The Primary Club

The cricketers' charity for the blind and partially sighted

Inside: John Lever supports the Club, VI honours, and how you help

INSIDE: VI cricket in the news – p2; Club tie spotted – p3; how you help – p4/5; 150 not out at Beckenham! – p8

Editor's letter

How exactly does your money make a difference? I asked Dom Taylor, Lord's Taverners Disability Officer and Community Cricket Officer, what Kent did with their grant from The Primary Club over the past year:

- January to April – 11 indoor, three hour training sessions at the Kent County Ground training centre in Beckenham supported by two coaches.
- Entry into BCEW Regional League, South & West; BCEW South & West Regional Twenty20 Cup; Brian Johnston Memorial Trophy Festival
- Continue coaching during the summer months
- Send one player on a VI specific Level 2 coaching course
- Playing clothes for 7 new players
- Cover match day costs of pitch hire, teas, umpires, scorers, travel, etc

Throughout your annual newsletter there are countless examples of how your money is making a genuinely lifechanging difference to people across the country. They all join me in saying a very large thank you indeed.

Alex Johnson

News

Former India captain Rahul Dravid told India Times reporters that he is not good enough to match the skills of of VI cricketers. "I am not good enough to play blind cricket," he said. "It is a rather difficult proposition because I have never played the game as they play. They have exceptional qualities."

Congratulations to England who reached the semi-final of the Blind Cricket Twenty20 World Cup before meeting an in-form Pakistan who put together an untouchable tally of 309 for one. Despite good knocks of 41 from Matthew Page and 34 not out from Luke Sugg, England fell some way short. The full England XI team sheet was Matt Page, Ed Hossell, Peter Blueitt, Justin Hollingsworth, Nathan Foy, Rory Hossell, Luke Sugg (Captain), Mo Khatri, Matt Dean, Dan Field, Amin Afshari.

The curse of Rule 5(c)

The curse of rule 5(c) has struck again, as confirmed by Test Match Special scorer Andrew Samson. The rule, under which members are asked to ***add £2*** to their annual donation for **each** primary achieved by an England batsman in a home test match, is invoked by James Vince in England's second innings against Sri Lanka in June last year.

So please do add £2 (or multiples!) to your annual donation!

BBS Cup Final: Report

The rearranged 2016 BBS Primary Club Heindrich Swanepoel Memorial Cup final was finally played at the end of April 2017 at Bath Cricket Club, contested by Warwickshire Bears and Somerset VICC.

Somerset were sent in to bat after losing the toss, but saw their opening pair Ed Hossell and Rob Crisp putting on 90 for the first wicket. Hossell eventually made the third highest cup final score ever of 131 from just 89 balls with sixteen boundaries and two sixes. Somerset were all out for 178 with 10 deliveries left unused. Asif Ali took 3-25, with two wickets each for Hassan Ali and Mark Turnham.

After an extended lunch break due to rain play resumed. Although the umpires became concerned about the conditions and a slippery ball, Warwickshire scored steadily and reached their target just before the rain returned.

Having scored 131 as well as taking a wicket and three catches, Ed Hossell was named Partially Sighted man of the match, with Mark Turnham named Totally Blind man of the match for his important 32 not out and two wickets.

BBS Cricket would like to thank The Primary Club for their continued funding of this competition for all of the clubs.

Major honour for Dave Gavrilovic

Blind Cricket England & Wales (BCEW) Chairman, Competitions and Technical Director and British Blind Sport Vice Chairman Dave Gavrilovic has received the Outstanding Contribution To Disability Cricket award at the England & Wales Cricket Board's NatWest OSCAs.

The OSCAs (Outstanding Service to Cricket Awards) celebrate the achievements and dedication of volunteers throughout the game. The OSCAs took place this year at Lord's with special guests including Stuart Broad and Jimmy Anderson as well as Mike Gatting. Dave, who had no idea that he was receiving an award, was presented with his trophy by Test Match Special commentator Jonathan Agnew, and former England opener Marcus Trescothick (pictured above).

