

CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND HUNTINGDONSHIRE ACO

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2025

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Welcome to our pre-season newsletter.

The evenings are getting lighter and the grass is growing; a sure sign of a new cricket season edging closer.

Once again, we have had a full series of members' evenings through the winter, with two more to come. We tried something new last month, in arranging for our scorers to have a separate session, and this worked well – although we need to encourage more scorers to take part. Next week we will be reviewing and discussing the major changes being introduced by the new Safety in Cricket regulations and in April we will talk about preparing for the new season.

The new appointments sub-committee has met and work has already been done in loading fixtures and starting to make appointments. If you haven't already done so, please do update your availability: there is a lot of cricket that needs officials.

Unfortunately, the transition to the new way of handling appointments has not been without a few challenges. You will be aware that, like most leagues, our Onyx League appoints from its own panel of umpires, which we recognised in putting in place the new arrangements. However, it has been very disappointing to discover that the former appointments officer has decided to continue to be involved in providing umpires, despite not having an official role. Inevitably this will cause confusion, challenges and conflicts over appointing when we are short of people. We will work hard to minimise the impacts and I hope that we can count on your support.

I mentioned above the new Safety in Cricket regulations which have been released. The old guidelines and directives have been replaced by a set of regulations, including precise procedures to follow, all set in a quasi-legal framework. Inevitably there will be some coaches, captains and players who are unaware of these changes, so applying them may prove challenging times.

On the issue of umpire fees, we reviewed the CAG ones last year and there are no changes for 2025. Details are on our website. I have agreed and confirmed fees with the schools to which we provide umpires and these are:

	<u>Fee</u>
T20 (per match)	£30
Half-day matches	£50
All-day matches	£60

Fees for umpiring CAG matches will continue to be paid via a claim on Whostheumpire, which worked well last season: it's quicker to claim, doesn't require an envelope and costly stamp, and is much simpler for Paul Tibble to process. Please do not submit a paper form unless you don't have access to a computer.

The challenge of attracting more scorers remains key, and is a bigger issue than it is for umpires. A national review of our approach to scorers has been carried out, in which Helen Hyde was quite heavily involved, and some improvements and changes will follow. One issue we face is the payment of fees to our scorers, where often the expectation is that they are unpaid. We have made some progress here in establishing the principle that scorers for Cambs CAG matches should receive a fee. A related issue is giving suitable opportunities to our scorers to develop their skills and move along their pathway. Again, we have made some progress by agreeing in principle that scorer appointments for Cambs CAG matches should be managed by Helen, our Scorer Officer.

In conjunction with the Cambs county board we are again running two, potentially three, 'Introduction to Umpiring' courses this spring. I am also delivering the same course for Cricket East early in April. The goals remain the same: to improve the standard of umpiring in self-officiated games, raise the profile of CHACO and hopefully entice a few more people to join us. Encouragingly, the CCA has agreed to introduce an incentive for clubs to provide non-playing umpires this season in the top divisions provided they have attended one of these courses, or have already done so.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you all an enjoyable season, hopefully one blessed with a fair share of dry and sunny weather.

Peter Hinstridge, Chairman

SAFEGUARDING

Just to make sure people are aware that the ECB are stepping up their scrutiny of all Safeguarding/EDI/discipline aspects. Having spent a couple of days at the National ECB Safeguarding Conference, the ECB are putting a lot of resource into making sure these areas are covered. Perhaps umpires may wish to be more aware of these areas when umpiring.

Regs

Rob Benson

DEVELOPMENT

2024 Season

Lack of Numbers was a major issue as the appointments list will clearly identify.

