Members' Newsletter July 2024

The Primary Club

The cricketers' charity for the blind and partially sighted

Fun and fundraising: our former Patron (centre) at a 2011 event arranged by the late Michael Savage (to Underwood's left). Also pictured, left to right, are former Northamptonshire players Laurie Johnson, the late Peter Arnold and the late David Capel

Derek Underwood 1945-2024

John Stern, newsletter editor, pays tribute to our late patron, a legend of Beckenham and beyond

Derek Underwood was the perfect fit as patron of The Primary Club, a role he fulfilled with charm, grace and enthusiasm from 1997 until his death in April, aged 78.

Not only had he played for Beckenham CC, from where The Primary Club emerged in 1955 but he was an alumnus of Beckenham and Penge Grammar School. In addition and perhaps most pertinently, 'Deadly' held the England record for number of first-ballers (aka primaries) in Test cricket. His haul of six golden ducks in 86 Tests was, suitably, later overtaken by Stuart Broad, Derek's successor as Patron.

"We have no problem in claiming him as one of our own," says Andrew Dixon, one of the Club's trustees and a Beckenham CC stalwart. "It was in Mike Thomas's time as Secretary that it was thought we should have a household cricketing name for Brian Johnston to mention in his promotion of The Primary Club on *Test Match Special*. Who better than an England cricketer who emanated from where the Club began!"

It was fitting that *Soul Limbo* by Booker T and the MGs, the much loved and iconic *TMS* theme tune, which was the music of the BBC television coverage during Derek's playing *Continued on p2*

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Patron presence: Newsletters past record Deadly Derek's vital contributions to Club fundraising events

career, was played at his funeral. The Primary Club was represented by Andrew Dixon and chair Tim Kelleher.

Mike Brace CBE, a long-time Primary Club trustee and former paralympic skier, shared the stage with Derek at many a fund-raising event. "I met Derek on many occasions and had the privilege of speaking at one of his Hoppers' dinners down in Kent – with Tim Rice as my warm-up partner!" recalls Mike. "He obviously also spoke at our dinners where we hosted the great man and he will be sadly missed by all in the cricket world."

Derek's cricketing exploits are exceptional. He remains England's most prolific spin bowler, taking 297 Test wickets at an average of 25.83. Spin, though, doesn't quite cover his artistry. "On rain-affected pitches his sharp left-arm cutters, delivered from a flat-footed run at near medium pace and allied with metronomic accuracy, made him almost unplayable," said his obituary in *The Times*.

Famously, in 1968 at the Oval, he took four wickets in 27 balls (seven for 50 in the innings) to secure victory for England over Australia with minutes to spare in the final Ashes Test to draw the series 1-1. A freak storm had flooded the outfield and play was only possible after the heroic efforts of ground staff and volunteers from the crowd.

Derek took 2,465 first-class wickets – and even scored a first-class century as a nightwatchman against Sussex at Hastings in 1984. He was the country's leading wicket-taker in a season on four occasions, twice sharing that accolade with Essex seamer John Lever. He won an array of trophies with Kent, including three County Championships.

> "He always appreciated the game and never made you feel like you weren't good enough"

Rob Key, another Beckenham boy, former Kent captain and now managing director of England men's cricket, remembers Derek fondly. "When I came in at Kent, I was aware of Deadly but not much more than that," he told me in an interview for an England match programme. "Throughout the years, he gave back to Kent County Cricket Club and he never did it in a belittling way. He wasn't one of those old players who looked back and thought his era was so much greater than everyone else's. He always appreciated the game and never made you feel like you weren't good enough. He was a very kind person and I think kindness is something that's massively underrated in society and not spoken about enough."

From the editor

John Stern

This year's newsletter is a bitter-sweet affair. We sadly pay tribute to the late, great Derek Underwood (pages 1-2), patron of The Primary Club for so many years. But we welcome the equally distinguished Stuart Broad (p3) as his replacement.