Dave becomes the second official from VI cricket to receive this prestigious award, following his predecessor as BCEW chairman David Townley.

"It's a massive honour to receive this totally unexpected award," said Dave. "As much as I love playing cricket I also get a great sense of pride and satisfaction at being able to organise events and competitions that enable so many blind and partially sighted people of all ages to take part in this great sport. Receiving this award was the second proudest moment in my cricket career, only surpassed by playing for England.

Dave has also taken a leading role in a number of projects including setting up the BCEW Scorers Panel and developing the BCEW website as well as compiling and maintaining the largest sight classification database of any single sport organisation in the UK.

Club tie spotted!

Jonathan Agnew writing in the New Statesman about the Lord's Test Match in July noticed that Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage was wearing a Primary Club tie in a private box in the Mound Stand. Please report similar sitings to the newsletter editor.

Mr Farage: Sporting a different tie

Eoin Morgan

If you've ever wondered what it would be like for a non visually impaired cricketer to play VI cricket, the England and Wales Cricket Board has something of interest for you...

In a special video, limited overs captain Eoin Morgan joins a training session with the England Visually Impaired team and shows just how hard it is to bat against the best.

You can see the video at the ECB's web site at www.ecb.co.uk/tv/96198 or on YouTube

Primary Club Matchplay Tournament

The Matchplay Tournament is sponsored by The Primary Club which has sponsored it for many years. The tournament is played for the Lew Vizzard Knockout Trophy, given to England and Wales Blind Golf in 1986 and again held at Gaudet Luce Golf Club who have been great supporters to EWBG.

After three rounds the semi-finals featured Peter Hodgkinson versus Derek Field, and Andy Gilford versus Andy Sellars. Peter beat Derek and Andy S beat Andy G. In the final, Peter (guided by Margaret Hodgkinson) beat Andy (guided by Martyn Wright) on the 17th.

Those who did not reach the quarter-finals played in a Stableford Plate.

"All four matches were played in fabulous spirit but were very, very competitive," said Peter. "Without sponsorship, holding blind golf events on this scale, would be difficult to achieve and with that in mind great thanks have to go to The Primary Club for their continued support."

All your donations help

East London Vision (ELVis)

East London Vision members as well as people from further afield really put themselves to the test when they all took part in a rock climbing taster session at The Castle climbing centre in Hackney. Run by ELVis and Metro Blind Sport, this event saw everybody get the chance to put on a harness and grapple their way up the vertical walls with the help of trained instructors.

Everyone was very enthusiastic and they all really pushed themselves further than they thought possible – many people managed to reach the very top. "This has been a fantastic trip where I've been able to do loads of climbing and also make new friends," said one of the participants, "so definitely all my goals for the day have been ticked off!"

We would also like to thank The Primary Club which very kindly provided the funding so that this event was able to take place. We are currently looking into ways to enable those who participated to be able to practise the sport on a regular basis.

But that's not all! In partnership with Metro Blind Sport, 17 blind and partially sighted people had the opportunity to try their hand at skiing and sledging, again thanks to funding from The Primary Club. This time the Snozone Centre at Milton Keynes was the venue, supported by six volunteers plus staff. Some of the more experienced skiers amongst the group had the opportunity to show off their superb skiing skills and scaled the slopes from much greater heights with instructors alongside them.

Masuma Ali, ELVis CEO said: "It was great to see that the event appealed to everyone from complete beginners to more advanced skiers."

National Blind Tenpin Bowling Association

Our Summer Doubles 2016 was once again held in Wigan and was only able to be held because The Primary Club members had given us a donation towards the cost of it, *writes Pauline Greenhalgh from the National Blind Tenpin Bowling Association.*

As you will appreciate, our members come from all areas of Great Britain and to enable us to hold a finals to decide the winning team, at the end of the bowling season, costs quite a lot as we have to pay for accommodation, food and bowling charges for 36 members, for the whole weekend. So in May 12 teams of visually impaired tenpin bowlers and their helpers or reserves were able to meet up with each other, many for the first time, at a finals. Such as the team from Wolverhampton who came first and couldn't believe their eyes or ears when their name was called out as the winners.

