been her hallmarks. For nearly 40 years, Steph has made a major behind-the-scenes contribution to the Club, to cricket and to Lord's. I am delighted that she has been made an Honorary Life Member of MCC, which she has served so loyally, and with such distinction, for so long."

Steph said: "I am absolutely thrilled to receive Honorary Life Membership. I have had a charmed career. To be able to remain part of this great cricketing institution, in my retirement, makes me very happy indeed."

An MCC dinner in Steph's honour took place, in the Long Room, a week after her retirement.

Middlesex v Kent Twenty20 match: Friday 30th June (5.30pm - 8.15pm)

Please send me, subject to availability, two complimentary tickets to this fixture:

Name:

Address:

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I have read and agree to abide by MCC's General Ground Regulations (which are published around Lord's and on www.lords.org).

Please post this form, by Monday 15th May, to:

Communications Department
Marylebone Cricket Club
Lord's Cricket Ground
St John's Wood
London NW8 8QN

PROMOTING YOUNG TALENT

MCC Young Cricketers: nine new recruits

Earlier this year, MCC boosted its Young Cricketers' squad for the 2006 season.

Its nine new recruits - seven men and two women - include Montoin Hodge (an all-rounder from the British protectorate of Anguilla), Kate Oakenfold (another all-rounder, and a former England U-19 player) and Michael Pedersen (a left-handed batsman who has already played for Denmark).

The new players will strengthen the Lord's-based MCC team that will play, for the second successive season, in the Second XI County Championship.

MCC's Head Coach, Clive Radley (a former Middlesex and England batsman), said: "I am very pleased with the squad we've assembled for the new season. In 2005, we had a very promising debut in the Second XI Championship, but we wanted to keep the momentum going this year. With these signings, I believe that our Young Cricketers will more than hold their own on the county circuit."

Several ex-Young Cricketers have played for England teams in recent years; they include Rikki Clarke (who has earned full international honours in both Test and one-day cricket), Alex Gidman (captain of the England 'A' team) and Nicky Shaw (who has represented the England women's team).

One of 2006's MCC Young Cricketers, Caroline Atkins (see below), is a current international and represented England in India and Sri Lanka earlier this year.



Studio 8 Photography

Easter coaching courses attract record attendance

Over the last month, a record number of children have attended MCC's annual Easter coaching courses (see above) at Lord's.

The courses enable hundreds of boys and girls to receive top-quality cricket tuition, from the Club's expert coaches, in the world-class MCC Indoor School.

Indeed, since its refurbishment last year, the School has been busier than ever before, as it has hosted a range of events organised by bodies including Capital Kids Cricket, the Lord's Taverners and the London Schools' Cricket Association. The building will be equally busy over the months ahead as it will stage, for example, the national cricket finals for girls' teams (at the end of April), part of the London Youth Games (in May) and an annual cricket tournament for youngsters with disabilities (in June).

The value of such groups' free or discounted use of MCC's facilities exceeds £130,000 per year.

Photographic scholar for 2006 season

MCC has appointed Richard Rowling as its Young Cricket Photographer for the 2006 season.

Richard (25) was the unanimous choice of a selection panel which included the leading cricket photographer Graham Morris, who will act as his professional mentor throughout the summer.

A graduate in photography, from the University of Staffordshire, Richard took up his new position over Easter, when he photographed the first match of the new season (MCC v Nottinghamshire) at Lord's.

Studio 8 Photography