Chris Larlham (p8) has been the indefatigable Hon Secretary of the Club for two decades, our very own Jimmy Anderson. He retires with our immense gratitude and just as England's pace bowlers will benefit from Jimmy's ongoing presence as a mentor, Chris, a fine opening bowler in his day, will remain a trustee, bringing his experience and judgement to bear. We warmly welcome his successor as Hon Sec, Nicole Pollock.

You can contact me by email: **editor@primaryclub.org**; follow us on X **@ThePrimaryClub**; and visit **www.primaryclub.org.**

Rule 5 (c)

The curse of Rule 5 (c) has struck again! The rule, under which members are asked to ***add*** £2 to their annual donation for each primary achieved by an England player in a home Test, is invoked by:

- **Chris Woakes** c Carey b Hazlewood v Australia at Old Trafford, 21 July 2023.

Welcome to the Nighthawk

Stuart Broad takes over the mantle of the late Derek Underwood and becomes Patron of The Primary Club

As Patrick Kidd explained in *The Times*: "When Stuart Broad was yorked middle stump by Jasprit Bumrah at Trent Bridge three summers ago he set a record, though he may not have realised it nor would have appreciated being told."

That record was the most first-ball dismissals in England Test history. It was Broad's tenth primary, passing the nine that Broad shared with Steve Harmison.

Broad, 38, who retired at the end of the 2023 Ashes after becoming only the fifth bowler to take 600 Test wickets, succeeds another England bowling great, Derek Underwood, who died in April after 27 years as the Primary Club's Patron.

Broad commented: "The Primary Club has a long and distinguished history of supporting grassroots cricket and many other sports for those with a visual impairment. Making cricket – and all sport – accessible to everyone is something I feel strongly about and I am proud and delighted to support this wonderful charity."

> "The Primary Club has a distinguished history – I am proud to support a wonderful charity"

Tim Kelleher, our chair, said: "We are delighted and honoured that 'the Nighthawk' has agreed to become our Patron. As well as all his other records and achievements, Stuart holds the England record for the most 'primaries' in Test matches – as did his illustrious predecessor Derek Underwood!"

Broad's predilection for a primary should be placed in context. His record of ten first-ballers in 243 innings is on a par with 'proper' batters like Australians Mike Hussey and Greg Chappell. Sam Curran, though, might wish to purchase a Primary Club tie given that he has six golden ducks from only 38 innings. The world record is held by the great Sri Lanka spinner Muttiah Muralitharan, the leading Test wicket-taker of all time, who was out first ball 14 times.

Thanks to some pain-staking research by Chris 'Frindall' Larlham, the Club's outgoing Honorary Secretary, we can reveal that, with ball in hand, Broad inflicted 19 primaries on opposition batters, 15 of which were taken in England. The first was Aussie Peter Siddle at Headingley in 2009 and the last Marnus Labuschagne at Edgbaston in 2023. Four each were taken at Lord's and Edgbaston, three at Headingley (including the last of his second hat-trick against Sri Lanka in 2014) two each at Trent Bridge (the last two in his first hat-trick in 2011 against India) and the Oval. Broad also had 13 second-ball dismissals as well.

Primarily: Australia's Peter Siddle becomes the first of Broad's 19 first-ball victims in his Test career at Headingley in 2009. England lost the match but regained the Ashes at the Oval, thanks in part to Broad's inspired spell of five for 37
Picture courtesy of Getty Images

BLIND CRICKET 2023

Sussex have a Field day

Record-breaking Sussex storm to fifth Primary Club Cup success

On a glorious May day at the 1st Central County Ground in Hove, Northants Steelbacks and Sussex Sharks finally contested the delayed 2023 BCEW Primary Club Heindrich Swanepoel Cup Final after a mix of rail strikes and rain prevented the game going ahead last season.

Rail disruption still had an impact as Northants were delayed and the game finally got underway 20 minutes later than scheduled with Northants winning the toss and electing to field.

The Sussex innings started solidly and they had reached 106 for two when Dan Field and Si Ledwith came together for the partnership that would change the game.

