HAMPSHIRE CRICKET SOCIETY

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Guest Speaker at November meeting

Michael “Carbs” Carberry was an immensely popular Hampshire player between 2006 and 2016 having previously played for Surrey and then Kent. He played 142 championship games scoring close to 10,000 runs with 24 hundreds at a 40+ average.

With Neil McKenzie he holds the record for the highest partnership for any wicket for Hampshire of 523 compiled against Yorkshire at The Bowl in early August 2011. Dominic Cork declared when Carbs reached his career best of 300* just 16 runs short of Hampshire’s record individual first class score made by R.H. Moore in 1937.

At the end of that month Carbs and Jimmy Adams created the current Hampshire record for a partnership for the second wicket in first-class cricket of 373 against Somerset at Taunton which was the platform for an innings victory. Carberry made 187 and Adams 207. These feats were even more remarkable as Michael was not long back in action after suffering from blood clots on his lung in late 2010.

Michael was a quality One-Day cricketer combining his batting with his exceptional athleticism in the field. During his time at Hampshire, they won four One Day titles, two T20’s and two 40 over competitions including a double in 2012.

In March 2010, Michael had made his Test debut in Bangladesh before illness interrupted his international career which did not resume until 2013. He played 6 ODI’s and one T20 in 2013/14.

Michael played in all five Tests in the ill-fated Ashes series down under in 2013/14. Opening the batting against a fired-up Mitchell Johnson (37 wickets in the series) and the superb Ryan Harris, supported by Siddle, Watson and Lyon, Michael acquitted himself well. He got starts in all but two innings without going on to a big score. He did make his only Test half century, 60 at Adelaide. His 281 runs was a higher aggregate than all the established batters apart from Pietersen’s 294. Despite this the test selectors decided to move on from him.

In 2015 Michael, now focussing solely on Hampshire cricket showed remarkable consistency scoring 1129 championship runs without a hundred to help keep Hampshire in Division 1. Safety, at the expense of Sussex, came thanks to a match winning 84* on the last day of the season at Trent Bridge.

Following another setback from ill heath which restricted appearances in 2016, Michael moved to Leicestershire in 2017, but his stay ended abruptly and in an unsatisfactory way. We chose to remember Michael’s good times at Hampshire. The style and panache, the grace in the field and the ability to adjust the tempo of his batting to match situations and across all formats. I would encourage readers, especially new members, to have a look at the excellent piece Alan Edwards wrote in the November 2017 newsletter (366) following Michael’s retirement.

Since then, Michael has moved into running his own cricket coaching business and cricket media work alongside his passion for visual art. Michael has strident views on the coaching set up at Hampshire which he has freely expressed on commentary.

I am certain we are in for an interesting afternoon.

Norman Cowans – guest speaker at October meeting

“I don’t like cricket”

Norman told a fascinating story of how he made his way into cricket and all the way to the top of the game. The focus of the talk was the battles he faced in the early years through to the first part of his test career.

Coming from his native Jamaica he had to work hard to made friends at school in England in the early 1970’s. He did this by playing football and basketball in a school in Middlesex which did not play cricket. Sent into a basement to get games equipment for the sports teacher he saw cricket kit. Bemused, as to why the school did not play cricket, he asked the sports teacher who replied, “I don’t like cricket.” He found a teacher that did, Mr Lucas, who agreed that if Norman found enough interested students, he would coach them. Norman delivered, as did Mr Lucas, and



Norman’s cricketing journey had started. Within a couple of years, the team reached the final of the Harrow schools' tournament beating teams with longstanding cricket pedigrees on the way. By then he was playing club cricket at junior and adult levels. He was incredibly determined. He entered a competition advertised in the Sun newspaper. The “Find a Fast Bowler for England” competition in 1976/77, launched and promoted by Tony Greig after he, as captain, suffered as the West Indies battered and bruised England at home in 1976. Norman made the last five of the National competition.

Showing great determination and self belief he pushed his way into Middlesex Colts. Decent performances for that team and for his club and his growing reputation prompted him to ask for a trial with Middlesex. He impressed but being too young for a professional contract, he switched his attention to joining the MCC ground staff at Lords. In 1978 he made his debut for Middlesex 2nd XI at Barry Island.

In 1978/9 he was part of an England U19 squad which toured Australia, although he told us that initially, he thought the letter he received inviting him to tour was a joke. In 1979 Norman suffered a stress fracture of his back which kept him out of action and prevented him from touring the West Indies with England U19’s.

In 1980 Norman made his first-class debut for Middlesex against Oxford University alongside Kevan James who was also making his first-class debut. They both bagged their first wicket at this level. Raj Maru also played for Middlesex in this game.

