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Notchers' News

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The network for scorers

This newsletter is *your* forum for sharing news and experiences, discussing scoring issues and networking.

Emma Busk at the U19 Cricket World Cup

In October 2009 my partner, Paul, and I were delighted to receive advance notification of his appointment by the ICC to the U19 Cricket World Cup, the venue for which had recently been changed from Kenya to New Zealand. While I was hopeful my work schedule would allow me to accompany Paul to the other side of the world, swapping what has turned out to be a most inclement English January for a Kiwi summer, I was not expecting the opportunity and honour of scoring at the tournament.

New Zealand Cricket, as host board, were responsible for appointing the official scorers to each match throughout the World Cup, which involved the 10 full-member nations and the top 6 Associate nations from the U19 World Cup Qualifiers which had taken place in Toronto last September. The 16 teams were split into 4 groups, with the top 2 from each group progressing to the Super League and the bottom 2 contesting the Plate competition. That amounts to 48 matches in the 3 week tournament, plus 16 official warm-up matches.

New Zealand has a small population, with 27 scorers on the First Class roster. In addition to the U19 World Cup, they were hosting a Bangladesh tour, had the culmination of their domestic T20 competition and a Women's tournament. Having already reduced the appointments from two official paper scorers and one official internet scorer to one of each, *New Zealand Cricket* still found themselves overstretched. Thanks to a recommendation from one of Paul's colleagues, I was thrilled to discover my services were required. I was appointed to score both of England U19's warm up matches, as well as one quarter final and the 5th/6th place play off.

I thoroughly enjoyed both warm-up matches but was slightly dismayed to discover that the official scoring record provided (and required to be used) by the ICC had undergone no improvements since my first encounter with it at World Cricket League Div 5 in Jersey back in 2008!

My colleagues on both days were extremely welcoming and it was a pleasure to share a box (or a table in the pavilion in one case) with them both. The 2nd match, England U19 vs New Zealand U19, gave a hint to the enthusiastic support the locals would give their side throughout the tournament.

My next encounter with New Zealand came on 24th January, when the host nation met their neighbours in the first Quarter Final and I made my Youth ODI debut. The early morning drizzle, persistent clouds and stiff wind (without which we may not have had an on-time start) didn't deter either team's supporters.

The scoreboard at the MainPower Oval, Rangiora is located at mid-wicket on the first floor of the pavilion and is spacious, light and comfortable.

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Emma and her view from the score box

The newsletter can only be successful if copy is received for publication. Please submit articles, letters and questions to notchers@btopenworld.com <http://www.notchers.co.uk>

Continued from page 1: Emma Busk at the U19 Cricket World Cup

The ground has no separate media facilities: the match was broadcast live on Sport Radio across New Zealand and the only feasible location for the 2 commentators was immediately outside the score box. It took a few overs before I was able to effectively 'blank out' the commentary, but there is no doubt that it added to the atmosphere, which was pretty electric with around 2,000 vocal supporters in the ground.

In a day of role reversal in the Busk-Baldwin household Paul, on a day off, put his experience as a 3rd Umpire to good use and proved that he was an equally efficient '3rd Scorer'. He kept Erika and me supplied with hot drinks and savoury snacks which fortified us through the challenges presented during play, including the remote location of the scoreboard operator, significant interference on the radios and some 'stealth-signalling' from one of the on-field umpires which I guess was one way to ensure we Notchers kept our concentration!

Australia made 232 for 8 in their 50 overs, with an excellent 59 ball half century from the Captain, Mitchell Marsh (son of Geoff, brother of Shaun). With the clouds darkening during the innings break, it looked likely that Messrs. Duckworth & Lewis would be doing their thing.

New Zealand obviously thought so too and as their openers began to chase the (correctly displayed) par score, wickets started to fall rapidly. Australia's 62 run victory set them on the road to their undefeated Super League campaign which saw them overcome Pakistan in a thrilling final.

New Zealand's tournament ended without a bang the following day when they were comprehensively beaten by South Africa by 9 wickets in the 5th/6th place play off, which was also my last match in New Zealand. For me though, there was no such disappointment – I had been immensely lucky to do what I truly love, in a high-profile, well-run, exciting tournament, meeting some wonderful people along the way. I may never get such an opportunity again, but I will always have the remarkable memories. And, my pens and I are extremely well warmed-up for the start of Richmond CC's season in April!