Ledwith's 80 not out, off just 52 balls with 11 fours was a magnificent innings but it was eclipsed by Field's 154 off just 80 balls with 19 fours and five sixes. It was the highest score by an individual batter in the cup final's 44-year history and their partnership of 180 was another all-time cup final record. Sussex's total of 322 for five was the highest in a cup final by some margin.

Northants needed a fast start to have a chance at such a massive chase but some outstanding Sharks bowling made that impossible. Joe Harrison and Phil Daniels kept the score down to just five runs for the opening five overs. Totally blind bowler Ian 'Tiny' Morris took three for 38 to effectively seal the deal. Northants were all out for 94 in the 25th over.

Hove comforts: Sussex enjoy their T20 success

Dan the man: Field hits out

> "Sussex promoted the game and there was an appreciative crowd soaking up the South Coast sunshine"

It was a tough day for Northants who had fielded in the hottest part of the day and came up against a Sussex side who turned in a complete team performance. Field was awarded partially sighted player of the match for his destructive innings and Morris won the totally blind player of the match award.

But the biggest winner of the day was Blind Cricket. Sussex Cricket had promoted the game and there was an appreciative crowd soaking up the South Coast sunshine and enjoying a history making spectacle.

Blind Cricket England & Wales commented: "We would like to sincerely thank Tom Belcher, Emma Brooke and the whole team at Sussex Cricket for staging such a terrific final. We would also like to thank The Primary Club without which our game couldn't continue to grow."

2023 BLIND CRICKET ENGLAND & WALES AWARDS

Total Player of the Year
Dave Daniels (Sussex Sharks)
Partially Sighted Player of the Year
Ed Hossell (Somerset VICC)
Women's Player of the Year
Emma Gilfoyle (Durham VICC)
Low Partial Player of the Year
Sheraz Chohan (Lancashire Lions)
Total Bowler of the Year
Amin Afshari (Kent Spitfires)
Partially Sighted Bowler of the Year
Mo Ghalib (London Metro)
Total Batter of the Year
Adrian Snellgrove (Somerset VICC)
Partially Sighted Batter of the Year
David Howells (Northants Steelbacks)
Most Promising Player of the Year
Rob Crisp (Somerset VICC)
Wicketkeeper of the Year
Ryan West (Surrey VICC)
Total Fielder of the Year
Ian Morris (Sussex Sharks)
Partially Sighted Fielder of the Year
Dan Field (Sussex Sharks)
Spirit of Cricket
Metro Devils

Umpire of the Year
Yolanda Harris (pictured)
Scorer of the Year
Beccy Ross
Charles Ronayne Award for Outstanding Contribution to VI Cricket
Geoff Ridgway

2023 BCEW Competition Winners

BCEW National League Division One
London Metro
Primary Club Heindrich Swanepoel Cup
Final Postponed: Northants Steelbacks v Sussex Sharks (see above)
David Townley Memorial Twenty20 Cup
Sussex Sharks
BCEW National League Division Two
Northants Steelbacks

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

A humbling experience

Tim Kelleher reflects on his first year as chair of The Primary Club which provided much joy – and a little pain

My first year as Chair of The Primary Club has been varied and fascinating. Although I have been a member for many years, I wanted to see at first hand the projects that your money supports.

One of the highlights was Surrey's disabilities day at the Oval. Several charities, including The Primary Club, were represented and the whole outfield was covered with children and adults playing different games. Surrey VICC were having a practice match and I was roped in to having a bowl which, I must say, I found rather difficult.

The ball is hard to grip because it's so big and cutting or spinning it is a real skill. When I put on the eye blinds, it was nearly impossible to bowl on the cut strip. The way bowling is taught is to replicate a windmill motion so the left arm (I bowl left handed) holding the ball goes down close to the left side and the right goes up keeping both arms straight and as close to the body as possible. The left goes up to the release point and the right goes down all in unison and close to the body so the release is straight.

I had to bowl to Surrey's star, a 19-year-old called Josh. He had multiple disabilities: he held the bat left-handed because his right arm didn't function sufficiently and he also had a visual impairment. He middled one of my deliveries back to my left side but within reach. I was without the eye blinds at this point and, mentally turning back time 40 years, went for the catch.