The ECB official pathway progression programme, reinvention of the feedback form that was far better, still created a few issues. The form was open to personal interpretation making the goal difficult to achieve for promotion particularly from M3 forwards. We had the same 11 Umpires that officially registered to be part of the progression program. Each was Observed at least once and there were advancements in grade for 6 Umpires. Others showed progress and are likely to remain on the future development pathway. Most of the Observations were either done by myself or Alan Bedding (early season). Simon Seabrook and Brett Gates did pathway to EAPL observations. Mark Webster did on-field again this year. Brendan Smith and Martin Darlow were successful in gaining promotion to EAPL and hopefully Peter Howard who was part of the observation programme will gain progression in the future.

Development 2025 Onwards

The area that we must improve was the transition of new Umpires completing ECB Umpires Course up training to enable them to become part of the active Umpires in CAG and panel matches. This was a major stumbling block this year. Partly due to ECB and CHACO liaison.

The team of observers and mentors met and discussed a way forward to develop and meet the requirements of the ECB to improve Umpiring Standards, although I feel that we did not fully meet this goal, due mainly to personnel issues and time available with those involved filling the Umpire Vacancies required.

Simon Seabrook (EAPL Rep)

Duncan Morgan will have the important role, involved with new recruits mentoring and placement.

Peter Laughlin (CDO)

Mark Webster and Alun Bedding will look at local progression and do the local Observations

Andy Donald, David Ash will Mentor and may become involved in On field Observation.

Andy Hayward and Rupert Bull have expressed interest in helping and they will be welcome additions.

This year we have an expression of interest from 12 Umpires to be part of the Pathway development programme, an increase on last year's numbers.

Lizzie Conder has taken the Appointments Officer Role and I am sure that will make pathway appointments easier. This is an essential area where Observations can be accommodated in National Cup and County Development Games. Hopefully in due course we can gain a marking system allowing us to be monitored and give feedback on pitch standards and the important GCR (General Conduct Regulations). Hence the reason for WTU to improve the game making everyone's enjoyment that much better in future years. Developing our Standards is our goal

Peter Laughlin

CHACO Development Officer

TREASURER

As of 28th February 2025, CHACO Finance has a bank balance of £9,401.42. A total of 40 members have paid their subscriptions, contributing £200, though there are still some outstanding payments. The expenses to date have been for room hire.

Cindy

CHACO Treasurer

APPOINTMENTS

Hunts Appointments

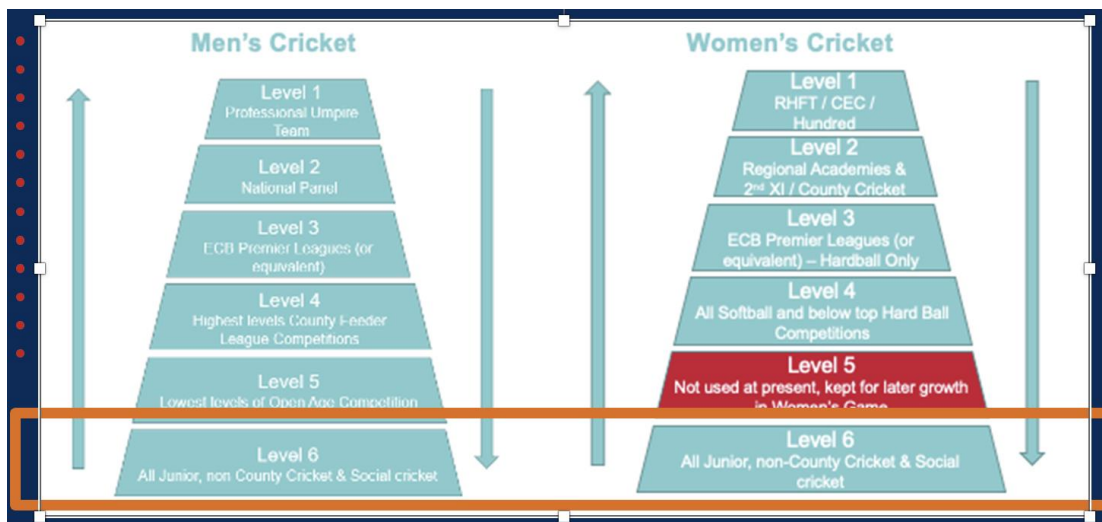
As we head into 2025 season, the fixtures are being uploaded to the CHACO website and WTU for all to see. You are welcome to confirm your availability and any preferred fixtures directly with me, and/or on WTU. As in previous seasons, ACO membership and a DBS must be in force to enable me to appoint you. Have a good season.