Emma & Erika at work in the score box

NO BALL/FREE HIT The debate continues

I wonder if some scorers are trying to make things unnecessarily complicated by trying to devise a symbol for the Free Hit delivery that follows a call for a front foot No ball. The free hit is not enshrined in the Laws of the game but occurs as a result of special regulations in certain limited-overs matches.

There appears to be no *universally accepted* symbol for such a scenario and, in the absence of any international body addressing the needs of cricket scorers, that is likely to remain the case. I am left wondering whether we actually *need* yet another scoring symbol.

Until now I've been content to use a simple marginal note to denote the free hit - as most of the first-class scorers do in the UK. My reasoning is that if any runs accrue from the free hit they will be recorded in the normal way and that, in any case, statisticians appear to have little or no interest.

The vast majority of No ball calls in limited overs cricket are likely to be for front foot faults. In my experience over the past few years I can probably count on the fingers of one hand the number of occasions where No ball has been called for anything other than a front foot fault. Consequently I am fast warming to the idea that, in competitions where the free hits are awarded, it would be far less complicated for us to accept that *any* No ball is followed by a free hit *unless there was a marginal note to the contrary*.

As I've already mentioned free hits only result from certain competition regulations but, within The Laws of Cricket, there is another No ball situation for which there is no recognised score book notation: the ball that has been bowled but comes to rest before it reaches the striker's wicket. If such a delivery has not been touched by the striker, either with bat or person, **Law 24.7** requires the umpire to call and signal No ball and immediately call and signal Dead ball. From a scoring viewpoint this is undoubtedly more complex than the free hit following a No ball because, in this case, the No ball is a ball bowled but not a ball received. I understand that the issue was discussed at length by Scorers' Board some years ago and the consensus was that, given that many scorers will never come across it and those who do are unlikely to come across it often, it didn't justify another symbol. A margin note suffices.

I do wonder if there now needs to be consideration of the formation of an international body to meet the needs of scorers. Issues such as these could be discussed and guidance could be given. Without such a body there will inevitably be even bigger variations in both the methods and standards of scoring than exist now – which cannot bode well for the future of the game we all love.

THE CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE

When I returned from a few weeks watching cricket in South Africa – after which I wondered whether I should change my pseudonym if people are to trust my judgement – I found just nine Challenge entries waiting for me (seven of them by email).

For the first time since I started the Challenge some fifteen or so years ago, there were no all-correct entries.

The trio of questions (Notchers 1 & 7, Scratchers 1) concerning overthrows when the batting side needed two to win caused some interest – and, it seems, some confusion. I must admit that, in Scratchers 1, I thought that, if the boundary overthrow reached the boundary *before* the batsmen had completed their second run, then the match would be over at that instant and only five runs would be recorded. I have, however, been advised by impartial experts in cricket law that six is the correct answer, so I have bowed to their wisdom and accepted six as the solution.

Solution

	Notchers	Scratchers
1	5	6
2	159	17
3	30	42
4	85	8
5	46	3
6	3	158
7	2	8
8	4	10
9	0	28
10	13	49
11	4	0
Extras	3	3
Total	354	332

Result: Notchers won by 22 runs

At Notchers 7 if the second run was completed *before* the overthrow reached the boundary, then only two runs would be recorded.

In Notchers 6 one competitor read more deeply into the question than I had intended: it was my intention that the question should refer to runs off the bat (or byes/leg-byes), but he claimed that runs could also be scored if a batsman was Stumped or Hit wicket from a Wide ball, or Hit ball twice from a No ball. I decided to be generous and allow his answer, along with all the others who read the question as I had intended. Congratulations to Keith Healey on being the deep thinker.

Notchers 8 produced four mistakes: the scorer would be required to acknowledge four signals: No ball, Bye, Short run, Boundary 4.

Three competitors sent entries with only one mistake: Nick Szkutko (Brisbane), Keith Healey (Staffordshire) and Peter Danks (Hampshire), and, after the editor agreed that we should still select a prize-winner, Peter was the one whose name came out of the hat. He has been sent a book token. The other entrants were Ken Baker, John Betts, Sheila Harding, Clive Jones, John Mountford and Polly Rhodes.