> "My body weight landed on the ball on the left side of my rib cage. Crack! Ouch!"

As I dived to my left, the ball (it's a bit more inflated than a small football) swerved and went further from my body than I had initially anticipated. I caught it one-handed, but was now off my feet, full-length, goalkeeper style. I knew that when I landed, probably on my elbow, the ball would pop out so – still airborne – I drew the arm back towards my body. As I went down I realised I had overdone it and I landed with my armpit above the ball. Dropped! But the really ignominious thing was that my body weight landed on the ball on the left side of my rib cage. Crack! Ouch! There was lots of laughter, like when someone gets struck in the box. I could see the funny side too but laughing was now painful. As was sneezing, coughing etc for the next four to six weeks.

Tim's tour: Tash (above) in Poole with her specially-designed wheelchair, paid for by Primary Club funds, and (left) another of the chair's visits to see Berkshire Stags win the BCEW Development League and T20 Cup

I visited Poole for Dorset Dolphins against Surrey. There I met a young woman called Tash, who is blind and also a wheelchair user following a viral infection. Her specially-designed wheelchair was paid for by Primary Club funds. The chair has no arms so Tash can swing a bat and also has a place to pop the bat behind her when she's the non-striker. Her enthusiasm for the game and the joy it obviously brings her is really rather humbling. And that is the overall impression – that The Primary Club, through your generosity, improves so many lives.

THE JAMES FUND

Innovation and collaboration

Thanks to a substantial legacy, The Primary Club has been able to support special projects above and beyond our annual grant giving across the UK

In last year's Newsletter we reported on the receipt of an exceptional legacy, of more than £150,000, from the estate of the late Kenneth James, a cricket enthusiast and volunteer from north-west London.

Rather than simply add that money into the pot, so to speak, to form part of The Primary Club's annual grant giving, the trustees decided to use the money for special projects that would be beyond the scope of our regular grants.

Over the course of 2023, applications were invited to receive grants of up to £25,000. There were few restrictions but trustees were keen to support projects that were either innovative (enabling support in new ways, or to a wider community) and/or collaborative (enabling organisations to deliver support together which they could not achieve alone).

After last year's newsletter was published but before the accounts were approved, we were notified of another large legacy from the estate of the late Ethel Murray. This was included in the 2022/23 accounts (see opposite) and the trustees will be undertaking a similar exercise to the 'James Fund' later in 2024.

One of the largest grants awarded (£24,491, over two years) from the James Fund was to British Blind Sport (BBS), a regular Primary Club beneficiary, to support the development of an exciting new sport, Showdown, for people with visual impairment.

"Showdown is a fast-paced sport, played on a specially designed table by two players from opposing sides, using flat, paddle-type bats and wearing eyeshades," explains BBS. "It shares similarities with table tennis and air hockey and is a sport designed specifically for blind and partially sighted people. This sport is increasingly popular across Europe and BBS recently showcased the sport at the IBSA World Games which were held in Birmingham in August 2023."

The Primary Club's support is helping to establish a national league for Showdown, with the creation of eight new clubs.

Showdown showcased: a fast-paced sport played on a specially designed table

OTHER GRANTS MADE FROM THE JAMES FUND:

Goalball UK – £25,000
Targeting four areas in the UK to create goalball clubs, provide training and equipment and support coaching development.

Daisy Inclusive – £21,321
Taster sessions in swimming, tandem cycling and guided running, enabling participants to take part in a 2024 'VI Athlon'.

Blind Baseball Cymru – £19,680
Expanding the sport to four new locations in an under-represented region and piloting the new sport of blind pickleball.

Sight for Wight – £16,139
Launching a tandem cycling club for blind and VI cyclists on the Isle of Wight.

ABC Council – £11,085
First year funding for a 'See Sports' challenge allowing the blind and VI in Northern Ireland to participate in a wide range of sports including kayaking, paddleboarding, climbing and skiing.

Blackwell Sailing – £10,920 (over 2 yrs)
Specialist instructors (supported by volunteers) and transport to enable VI participants to sail on Lake Windermere.