Norman's county championship debut came in September 1981 at Leicestershire under the captaincy of Mike Brearley whose leadership skills he admired. Brearley went on to have a significant impact on his development. His first wicket was England spinner Nick Cook. In the second innings he dismissed two Test batters, Chris Balderstone and David Gower in his 5-58.

Competition for places in the star-studded Middlesex team was intense but by the mid summer of 1982 Norman was playing regularly and doing well. Norman fondly remembered the visit to Weston Super Mare to play a Somerset team including Viv Richards, Ian Botham, and Joel Garner. Norman described how he made Viv "smell the leather" before dismissing him. In the second innings he took 5-28 including bowling Ian Botham for a duck. That season he played in 11 games taking 33 wickets at 21.84 to help Middlesex to the title.

In the final championship game at Worcester, he took a telephone call to receive the news that he was in the tour party for the winter Ashes tour. That call was from Alan Lee, the esteemed journalist and not from the England management. Cowans commented on the differences between how the England set up dealt with players then compared to now. On that tour he was surprised there was no structure to the introduction of inexperienced players to the team, and a lack of specific team plans to counteract opposition players on the field. He also spoke about the perils of having Derek Randall as a room mate.

On the field he did well in the warmup matches and made his Test debut at Perth, aged 21, becoming the 500th England Test player. He went wicketless but did make 36 which was still his highest Test score when his career ended after 19 matches. The game petered out into a draw and as Norman reflected, is notable for the pitch invasion during which a spectator injured Terry Alderman rather than the game of cricket.

England lost the 2nd Test at Brisbane and although Norman got his first Test wicket, Greg Chappell, he lost his place for the Adelaide Test which resulted in another defeat. Cowans replaced Eddie Hemmings for the Boxing Day Test at the MCG. It was a remarkable match with all four completed innings totalling between 284 and 294. Australia needed 292 to win in the fourth innings. When Cowans took his sixth wicket of the innings Australia were 218-9 still 74 short of the winning line. Allan Border and Jeff Thomson added 70 before Geoff Miller (our guest for the Christmas lunch) caught Tommo in the slips from a rebound out of the hands of Chris Tavare off the bowling of Ian Botham. The 3-run win kept the series alive before a drawn game at Sydney saw Australia win the Ashes.

Norman won the man of the match award for his 6-77 in the second innings which followed his 2-69 in the first innings including bowling Greg Chappell first ball.

I found it quite poignant that Mr Lucas, the teacher who got cricket off the ground at his school was at the MCG to see his best performance in cricket. Fair to say the story had moved to "I don't like cricket- I love it" a line from the appropriately named song, Dreadlock Holiday by 10cc.

In his contribution to "My Favourite Game" where he recalls his final championship game for Hampshire against Durham at Portsmouth in 1994, Norman touches on this historic match, confirming it as the highlight of his cricketing career.

He played against New Zealand at home in the summer and on tours to New Zealand and Pakistan the following winter. He played a solitary Test in the home series defeat to the West Indies in 1984 but played in all five Tests in India in 1984/85. Captained by David Gower they pulled off an unexpected 2-1 series win which Norman takes considerable pride in being a part of.

His Test career ended as it began in an Ashes series. England won the first Test at Headingley by five wickets, but Cowans lost his place and although he did not know it then, his Test career was over at the age of 24. Asked about this in the Q&A, Norman, without any arrogance, said he should have played more and was a better bowler than many chosen ahead of him.

Norman, when asked why his Test figures were better abroad than at home gave an interesting answer. He believes the county championship schedule in those days was punishing for bowlers with constant back-to-back matches interspersed with Sunday League games in seven day a week cricket. Test players would finish a county game on a Tuesday, travel to the Test venue and train on the Wednesday with the match starting on the Thursday. Tours had more travelling but provided more rest between matches. Squad rotation enabled some of the Test players, particularly the bowlers to miss tour games between Tests.

Asked about the stress on the body of bowling fast, Norman's personal insight was that he bowled too much whilst he was still growing but feels that bowling overs in matches (because of the mechanics of the bowling action) is the best way to get fit to bowl and reduce the threat of injury. He believes bowlers in the modern era should bowl a little more and, that in his day, they should have bowled a bit less.

Personally, I really enjoyed finding out more about those early years. In many ways the situation in terms of cricket in schools has not moved on significantly since the 1970's.

There are great initiatives like the Barclays Knight- Stokes Cup (MCC & MCC Foundation), Secondary Countdown Cricket and Cricket for Teachers (ECB) and Chance to Compete (Chance to Shine) which target non-fee-paying state schools. Freddie Flintoff's "Field of Dreams" might be good television but further highlights the shortfalls. State schools work under significant financial pressure, and many are chronically short of facilities. Sports provision still relies on enthusiastic teachers going beyond the call of duty and it is still the case that most youngsters who do not go to public schools rely on grass roots cricket clubs for access to cricket. I was lucky that I went to Prices Grammar School in Fareham (non fee paying) in the 70's which had a dedicated team of sports masters (who also taught other subjects) including former Society member, Charlie Tuck who sadly passed away in 2024. Charlie who opened the batting for Gosport Borough in the Southern League, brought his passion for cricket, rugby and all sport into the school which believed sport was an integral part of the curriculum. The school also created links with sports clubs like Fareham CC and Fareham Hockey Club to provide access to junior and adult club sport. Like now, pupils in some other state schools in the area were not so lucky.