Thank you to all those who entered this year, especially those who have been sending entries for many years. But, in view of the record-low number of entries this year, I wonder whether the Challenge has run its course.

Any thoughts?

The Third Umpire

Has the Christmas Challenge run its course?

The Third Umpire and the editor have discussed the future of the challenge and ask you:

-  Do you take up the challenge?
-  If you do complete the challenge but choose not to submit your answers, why not?
-  Do you check that your answers agree with those of the Third Umpire?
-  If you don't take up the challenge is it due to lack of time, lack of interest or some other reason?

THE FUTURE OF THE CHALLENGE IS WITH YOU, THE READERS. WE WANT TO KNOW YOUR VIEWS

Little or no response will result in no Christmas Challenge in 2010

MORE UNUSUAL SCORING RECORD ENTRIES

Philip Stallard and Roy Jennings both report that it's not unusual for them to record 'Helicopter stopped play'. Both regularly score at grounds which are adjacent to major trauma centres; play stops when the air ambulance has to land on the outfield to bring in the injured.

Roy also reports the scoring record entry "horse stopped play" when a lovely white horse came through the gate, trotted around the outfield for several minutes then disappeared through a gap in the hedge. He comments that it was obviously a cricket loving horse as it never went on the square! No one ever found out where it came from or who owned it.

Robbie Burns reports that a number of years ago he headed a scoresheet "Start delayed. Solar Eclipse"


The Editor was interested to note that 4 out of the 9 entrants do not receive Notcher's News directly via the group mailing lists proving that readers are sharing the newsletter with scorer colleagues and/or that interested parties are accessing the newsletter via the website.


COMPUTER SCORING

David Naldrett

David lives in New Zealand where his son's team competed in the South Island 5th/6th Grade (U11) Tournament in January

David was one of the tournament scorers and reported that the competition regulations included:

 40 overs a side matches on each of the four days;

 if a side passes the opposition total they continue batting for up to 40 overs or until they are all out, whichever is sooner.

A lot of cricket for U11s and a lot of scoring for Dad!

Having read Andy Scarlett's article on computer scoring with interest David was prompted to write this article.

As an ex-player and with little scoring experience I went down the route of buying the Tom Smith cricket rules book and the TCS Electronic Scoring programme. I have also recently emigrated so am now the Pom in the land of Kiwis. I thought I would comment on some of the issues for this relative novice scorer at a 4 day Under 11 tournament.

GLARE/RAIN

The brighter the sun the more you have the joy of looking back at yourself from the lap top screen. The glare making it almost impossible to see the mouse pointer. I was under a canopy but still struggled to see the screen. In the end I sorted this by utilising an old lap top which has a matt screen rather than the all popular gloss finish of modern ones. The canopy also helped when the boys continued to play in pretty heavy rain. I was happier using the old computer which cost me £150 rather than my expensive 17 inch laptop which cost much much more.

POWER

Since Santa didn't bring me the Acer timeline series with 8 hour battery life, I have been using external battery packs called "Power Gorillas" purchased from Powertraveller in Hampshire to top up the laptop's battery. They are currently on sale for £145 and are superbly made, have numerous adapters for any make of computer and also any country's style of plug. I bought 2. The first lasts about 32 overs of the first innings due to the power used in setting up the match; the second battery usually lasts from the 32 overs and has 2 of the six bars left following the completion of the 40 overs of the second innings. This obviously gives me the security of the 2 bars and the computer battery left for any delays.

INTERRUPTIONS

What is the score? How many did I get? This was cured by closing the bowlers scorebook and run rate sections of TCS thereby making the "scoreboard" as large as possible. The boys then just looked over my shoulder and were able to check the score without saying anything.

CONCENTRATION

Very important especially after a wicket has fallen to ensure you have the correct player facing the next ball after players crossed prior to the wicket falling. It was my downfall once as I didn't spot I had clicked on the incorrect member of the batting side. The beauty of TCS was it was very easy and quick to rectify.

The one thing the TCS system doesn't do though is stop a proud father becoming too engrossed in his son's performance. I did embarrass myself by going "Yes" rather too loudly when he took an important break through wicket.

