

HAMPSHIRE CRICKET SOCIETY

Patrons: Shaun Udal James Tomlinson Kevan James

NEWSLETTER NO. 443 – FEBRUARY 2026

Wednesday 18th February 2026 – Meeting

The Society extends a very warm welcome this afternoon to CHRIS BROAD, formerly of Gloucestershire, Nottinghamshire and England. Latterly, he was an ICC Match Referee.

A tall left-handed opening batsman, he will perhaps best be remembered for his hundreds in three successive test matches in the Ashes series in Australia in 1986\87. After England had won the first Test at Brisbane by seven wickets, he scored 162 in the drawn second Test at Perth – an innings that *Wisden* described as “majestic” – followed by 116 at Adelaide (another draw), and 112 at Melbourne. England sealed the series in the latter match by an innings and 14 runs. When John Woodcock later spoke to the Society about the tour, he mentioned that the England team were a credit both on and off the field.

For good measure he made 139 in the Bicentennial Test at Sydney in the following year. The match was a celebratory event to mark the 200th anniversary of the landing of the First Fleet in Australia. He did, though, attract criticism for knocking his stumps out of the ground when he was dismissed.

Controversy followed him on the ill-starred tour to Pakistan in the following winter. Peter Osborne in his seminal history of cricket in Pakistan *Wounded Tiger* wrote that “the tour looked like a mistake from the outset. It attracted little interest from Pakistani fans and, without Ian Botham, the England team was lack lustre. As is often the case with England tours to Pakistan, the players were surly”. In the first Test at Lahore the pitch had been specially prepared to suit Pakistan spinners. In the second innings Chris Broad was given out caught at the wicket, but refused to walk. After the best part of a minute had passed, Graham Gooch, his partner, persuaded him to leave the field. He received a stern reprimand from the England tour manager, Peter Lush. In the second Test at Faisalabad our speaker made amends with a patient 116 as England reached 292. England looked to be set for victory but were then deprived by the infamous Shakoor Rana/Mike Gatting confrontation,

which wiped out a day's play, whilst diplomacy was brought to bear to enable the match, and the tour, to continue.

His final Test century was 114 against New Zealand at Lancaster Park, Christchurch later in the winter. He played in 25 Tests scoring 1601 runs (avge 39.54) and holding 10 catches.

Despite these blots in his test career, he has now refereed in 123 test matches.

Again, Osborne's *Wounded Tiger* is indispensable reading on yet another incident in Chris Broad's career in Pakistan, this time when he was a match referee. He earned great praise for his courage when the bus carrying officials was fired upon by terrorists at Lahore prior to the third day of the Pakistan/Sri Lanka test in 2009. He spent minutes staunching the bleeding neck wound of a fellow official until an ambulance arrived. He was rightly critical of the lack of any security, unlike on the two previous two days. Pakistan accused him of lying about the terror attack. Javed Miandad demanded a life ban for his outspoken remarks. These were rightly dismissed by the ICC, and Pakistan went on to be prevented from hosting test matches at home. All their future home matches were required to be played in the UAE.

BRIAN CHRISTOPHER BROAD was born in Knowle, Bristol on 29 September 1957. Schooled in Bristol and Cheltenham, he made his debut for Gloucestershire in 1979. He spent the early part of his career there, before moving to Nottinghamshire in 1984. He then returned to his native County for the final two years of his career in 1993 and 1994. He played in 340 first-class matches scoring 21892 runs (avge. 38.07), which included 50 centuries and 105 fifties. He held 189 catches. Two of those hundreds were made against Hampshire. Both were for Gloucestershire; one at the start of his career – 116 at Cheltenham in 1980 and the other towards the end – 131 at Bristol in 1993. His final first-class appearance was at Portsmouth in July 1994. He was the much loved Cardigan Connor's 450th victim.

His first game as a match referee was the encounter between New Zealand and Pakistan at Westpac Park, Hamilton just before Christmas in 2003.

No biography of Chris Broad would be complete without the obvious mention that he is the father of the great Stuart Broad, who illuminated test cricket for much of the first quarter of the current Century.

Wednesday 14 January 2026 – Report

Phil Neale engaged members with an authoritative and fluent address on his career in both cricket and football. Worcestershire were well served with footballers during the 1960's and 1970's, through the presence of Jim Standen, Jim Cumbes and Ted Hemsley, as well as himself. Tottenham Hotspur and Derby County were interested but an injured finger set back his aspirations. By the time he recovered, both Clubs had acquired a replacement.

He took over from Glenn Turner as captain. He and the Worcestershire hierarchy recognised the need to strengthen the side. They brought in Kapil Dev and Collis King, before seeking Ian Botham after he had scored 100 in 66 minutes for Somerset against Worcestershire. His recruitment resulted in 1000 new members joining the Club in a week. Queues formed around New Road when the news was announced. When Graham Dilley was signed, he even recruited a new sponsor. Both men were to bring great success.

When he retired, he worked for the England team in a number of roles. His tenure included the victorious 2005 Ashes series, and England winning their first-ever World Cups in both t20 cricket and the 50 overs Competition. He was a proven winner.

Phil Neale attracted an audience of 122 members, the highest number for some years.

At the start of the meeting, members stood for a minute's silence in memory of Nicholas Twine, who served the Society as an influential committee member since its foundation.

FINAL MEETING OF OUR 2025/26 SEASON

A reminder that the final meeting of this winter's programme will be held on Wednesday 11 March, starting at 2pm at our normal venue, Romsey Golf Club. Our speaker will be **RICKY ELCOCK**, formerly of Worcestershire and Middlesex. He was a fast bowler, who later became an airline pilot. He was the first black captain with Virgin Atlantic. Latterly, he wrote a highly regarded autobiography, *Balls To Fly* (published Fairfield Books in 2023).

KEVAN JAMES AT THE WEST OF ENGLAND CRICKET SOCIETY

TUESDAY 10th FEBRUARY 2026

Our Patron, Kevan James, was one of three Panellists at the above meeting, when in conversation with Stephen Chalke, they discussed the issue of **County Cricket Matters, in the context of where county cricket is now, and where it was likely to be in the future.** He was joined by **Antony Gibson** and **Annie Chave**. Antony, son of Alan, one of the finest of all cricket writers and broadcasters, is himself an excellent writer and a BBC radio commentator on Somerset cricket. Annie is also a Somerset supporter and is founder and editor of the Quarterly Magazine *County Cricket Matters*. She began the publication to champion county cricket at a time when it seemed it would be subsumed by The Hundred. Stephen kindly allowed our Newsletter editor and our current Secretary, John Hooper, to come to the meeting in Bath so that we could listen to Kevan.

A fascinating discussion ensued. Somerset, of course, have never won the County Championship. Having come tantalisingly close to winning the competition in recent years, Antony Gibson was hoping that they will break their duck in 2026. With the introduction of Counties benefitting from income from the proceeds of The Hundred, he felt the finances of County Clubs were stronger than at any period in his lifetime, and that any talk of Counties going out of business were premature when compared to the recent past. This view was endorsed by his colleagues on the Panel, though mention was made about recent events in Sussex. This seemed to be a case of how The Hundred money was used

Annie felt, justifiably, there was a disconnect between the rhetoric of the ECB, where they claimed to support the Counties, and their actions which seemed to undermine them. There was a consensus however that The Hundred was here to stay.

It was clear from the afternoon's discussion that Hampshire, as a host of The Hundred, were in an advantageous position compared with those non-hosting Counties. The financial viability gap between the two groups would inevitably grow. There was generally agreement throughout the hall, that there was still work to be done in making the schedule more rational so that more County Championship cricket could be played in July and August.

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