England call ups

Sonny Baker is in the recently announced 15-man squad for the three Test series in South Africa which starts on 17th December.

Ben Mayes and Eddie Jack are in the England Lions squad which will also be touring South Africa. They are both in the red ball squad with Mayes also in the 50 over squad.

Mayes, Jack and Scott Currie are currently representing England Lions in the West Indies and performing well. A report on the tour will be in the December newsletter.

Hot off the press: Jack and Currie now on their way to Australia for ODI and T20i series. Jack was already in the T20 squad but now joins Sonny Baker and Liam Dawson in the ODI squad. Currie joins Dawson and Jack in the T20 squad.

Latest news from Hampshire management

Rich Edwards has recently interviewed Hampshire CEO David Mann for “The Hawk” his new venture offering an independent journalistic view of Hampshire cricket. A link to “The Hawk” website is on the Society website. I am a member and have found it to be well worth the subscription. The interview is for “Hawk” members, but Rich has kindly agreed that I can summarise the key talking points, The Ashes Test in 2027, infrastructure improvements, the 2026 season on the pitch and the plans for the 2027 season.

The first four days of the fourth Ashes Test next July sold out with demand massively exceeding supply. Mann told the Hawk that any profits from the Test will be utilised to support and improve the ground and facilities to stay in the running to host international matches.

Mann said, “whilst we hope to make a few million pounds on the event itself the money gets reinvested directly back into the venue to keep us ahead of the curve.”

Areas that are potential targets for upgrade are the pavilion and changing rooms, the indoor school roof, and new floodlights. A revised planning application to the local authority seeks potential residential development, different access, and use of car parks. There are also plans for a new golf clubhouse.

On the playing side Mann was critical of reduction in the prize fund for the T20 Blast and the financial impact caused by the scheduling of the quarter finals which saw all four matches played in front of sparse crowds as fans chose to watch England’s men’s football World Cup semi-final that evening. He was also critical that the women’s finals day took place without the top players despite a gap in the calendar between the Test at Lords and the start of The Hundred.

From the interview there were signs that the new owners recognise fans disquiet at the struggles in red ball cricket in the last two seasons and there may be funds available to increase player budgets.

Mann said “If you look at spend, we’re around 14th or 15th on the men’s side last year and right at the bottom on the women’s side”

“The coaches and staff have been allotted what they need to be competitive, especially in white-ball cricket and we’ve been as competitive as anyone”

“If you linked results to spend, I’d be surprised if we weren’t top of that league” “But it can’t go on forever” “We have to invest more in the teams, their facilities and the ecosystem around them”

Hampshire fans will be watching with interest to see if the plan comes to fruition through player recruitment and then with results on the pitch. We are starting to see early indications of intent with the recent announcement of the signing of Saif Zaib from Northants on a multi year deal. Zaib, when commenting on his move specifically referenced Hampshire’s ambition.

We have an Ashes Test to look forward to at a spruced-up ground. The ECB, the new owners, and all Hampshire supporters will be praying for decent weather next July.

Once again thanks to Rich for allowing me the opportunity to provide this insight for Society members.

Hampshire Cricket Heritage

John Winter has interviewed my predecessor, Alan Edwards who wrote and edited the newsletter from 1982 until the end of last season. It is an excellent piece and well worth a read. You can find

it on the Hampshire Cricket Heritage website alongside a wide range of interesting stories including an interesting take on what it might be like watching Hampshire in 2027.

HCH do so much work including managing and enhancing the Hampshire cricket archive. If you are interested in supporting their work for a modest donation, detail on how to become a supporter is on the website.

Bowl movements

Short and not so sweet. On 6th November Hampshire announced that "Russell Domingo has left his role as Men's Head Coach…"

The well documented extension of the domestic season in South Africa announced earlier this season has resulted in a conflict in respect of his commitments in South Africa and at Hampshire. He has decided to focus on coaching at home despite having signed a two-year contract. Arriving only just before the start of this season he presided over a disastrous red ball campaign which saw Hampshire relegated along with Leicestershire (who have lost their appeal against the points deduction) to Division 2. The T20 campaign saw Hampshire lose in the final. In the One-Day Cup Hampshire did not reach their "usual" spot in the knockout stages. Domingo came with an impressive CV but leaves having failed to enhance that reputation and with the club in a worse position than he found it. I cannot help thinking there is more to this departure than just cricket calendars overlapping.