UK Blind Baseball – £9,350
Start up costs and expenses for development of the sport across the UK.

Blind Ice Hockey UK – £8,250 (over 2 yrs)
Enabling blind and VI people to take part in this growing sport, which is currently played competitively only in Canada and the USA.

The Brier School – £6,028
Introducing goalball to a nationally recognised special school of 180 pupils with moderate and complex disabilities including visual impairment.

Moor Vision – £5,000
Launching a range of activities aimed at under-fives in Devon, covering swimming, tandem cycling, goalball, climbing, sailing and active play.

THE PRIMARY CLUB
RESULT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	2023/24 £	2022/23 £
Joining subscriptions and donations	111,663	98,139
Legacies	13,857	407,635
Profit on sale of merchandise	(465)	943
Tax claim under Gift Aid	19,492	19,535
Interest receivable	5,089	648
Total income	**149,636**	**526,900**
Publicity and administration costs	(8,474)	(9,372)
Grants (details below)	(324,794)	(162,657)
Surplus for the year	(183,632)	354,871
Surplus from earlier years	461,898	107,027
Surplus to carry forward	**278,266**	**461,898**

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

2023/24 GRANTS TO SCHOOLS AND CLUBS FOR THE BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED

Berkshire County Blind Society	Standard VICC Grant	3,500
Birmingham Goalball Club	Goalball	4,000
Birmingham Sports Club	Futsal	3,500
Birmingham Stars VICC	Standard VICC Grant	3,500
Blind Cricket England & Wales	Dev, Balls, Trophies, Women, PC Cup	18,090
Bradford & District VICC	Standard VICC Grant	3,500
Braille Chess Association	Coaching costs, chess sets & clocks	3,700
British Blind Sport	Archery & ten pin bowling	11,418
Cambridge Dons	Goalball expenses	2,000
Cheshire Cobras VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
Devon Bowling and Social Club	Season expenses	3,500
Dorset Dolphins VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
Durham VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
English Blind Golf Association	Matchplay Tournament	3,500
Gloucestershire VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
Kent Spitfires VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
Kingston-u-Thames Assn for the blind	Swimming sessions	2,170
Lancashire Lions VICC	Cricket & goalball	5,000
London Futsal Club	Season expenses	3,430
London Sports Club	Swimming, rowing etc	2,880
Merseyside VIFC	Weekly sessions	5,145
Merton Sports & Social Club	Hall hire & insurance	2,500
Metro	Standard VICC grant – two teams, plus 2024 athletics	9,000
Northants Steelbacks VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
North West Scorpions FC	Season expenses	6,500
Northern Ireland Blind Golf	Introducing children to golf	6,900
Open Country	Tandem Challenge Middlesbrough	2,000
Partially Sighted Football League	Season expenses	5,000
Royal National College	VICC season expenses	2,640
SAVI Northwest	Venue hire, equipment inc goalball	7,000
Scottish Blind Golf Society	Strokeplay Tournament	2,200
Somerset VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
Staffordshire Wolves VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
Surrey VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
Sussex Sharks VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
Tandeming Together	Tandem maintenance, insurance & transport	5,200
Taunton Deane VI Bowls	Season expenses	2,000
Vision of Adventure	Storage of tandem fleet	4,320
Watford Goalball Club	Hall hire	3,000
Wavertree CC	Season expenses	3,000
West Glamorgan Sports Club	Tournament expenses	2,300
Worcestershire Elizabethans VICC	Standard VICC grant	3,500
Yeovil VICC	Season expenses	3,000
Yorkshire VICC	Season expenses	3,500
Prior year adjustment		(1,300)
James Fund grants (see opposite)		138,701
		324,794

From the Hon Sec...

Dear Member,

This is my 21st, and last, communiqué as your, now former, Hon Secretary.