Wolverhampton is one of our newer clubs, only having been with us for two years. They have three teams in our league and all made it to the Finals.

This year we also had a lovely surprise for our bowlers in the form of Lora Turnham and her husband

to fund these projects...

Lancashire Lions VISC

The club and its members have been going from strength to strength this past year with much valued support from The Primary Club funding, *writes club treasurer Ben Tanner.*

Membership for cricket and goalball has increased with many members excelling in the sports. The funding has allowed more people to access the club with help with travel and to subsidise costs of training, travel expenses and increase and improve the coaching the members receive to help improve their play.

Neil Fachie who had just returned home from the Paralympics in Rio after winning one Gold, one Silver and one Bronze medal between them. Lora has had no sight since birth and Neil has only a little sight so they do the Tandem Cycling, and do very well at it too. Our members were delighted to meet two Gold Medal winners and Lora and Neil did a very good job of presenting our trophies, having their photos taken with each team and letting all our members see and feel their medals. None of our members had ever seen, felt or held a medal from the Olympics before.

None of this would have been possible without the kindness shown to us by The Primary Club's members and we would like to assure them that we appreciate all that they do to help our Visually Impaired members and send them a very big THANK YOU.

Nottinghamshire Knights

The Nottinghamhire Knights are absolutely delighted to have the support of The Primary Club, *writes Lydia Bishop, Fundraising Manager at My Sight Nottinghamshire*, and last year your grant helped us attract many new players – we now currently have 25 visually impaired people involved with the team.

Playing cricket and being part of the team means so much to the members and much of this simply wouldn't be possible without your grant. Being involved with the Knights has helped people like our Captain, Phil, who was registered as blind in 2009.

"When I was first diagnosed with diabetic retinopathy I was absolutely devastated," says Phil. "I remember sitting in my bedroom and refusing to come out for several months afterwards. I just felt that I couldn't cope with the emotional implications of losing my sight at such a young age.

"When I first met the Nottinghamshire Knights blind cricket team I was bowled over by just how grounded they all were. They were just regular guys like me, their blindness hadn't made them behave in an odd or unusual way, they were just ordinary people who met up for a laugh, an occasional pint and to play cricket.

I very quickly made friends and began to get out of my bedroom and my depression and out onto the cricket pitch where I could bat off my frustrations and be accepted for who I was now."

twitter

Please do follow us at
@ThePrimaryClub

(and you can also follow the Primary Club Casuals at
@PCCasuals)

Also well worth following is
@UKBlindCricket

John Lever attends Primary Club fundraiser

The annual fund raising luncheon organised by Michael Savage and his wife Sally in aid of The Primary Club was held last year at the Northamptonshire County Golf Club.

The fact that Michael was awaiting a call for a long awaited hip-replacement did not affect his meticulous planning of this sixth such event.

Primary Club's funds were swelled by over £4,000 from Michael's latest efforts, and around 80 guests gathered in November to enjoy a sumptuous lunch followed by a most entertaining presentation by John Lever MBE, former England and Essex bowler.

The by now familiar figure of John "Bomber" Harris painlessly extracted cash from the guests with his table auctions during lunch, and later on conducted the main auction of cricket memorabilia and wines making well over £1,000.

On behalf of the Primary Club honorary reps David Bentley and John Spalton were delighted to attend and David gave a brief rundown of the activities and history of Primary Club before recognising the immense value of Michael's contribution to their funds over the years – recruiting over 90 new members and raising a considerable amount of money in the process.

Michael has already set the date for his seventh luncheon – Wednesday 8th November 2017 – and has secured the services of Matthew Fleming as guest speaker. Matthew is the current president of the MCC, former England ODI player and Captain of Kent County Cricket team. He is the latest in a long line of distinguished speakers – including Derek Underwood, Chris Cowdrey, Derek Randall and Andrew Strauss – who Michael has persuaded to attend his luncheons.

To date the Primary Club has benefitted from Michael's luncheons to the tune of well over £20,000 which has been distributed to a wide range of very grateful recipients. Long may they continue.

