

BEGINNING OF NEW INNINGS AT LORD'S

It is a great pleasure to write to you in the first edition of this newsletter to have been published since the autumn - when I had the very pleasant task of moving into St John's Wood and, at the same time, the tremendous privilege of succeeding Roger Knight as the Secretary & Chief Executive of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC).

Roger was responsible for many outstanding achievements during his period at Lord's - from the refurbishment of the historic Pavilion, at one end of the ground, to the construction of the futuristic Media Centre at the other. Equally importantly, in my view, he played a key role in transforming the relationship between Lord's and its locality.

I am determined to build on Roger's achievements and look forward to developing, over the coming years, an ever-closer relationship between the Club and the local community. Through events such as the Long Room carol concert and regular consultation with the Local to Lord's group, as well as the publication of this twice-yearly newsletter, I believe that we have some great foundations for the future.

My appointment is just one of many changes to have occurred at Lord's since MCC's last community newsletter was published. The Club also has a new President (Doug Insole), a new Treasurer (Justin Dowley) and several new Committee members - including an ex-Middlesex and England captain (Mike Gatting). MCC is fortunate that it can call upon people of this calibre as it strives to keep Lord's world-class and, at the same time, retain its current share of major matches - in the face of intensifying competition from other grounds.

Local use of the facilities at Lord's

As well as having a high-calibre Committee, I have been delighted to discover that the Club's staff have ideas, experience and talent in abundance. Many of them are already familiar faces in the local community - especially those, such as our award-winning groundstaff, who not only work but live at Lord's. Over time, I hope that our neighbours will get to know many more members of MCC's team by, for example, using some of the facilities at Lord's - from the gymnasium, where you can improve your fitness, to the Lord's Tavern Bar & Brasserie, where you can do exactly the opposite!

Please visit our website (www.lords.org) or contact our switchboard (020 7616 8500) if you would like any further information.



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A warm welcome for everyone's ideas

Over the coming months, I want to ensure that the excellent ideas coming from our staff and our Committee are put into practice. (Indeed, the process has already started; this newsletter, for example, is the first we've published using both paper and ink that is as environmentally-friendly as possible.) However, I've always given a warm welcome to good ideas regardless of their source. So I hope you won't hesitate to let me have your thoughts on how we can ensure that MCC is not only the most famous cricket club in the world but also, quite simply, the best.

Keith Bradshaw
Secretary & Chief Executive

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MCC tours go 'climate neutral' see page 3

Carol concert helps local hospice see page 4

KEEPING LORD'S WORLD-CLASS

Ground improvements: progress update

Two important ground improvement projects at Lord's are now virtually complete.

First, a million-pound Banqueting Suite refurbishment initiative - designed to improve the building's service infrastructure, disability access and internal appearance - has largely been concluded (although some further work, on a much smaller scale, will be undertaken in the early part of this year).

Secondly, the installation of a high-tech video analysis suite, in MCC's Indoor Cricket School, has been finished - although a staff training programme needs to be completed before the new facility can become fully operational.

The Club has also identified the next two improvement projects that it plans to undertake at Lord's. They involve the installation of three new, state-of-the-art combined scoreboards and replay screens (in time for the 2008 cricket season), plus the refurbishment of the acclaimed Mound Stand (following the successful installation, last winter, of its new 'tented' roof).

MCC believes that a policy of continuous improvement and investment is essential to ensure that Lord's can retain both its world-class reputation and its ability to attract major matches (see right) in the face of increasingly fierce competition from other grounds.

□ *To book a room within the refurbished Banqueting Suite, or any other facility at Lord's, please contact MCC's Meetings & Events team on 020 7616 8501.*

Money down the drain on Nursery Ground

MCC has spent £25,000 on improving the drainage of its Nursery Ground (at the eastern end of Lord's), which hosts practice sessions and the end-of-season matches played by the Cross Arrows Cricket Club.

The improvements were necessary because large parts of the surface, which is also used for picnics on major matchdays, had become severely compacted.

The work (below) took three weeks to complete and should greatly improve the Ground's drainage for the 2007 season when, among its other fixtures, it will host an historic women's match between MCC and China in mid-August.