Your umpiring efforts are really appreciated.

Cheers Mark

Cambs Appointments

The Appointments Sub-Committee met at the end of January, and we have shared the appointment responsibilities between us for the next season. <https://www.cambshuntsaco.org.uk/umpire-appointments> has been updated to reflect this and show who to contact about which leagues and competitions. Matches for the season have been uploaded to Who's The Umpire (WTU) and appointments will shortly start to go out. Thank you for completing the questionnaire. We are awaiting the circulation of the pathway progression criteria and application form, due imminently, before making appointments to CAG matches. We will be looking to support pathway progression especially for those umpires who have completed the UC course in the last 12 months through CAG appointments early in the season with an experienced colleague to mentor.



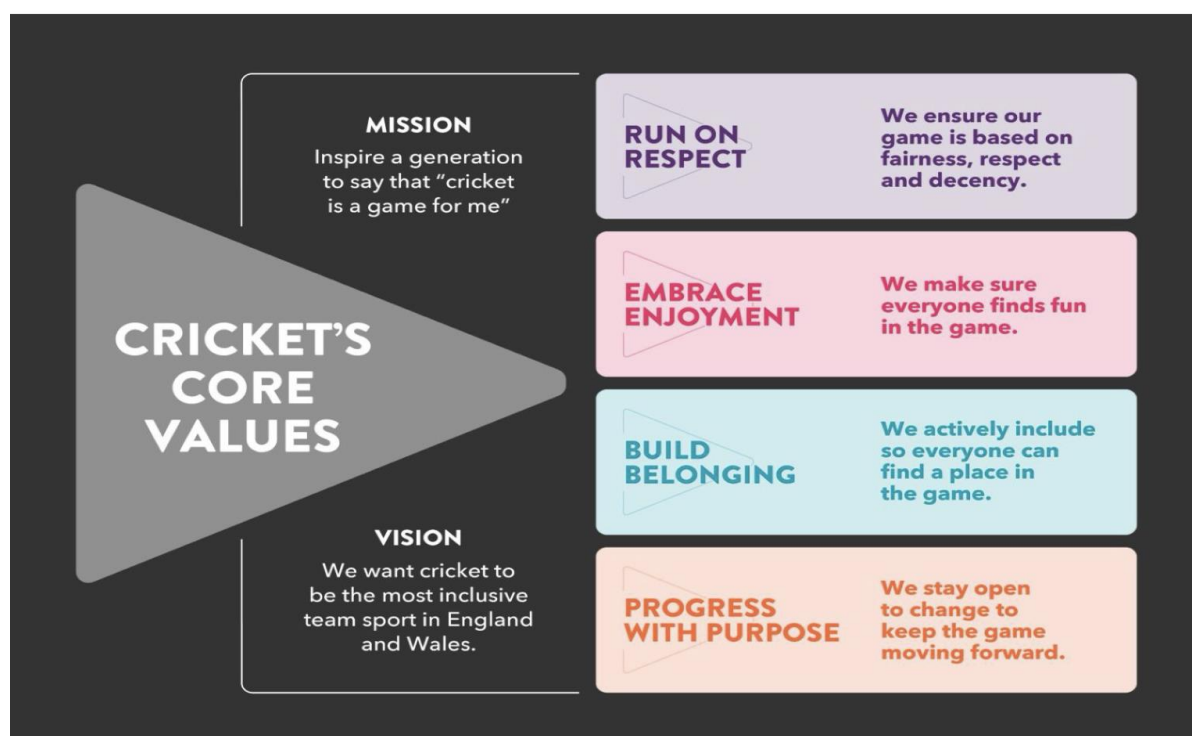
Please do review and update your availability in WTU. There will be a session on how to use WTU at the new members' meeting or you can ask Peter H or myself how to use the calendar function for availability.