I looked back to my first, and in particular to the summarised results for the year to 31st March 2004 alongside it. Our regular income of some £188,000 was augmented by net receipts of £14,000 from our first ever dinner, held the previous October with Mike Brearley as our guest speaker, who was followed by Richie Benaud (2005 – our golden jubilee), Christopher Martin-Jenkins (2008) and John Major (2011). Twenty years on, our regular income hovers around £130,000, almost 40% of it from standing orders. Our members are all 20 years older now and this has been reflected in substantial receipts from legacies. There have been 42 'Primaries' by England batsmen in home Tests (a record five of them in 2022), with a total of six belonging to our new Patron and four to a certain former Nottinghamshire and England team-mate.

There has been a sea change in the nature of our grant recipients. Of the 34 schools and clubs to whom grants were made then, only eight received a grant in the year just ended. One reason is that we no longer receive applications from the specialist schools, as a result of a change in government policy such that children whose only disability is visual impairment are now educated in mainstream schooling. A number of others have fallen by the wayside through a lack of volunteers to support them.

However we now support a total of 17 cricket clubs, which is all – or almost all – of them, plus their umbrella body, Blind Cricket England & Wales.

I have very much enjoyed my time as your Hon Secretary and I wish my successor, Nicole Pollock, and all of you, whether playing, watching or just following the game, a happy and enjoyable season.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Larlham

Chris Larlham

Pedantry, wine, cricket ... and primaries

Hon Treasurer Ross Midgley pays tribute to his friend Chris Larlham, who stands down after 20 exceptional years as Hon Sec of The Primary Club

I met Chris nearly forty years ago, soon after I moved to Saffron Walden. Originally it was a shared interest in bridge that brought us together, although we rapidly established other points of contact – principally wine, of which he has an extensive collection, pedantry and cricket.

Some 20 years later, Chris read that The Primary Club was looking for a new Hon Secretary and, after an 'interview' at Lord's with our late chairman, Robert Fleming, he took up his post. The then Hon Treasurer, Tony Bentall, was on the point of retiring and it wasn't long before Chris recruited me to join as a replacement.

Over the past two decades, Chris (pictured right in the 2006 Newsletter) has performed his own duties – and, it must be said, most of mine – with his characteristic efficiency, attention to detail and good humour. Chris has done probably three quarters of the traditional job of the Hon Treasurer, in addition to all the duties of the secretary. The debt that we owe to him goes beyond merely the Hon Sec role. His spreadsheets are legendary and his knowledge of grant applicants encyclopaedic. His house has become a repository for Primary Club merchandise.

The Brian Johnston Six-a-side Competition is announced. Pauline Johnston presents the Hon Sec with the trophy for the new award (see page 2)

Since retiring as a senior City solicitor, Chris has devoted much of his life to cricket – which he used to play to a good standard – whether as a spectator at his beloved Surrey CCC, as a coach and latterly scorer at Saffron Walden CC or, of course, as a stalwart of The Primary Club. We are fortunate that he will be continuing as a trustee even after stepping down as Hon Sec and doubly fortunate that he has managed to recruit such an able replacement in Nicole Pollock.

Chris – on behalf of the trustees and all our members and grant recipients – a massive thank you for all you have done for The Primary Club.

"The club owes you a huge debt of gratitude"
Tim Kelleher, Primary Club chair

"Chris has performed an outstanding role in, at times, quite difficult circumstances. Thank you very much from all the blind and partially sighted sportsmen and women around the country over many years."
Mike Brace CBE, Primary Club trustee and former GB Paralympian

The new Hon Sec

Nicole Pollock married into a cricket-loving family and has attended numerous amateur and professional matches since her cricket-tour honeymoon to South America in 1987.

Qualified as a chartered accountant, she retrained as a teacher and recently retired from a varied senior career in a prestigious prep school. She is looking forward to supporting The Primary Club's ambitions to promote and grow its membership so that it can continue to fulfil its principal focus of enhancing sports and recreational activity for the blind and visually impaired.

In her spare time, Nicole enjoys reading with her young grand-daughter, learning Italian online, and accompanying her husband to cricket and rugby matches. Nicole follows Chris Larlham to the crease, hoping to emulate the success of his 20 year innings as Hon Secretary!

Good company: Nicole Pollock with former England captain Sir Andrew Strauss

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