England spinner Monty Panesar bowling at Lord's in 2006

Keeping major matches at Lord's

MCC has unveiled a new debenture scheme to help ensure that it has the funds necessary to continue investing heavily in Lord's. Announced in early November, the new initiative will replace the Club's current debenture schemes, which are set to expire before the start of the 2007 cricket season.

Since its bicentenary, 20 years ago, MCC has spent well over £50 million on improving 'the home of cricket' through projects including the construction of the Media Centre, the re-laying of the outfield and the refurbishment of its Pavilion.

The new debentures should help the Club take its total investment to over £75 million.

In the longer term, MCC hopes that its improvement programme can include measures to increase the capacity of Lord's. As well as enhancing its ability to attract and retain major matches, it would return its capacity to the levels last seen when several thousand spectators could be accommodated between the boundary rope and the perimeter fencing.

However, no plans have yet been developed and any proposals would be subject to early and extensive consultation with local stakeholders, the local planning authority (Westminster City Council) and MCC members.

PLAYING AND PROMOTING CRICKET

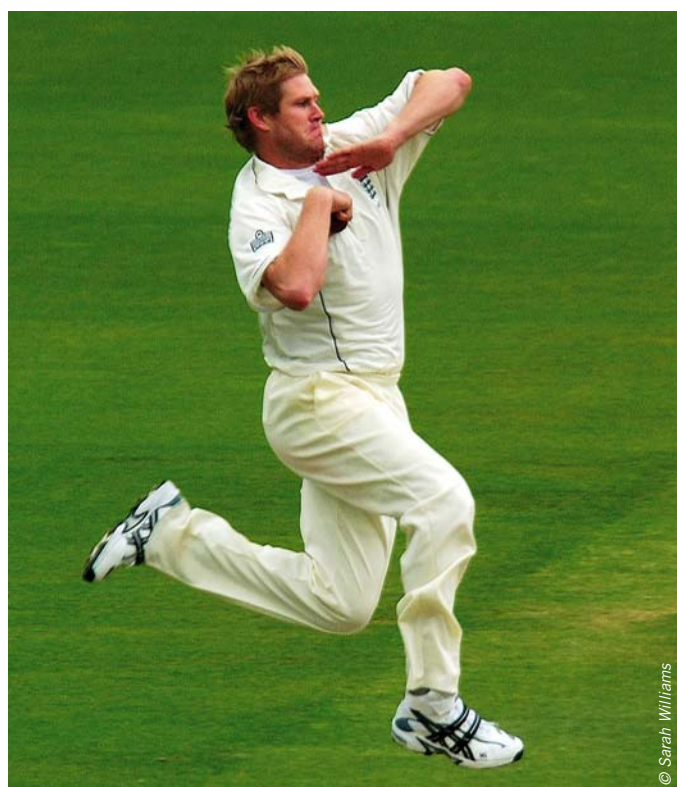
Major matches at Lord's this summer

The fixture list for the forthcoming cricket season has now been published. In addition to England's international matches (against the West Indies and India), the highlights at Lord's will include the traditional 'curtain-raiser' (MCC v Champion County) in mid-April, two early evening matches (in the Twenty20 Cup) in the first week of July, and the end-of-season npower Village Cup (when there will be free admission to Lord's).

Indeed, there will be a number of free entry days for everyone plus, as usual, a 'Kids 4 Free' month when children can come to 'the home of cricket' to watch Middlesex matches, and take part in a range of special activities, without charge. Further details will be available via MCC's website (www.lords.org) in due course.

In the meantime, local residents might find it helpful to have the following list of the fixtures likely to attract the largest crowds this summer:

- **England v West Indies** (npower Test match)
Thursday 17th to Monday 21st May
- **England v West Indies** (NatWest one-day international)
Sunday 1st July
- **Middlesex v Surrey** (Twenty20 Cup)
Tuesday 3rd July
- **Middlesex v Essex** (Twenty20 Cup)
Friday 6th July
- **England v India** (npower Test match)
Thursday 19th to Monday 23rd July
- **ECB One-Day Trophy Final**
Saturday 18th August
- **England v India** (NatWest one-day international)
Saturday 8th September



MCC's pioneering 'climate neutral' tours

MCC has introduced a pioneering 'climate neutral' policy for its overseas tours.