Lizzy Conder

CAMBS CRICKET BOARD

The Cambridgeshire Cricket Board is committed to ensuring that we collectively have an enjoyable, friendly and fun experience with the aim of making cricket a game for everyone.

Cricket's core values will underpin the process and philosophy for appointments this season – run on respect, embrace enjoyment, build belonging and progress with purpose.



Both the Boards and CHACO are committed to seeing the game run on respect. Following the session on Law 42 at February's members' meeting, please raise any concerns on player or supporter behaviour during the season to the competition/league organisers with Peter Henstridge, CHACO chair copied in.

EDUCATION

Hoping that we find our officiating fun during this upcoming season and through good experiences, encourage more people into umpiring and scoring. Upcoming umpiring skills workshops

1st April at Over Community Centre, 16 The Doles, Over, starting at 6.30pm - <https://booking.ecb.co.uk/WdOoDn>

15th April at Sawston and Babrahams Spicers Pavilion in Sawston, starting at 6.30pm - <https://booking.ecb.co.uk/xAEK7n>

Still a few spaces left for the one day Umpiring course on 6th April at Comberton Village College. <https://booking.ecb.co.uk/X5mqbk>

SCORERS

Safeguarding

Ahead of the upcoming season, scorers should be mindful of the safeguarding issues around scoring. Scorers should be aware that irrespective of holding a valid DBS they should always uphold safeguarding criteria when scoring. This means that a scorer should not sit in an isolated and/or enclosed scoreboard with an under 18 person or a vulnerable adult unless another responsible person is present. This is applicable even if the scorer holds a valid DBS.

The advice is designed to protect everyone. If a scorer has a concern they should raise their concerns with their club safeguarding officer. Clubs should make arrangements to accommodate U18 scorers either by providing a scoring area in full sight and hearing of spectators and players OR by providing a chaperone. Scorers are encouraged to share any concerns with their club safeguarding officer or by contacting Jamie Rice, the County Safeguarding Officer, safeguarding@cambscricket.org.uk

Scoring Education and Pathway

The new pathway is almost agreed. Work is ongoing on the new education courses and modules. There will be further updates as soon as this work is complete.

Anyone interested in scoring and/or wanting help with any aspect of scoring should contact me by email or phone – helen.hyde@ntlworld.com 07970 943713

Helen Hyde

County Scoring Officer CHACO

Regional Scoring Officer Eastern Region (Job share with Allison Bradnock).

ONYX LEAGUE LIAISON

Following the Onyx AGM on the 20th February, there are a few points to make.

1: Teams

Castor, having won Division 2 last season, announced a few days before the AGM, that they were withdrawing their 1st team completely.

So, Upwood were promoted in their stead.

Stamford are restored to Division 2.

Huntingdon, likewise to Division 3.

2: Discipline

The Clubs are aware that a clampdown is being threatened.

To ensure that not too much chaos ensues, we umpires have got to be sure that we set out our expectations clearly. The Captains have requested a post-match conversation, before any report is submitted.

3: Umpires --- AUL (Additional Umpire List)

As we have been made aware, a scheme to encourage more officials is coming to operation. Hopefully this may help to turn the tide. As far as it impinges on us, umpiring in Onyx 2/3, I think we may occasionally find that we have a colleague from the AUL. As far as I can ascertain, they should be treated as any other umpire, but obviously they may be a little variable in experience and expertise. We must welcome them, encourage them and trust that that they are more help than hindrance. No doubt we will learn more of the exact details of how it will work by season start.

4: Handbooks

Hard copy handbooks will continue to be issued to Umpires, but the number to clubs is now down to one each.

That's all for now,

Chris Wilson