

30/11/2005

The Not So Secret Seven - Primary Club Reveals England 'Primaries'

With Ian Bell's selection as September's "Primary of the Month", over half of England's Ashes winning squad are Primaries

The Primary Club, the cricketer's charity for the blind and partially sighted, can now count seven of England's Ashes winning squad amongst its 9,500 members following the selection of Ian Bell as The Wisden Cricketer's "Primary of the Month" for September. Bell becomes an honorary Primary Club member alongside Marcus Trescothick, Michael Vaughan, Kevin Pietersen, Andrew Flintoff, Ashley Giles and Steve Harmison. Anyone who has been out first ball is eligible to join the Club. The Club is keeping a close eye on those players who have so far avoided a golden duck: Andrew Strauss, Geraint Jones, Matthew Hoggard, Simon Jones and Paul Collingwood, although the pressure is off until 2006 as the "Primary of the Month" is only awarded during the English home season.

"It's been a fantastic year for English cricket and we're hoping that England's performances in the future build further on the cricket fever that's been fuelled by the return of the Ashes," said Derek Underwood, Club Patron. "We're already looking forward to what promises to be a fantastic season next year."

Underwood continued: "We're very grateful to the Professional Cricketers' Association and the seven England players for becoming honorary members and joining in the spirit of the award. No one likes to get out first ball, but at least by joining the Primary Club, someone other than the opposing side can really benefit from a bad day at the wicket. In the fifty years since the Club was founded, we've raised over £2 million and helped to fund a variety of ground-breaking projects and provide specialist equipment. These include 'The Golden Duck', a specially adapted canal boat unveiled earlier this year for the Royal London Society for the Blind, a fully operational radio station, indoor swimming pools and gymnasiums, and activity holidays for blind and partially sighted children."

(306 words)

About The Primary Club (www.primaryclub.org)

The Primary Club is a currently celebrating 50 years of raising money for sporting and recreational activities for blind and partially sighted children.