This initiative, believed to be the first of its kind in world cricket, involves a five-year partnership between MCC and Climate Care - a leading carbon-offsetting organisation. It commits the Club to investing in a range of Climate Care projects to offset all the carbon dioxide emissions caused by its teams flying around the world to play and promote cricket.

Since the autumn, for example, MCC teams have toured Australia, China (above), Botswana and Zambia. In total, these tours will have put around 175 tonnes of CO₂ into the atmosphere. Under the new initiative, the Club is offsetting all these emissions by investing in projects such as a renewable power initiative in Indian schools and energy efficient lighting for community projects in South Africa.

The Club's partnership with Climate Care also covers its five overseas tours in 2007, which will include visits to countries ranging from Belgium to Brazil.

MCC has also been holding discussions with the Carbon Trust about the development of an Energy Conservation Plan for Lord's. Other recent environmental initiatives at the ground have included measures to reduce water consumption, increase paper recycling and encourage more spectators to use public transport when travelling to and from St John's Wood.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Carol concert raises funds for local hospice

In December, MCC helped to raise around £1,500 for St John's Hospice, in Grove End Road, through a collection after its annual 'Evening of Carols' in the Long Room at Lord's.

A capacity crowd (below) of 240 local residents and MCC members attended the event and joined in the singing, which was led by The London Chorus.

Christine Malcolmson, Matron at St John's, said: "We're very grateful to everyone for being so generous with their donations, which will be put to the best possible use. We're also indebted to everyone at Lord's for staging, yet again, such a fantastic festive event in a truly stunning setting."

MCC staged its first pre-Christmas carol concert (in aid of Save the Children) in 2001. The event has raised funds for St John's Hospice - a short walk away from Lord's - since 2003.

The amount raised by December's concert may rise even higher over the coming weeks, as a Gift Aid form was printed in each carol booklet.



New recruits for Local to Lord's group

Three new members have joined the Local to Lord's group, which meets quarterly and provides MCC with advice and ideas on a wide range of community issues.

The new stakeholders replaced group members who had stood down for family reasons or after leaving the local area.

The new recruits are Louise Brodie (St John's Wood Court), Edgar Rogers (Abercorn Place) and Michèle Marriott (St John's Hospice).

Local residents who might like to join the group, when any further vacancies arise, should register their interest with MCC's Communications & Public Affairs Department by e-mail (communications@mcc.org.uk), fax (020 7616 8524) or letter (via the postal address below). Thank you.



Skipper unveils new commemorative plaque

The captain of the England women's cricket team, Charlotte Edwards (above), has unveiled a special commemorative plaque, at the entrance to the Lisson Green Estate, to help mark the previous site of Lord's.

The English Heritage-style plaque is positioned on the old ground's western side. This location means that, as well as being seen by the Estate's residents, it can be appreciated by the countless spectators who walk to Lord's from the Marylebone mainline and Underground train stations each season.

At the unveiling ceremony, in August, Charlotte said: "I'm sure this beautiful new plaque will be an interesting talking-point, for local residents and match-goers, for many years to come."

The ground being commemorated was used by MCC for three seasons - 1811 to 1813 - before being abandoned because of the construction, through its outfield, of the Regent's Canal. This forced the Club to move around 250 yards north-east, to its current home.

MCC would like to thank Dunlop Haywards for kindly funding this new plaque.

Local residents watch record-breaking innings

In mid-August, around 300 local residents and their guests enjoyed complimentary admission to the world-class MCC Museum at Lord's, as well as free entry to the England v India women's match, as guests of the Club.

The free admission policy (announced in the last edition of this newsletter) enabled MCC's neighbours to see exhibits including the Ashes urn as well as an astonishing performance by England's Claire Taylor.

Her innings of 156 not out shattered the previous record, dating from 1979, for the highest individual score in a one-day international at 'the home of cricket'.

MCC has since installed a special board, honouring Claire's achievement, behind the Compton Stand at Lord's.