Loughborough Lions

PLEASE CONTRIBUTE!

The editor welcomes contributions. Any personal cricketing oddity, especially involving a primary, would be welcome. Photos would be a bonus!

Loughborough Lions Partially Sighted Football Club has a grant from The Primary Club to cover travelling expenses.

"We are having a really good season," says treasurer Mick Smalley. "We are currently lying second in the Division, three points behind the leaders.

With only four games to go there's everything to play for. The lads are very grateful and wish to thank you for your support.

From the Hon Sec…

Dear Member,

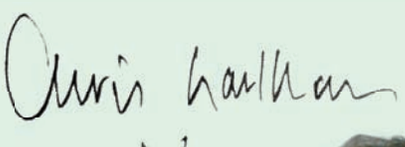
You will notice from the figures to the right that our income in the year just ended and surplus each fell by about £60,000, a fall almost wholly accounted for by a drop of £52,000 in "exceptional items" (otherwise known as legacies). This in turn meant that even after reducing grants by £12,000, we had to raid reserves to the tune of £28,000 and they now stand at just over £50,000. Two more years like last year and we shall either have exhausted our reserves or cut grants even further. At the moment, something like 60% of our grants go to support visually impaired cricket clubs and other cricket activities: if income continues to stagnate we shall be faced with an unpalatable choice between cutting back grants to cricket (where the "standard" grant has been £3,000 for the last six years, despite significant increases in costs, particularly travel costs, over that period) or withdrawing support from a number of other sports.

My thanks go to the 3,000 of you (out of 6,300 receiving this newsletter) who make a donation most years, and particularly to the 1,400 who make that donation by standing order. For some reason, recent joiners have a rather less satisfactory donation record: of the 376 who have joined in the last three years, 332 haven't donated a penny since. For those who have yet to make an annual donation by standing order you can download a form from our website (click on 'Join' and then on the link to 'application form' which includes the standing order form). You can then either complete the form in the old-fashioned way and return it to me in the envelope included with this mailing or use our bank details contained within it to set up a standing order online (in which case an e-mail confirming the date and amount would be much appreciated).

As I was finishing this piece, I read in The Times the obituary of someone who was probably our oldest living member at 102. He celebrated his 100th birthday with a magnum of David Gower's favourite champagne and said he was glad to reach 100 because he never quite made it on the cricket pitch.

My best wishes for a happy and successful season.

Yours sincerely



Chris Larlham

THE PRIMARY CLUB FORECAST RESULT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017

	2016/17 £ (forecast)	2015/16 £(actual)
Joining subscriptions and donations	120,000	125,640
Exceptional items		52,000
Profit on sale of merchandise	500	1,229
Tax claim under Gift Aid	22,000	22,441
Interest receivable	531	714
Total income	**143,031**	**202,024**
Publicity and administration costs	(11,209)	(11,444)
Surplus for the year	**131,822**	**190,580**
Surplus from earlier years	79,594	60,697
	211,416	**251,277**
Grants (details below)	159,735	171,683
Surplus to carry forward	**51,681**	**79,594**

Note: Copies of the Club's full accounts may be obtained from the Honorary Treasurer.