At the end of the tournament our coach had to do a report on the tournament. He was amazed at how comprehensive and prompt the tournament information made available to him was.

A SPECTATOR FIELDS THE BALL:

Gina and Heath Kearns from Guernsey posed this question

A batsman plays a shot and is going to the boundary a spectator picks the ball up before it reaches the edge of the field? Is it

The runs that have been completed are scored and the ball is dead

5 penalty runs are scored as well the runs completed

Or is it a dead ball

Stan Bennett, member of the MCC Laws sub-committee, answers as follows:

Law 19.1(a) requires the umpires to decide, before the toss, whether an obstacle on the field of play is to be regarded as a boundary. This covers things like signposts on village greens, trees, or broken down rollers that cannot be moved in the time available. This type of obstacle is easily dealt with. If an obstacle is not regarded as a boundary, the ball striking it remains in play. Mobile obstacles such as dogs, enthusiastic youngsters, cynical supporters and spectators of all types create a problem.

It would clearly be quite silly to deny the batting side a boundary if a young spectator ran a yard or so on to the field of play and prevented the ball from reaching the boundary. It would be similarly stupid to allow a boundary for a ball intercepted by a spectator 20 yards in from the boundary, especially if a fielder were close enough to field the ball before it reached the boundary. The umpire must make his decision with the concept of fairness uppermost.

The umpires could agree retrospectively (if need be) that the concept of fairness will guide their decision making. In the vast majority of cases this will create no problems; the decision that the umpire needs to make will be obvious and only those who can see no further than their own team's prospering will take issue with it. In a very few cases, however, it will be difficult. Here the umpires will consult and if doubt remains they will follow the Nigel Plews principle and do what they consider to be best for the Game; not the match, you understand, but the Game of Cricket. They cannot allow the ball to remain in play as the unwelcome spectator could retain control of it or determine its onward path to suit his own match preferences. Whatever decision is made the ball will have to become dead. To ensure that all the players understand the situation and to prevent any further action, the umpire should call and signal Dead ball. He will then either award a boundary or rule that the runs scored will be in accordance with Law 18.11, that is to say, completed runs plus the run in progress if the batsmen had crossed at the instant the ball was intercepted. In the latter case the batsmen will be sent to the end that was 'theirs' at the instant of the interception.

There could be penalty runs, but only if a member of the fielding side has come on to the field of play without the umpire's consent and has come into contact with the ball in play (Law 2.6).

One hopes that the umpires will adequately inform the scorers of what has happened.

ADVERTISING SCORER TRAINING COURSES

As Notchers' News isn't the best place to advertise locally run courses the website (<http://www.notchers.co.uk>) hosts a list of known courses which will be updated regularly. If you want to advertise your course details there (free of charge) you should email relevant information (include a contact address) to notchers@btopenworld.com

USEFUL EMAIL ADDRESSES

England and Wales Cricket Board Association of Cricket Officials (ECB ACO)
<http://www.ecb.co.uk/ecb/ecb-association-of-cricket-officials/>

International Institute of Cricket Umpires and Scorers
<http://www.umpires.tv> (For scorer specific information email scorers@umpires.tv)



For books, scoring equipment and coloured pens or to access the Bulletin Board;

Visit the Acumen Books website at:

www.acumenbooks.co.uk



MILLENNIUM SCORING RECORD

The A3 scoring record originally designed by members of the ACU&S Scorers' Board. Contact milsteadmsr@btinternet.com for more information

Binder and 50 sheets (= 100 innings) £20 + P&P

Refill pack of 50 sheets £10 + P&P

Scorer Correspondence courses

ECB ACO offer an Introductory level course - For more information visit the ECB ACO web site.

A standard level equivalent course is independently run to the high standards previously set by The Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers. It is open to anyone wishing to learn more about cricket scoring.

For more information contact cathy.rawson@btopenworld.com

Share your cricket scoring experiences and scoring questions with readers.

Photos are welcomed and add interest to the newsletter.

Send your contributions to: notchers@btopenworld.com

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Total Cricket Scorer

An easy way to score and analyse matches with comprehensive statistics, and even control your electronic scoreboard

To download your free trial copy, or for more information, please visit our website: www.totalcricketscorer.com

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CODE 27

As used at Lord's

Your questions, news and views are welcomed for use in future issues