2017 GRANTS TO SCHOOLS AND CLUBS FOR THE BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED

Berkshire Co Blind Soc	Monthly sports club & cricket club		8,000
Birmingham Sports Club	Futsal & goalball		6,000
Blind Cricket England & Wales	Equipment and development programme and women's VI team		13,000
British Blind Sport	Cricket – KO Cup	6,350	
	Tenpin bowling	4,500	10,850
Cambridge Dons	Goalball expenses		2,000
Cheshire Cobras VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
Cricket for Change	Development programme		10,368
Derbyshire Assoc for the Blind	Swimming and tenpin bowling		6,492
Derbyshire Owls VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
Devon Bowling Club	2017 season expenses		2,500
Dorset Dolphins VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
Durham VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
East London Vision	"OptimEyes" Project		3,000
English Blind Golf Assoc	2017 Matchplay Championship		3,000
Gloucestershire VICC	2017 season expenses		2.200
Hampshire VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
Island Trust	Residential Voyage		2,000
Kent Spitfires VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
Lancashire Lions VICC	2017 season expenses & goalball		3,700
London Futsal Club	2017 season expenses		2,430
London Sports Club	Swimming		1,000
Loughborough Lions FC	2017 season expenses		2,000
Merton Sports Club	Hall hire & insurance		1,850
Metro	Cricket		6,000
National Blind Tenpin Bowling Assn, Belfast	Winter Trios League 2016		2,500
Northants Steelbacks VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
North West Scorpions FC	2017 season expenses		3,000
Nottingham Knights VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
Open Country	Tandem		1,675
Rhyl Visionnaires	Tenpin bowling		300
Royal National College,Hereford	Cricket expenses		1,210
SAVI Northwest, Merseyside	Venue hire and uniforms		2,800
Scottish Blind Golf Soc	2017 Strokeplay Championship		1,500
Somerset VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
South East London Vision	"Get Moving" project		3,000
South West Rovers	2016-17 football expenses		2,000
Staffs Wolves VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
Surrey VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
Sussex Sharks VICC	2017 season expenses and juniors		3,500
Tandeming Together	Tandem maintenance & transport		2,800
Taunton Deane VI Bowls	2017 season expenses & equipment		2,000
VIB Somerset Bowling Club	2017 season expenses		2,000
Vision North Somerset	"Splash & Chat" Swimming Club		1,560
Warwickshire VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
West Glamorgan Bowls Club	2016 season expenses		1,500
Worcs Elizabethans VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
Yorkshire VICC	2017 season expenses		3,000
			£159,735

Still going strong at 150!

Beckenham CC – where The Primary Club was formed in 1955 – celebrates its 150th anniversary

As part of the celebrations, the club held a "Primary Club & Old Boys" day on June 5 last year which included a blind/VI cricket demonstration and a match between Beckenham Wizards and The Primary Club Casuals, *writes Adrian Thomas*. The day raised a total of £2,300 for the Primary Club.

In the morning we were delighted to welcome Matt Dean and Rob Comber, captain and vice captain of the VI England cricket team respectively, to give a demonstration of VI cricket, and coaching sessions to all who wanted to participate.

Rob and Matt are both qualified coaches, and held coaching camps in batting, fielding and bowling. They arrived with specs to simulate various degrees of visual impairment. The sessions proved incredibly popular with both adults and juniors.

These guys both stayed on for the Wizards vs Primary Club game afterwards, chatting to anyone who wanted a word. There was no shortage of takers.

In the afternoon Beckenham Wizards, captained by me took on the Primary Club Casuals captained by Euan Spence, whose opening batting partner was John Stern, all of us trustees of The Primary Club.

The Wizards proved a little strong, and the home captain has been rightly chastised by the opposition captain for selecting Beckenham's club captain, and ex-Danish International, especially as John was stumped off him by a country mile.

It was a hugely successful day, and it was wonderful to think that on this ground, 61 years ago, four inebriated bachelors, down on their batting luck, decided to form the Primary Club which has grown into the charity it is today.

Birmingham Sports Club for the Visually Impaired

The money from The Primary Club has enabled BSCVI to provide two main sporting opportunities (Goalball and Partially Sighted Futsal) for people from Birmingham and its surrounding areas. It has given the club the resources to not only provide training sessions run by qualified coaches but also to enter national leagues in both sports.

Birmingham Goalball has had a varied time on and off the court, we have entered both league and cup competitions run by Goalball UK, although results have not been as we have wanted we have managed to keep a relatively young squad together who are hardworking and always looking to improve their game. Three of the Birmingham Goalball players were invited to a Goalball talent camp run by Goalball UK and the Royal National College in Hereford.

Birmingham Futsal entered the BBS Partially Sighted cup and narrowly missed out on a semi-final spot on goal difference. Off the field, five Birmingham Futsal players represented their country in the 2016 IBSA B2/B3 Partially Sighted European Championships in Turkey in December. These players did both England and their club proud as they managed to return home with a Bronze medal.

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