Hampshire now begin the search for a new coach and a new batting coach following the departure of Jimmy Adams. This will not be easy with at least four counties looking for new coaches. The 2027 season in Division 2 is now looking like a major reset in all departments. Pressure is well and truly on the management over this winter in finding replacement coaches, an overseas player and some more bowlers.

Just after the publication of the last newsletter the club announced the departures of Ali Orr and Dom Kelly. Neither were a great surprise, indeed the move of Orr to Middlesex was rumoured for months.

A later announcement was a little more surprising but one which Hampshire members will welcome, the signing of Saif Zaib from Northants. He has been successful in his time at Northants who will be disappointed to lose him as he helped take them close to promotion from Division 2 of the championship and was part of the team which won the T20 Blast last season beating Hampshire in the final. Saif (28) is a left-handed batter and slow left arm bowler. He made his first class debut for Northants in 2015 and has scored 4740 runs at 36 including 12 hundreds with a top score of 196*. Nine of those hundreds have come in the last two seasons including six in 2026. Over those two campaigns he has scored 2,281 runs at 54 albeit in Division 2 of the championship where statistically batting is a bit easier. Although batting is his primary role his bowling has been particularly effective in white ball cricket and he will be pushing hard for a place in all formats in 2027.

The batting is going to look a bit different next season with Saif Zaib and Rishi Patel coming in and Ali Orr leaving.

Orr joined ahead of the 2024 season having done well at Sussex who were reluctant to let him go. The stylish left handler opened the batting with Fletcha Middleton in the first five championship games. In the fourth game at home to Durham, he made 126 against an attack including Ben Raine, Matt Potts, Peter Siddle & Calum Parkinson.

Having given supporters a glimpse of his talent, his season ended following a serious arm injury picked up in the first T20 game. The injury and the signing of former Test player Mark Stoneman to open the batting delayed Orr's return to the championship team until June 2025 when he replaced Stoneman. Orr in turn lost his place after two games before returning for the last three as Hampshire sought to find a decent opening combination.

He played just three T20's games (scoring 5 runs in those games) which bizarrely included the semi final, and the final as Hilton Cartwright could not return for finals day. Another disappointing final defeat to Somerset ensued despite a fine 85 from Toby Albert the competitions leading run scorer in 2025.

For Ali Orr redemption came in the One-Day Cup where he was ever present forming a successful opening partnership with skipper Nick Gubbins. In 11 games he scored 602 runs at 55 including three hundreds. He gave home fans a demonstration of his stroke play in the home group fixture with Leicester scoring 131 off 141 balls as Hampshire cruised home.His innings in the quarter final at Radlett was also a pleasure to watch live for its contrast. Hampshire had given up home advantage due to a scheduling fiasco where the fixture clashed with a home game for The Brave on the same day.

Hampshire were put in to bat on a tricky pitch in good bowling conditions. Orr made 108 off 140 balls before he was eighth out with the score on 208. Hampshire made 229-9 and apart from 42 from James Fuller, nobody else made more than 13. Middlesex made 187, undone by Liam Dawson's 4-33.

Dawson's 142 at Scarborough and a disciplined bowling and fielding performance saw Hampshire over the line in the semi final by 18 runs. The hundred Orr made in the final at Trent Bridge should have been enough to beat Worcestershire in a rain impacted game. The rain significantly reduced Worcestershire's target and allowed Matthew Waite to smash a couple of late 6's to see them over the line with two balls to spare.

The 2026 One Day Cup campaign was disappointingly inconsistent for Hampshire and for Orr who could not repeat the form of 2025. He did make his fifth hundred for Hampshire in the competition at Hove. Orr made 105 and with Ben Mayes (109) put on 225 for the first wicket.

Orr could not break into the T20 team, which again lost in the final, playing just one match.

He was in and out of the championship team as the top order batting woes continued without a strong and settled opening pair. Orr played just 5 games with the highlight being an unbeaten 53 to help save the game at The Oval.

Orr leaves having played just 15 championship games scoring 634 runs at 23 which does not do him justice. He was unlucky in many ways, the injuries, playing in a team devoid of confidence and, to an outsider, the victim of an inconsistent selection policy were big factors. I hope he does well at Middlesex and can replicate some of that form from the 2025 One-Day Cup campaign.

Winchester born, Dom Kelly struggled to make the leap from Academy and second team cricket in his four years with Hampshire. The left-handed batter and right arm medium pacer made his first-class debut in 2022 having previously represented England at U19 level. That debut game was against a Sri Lankan development team.

His only other first-class game came in the championship in 2025 against Worcestershire. That was not a great game to make an impression as Jake Libby and Adam Hose smashed the

Hampshire bowlers around The Bowl making 679-9. Kelly, bowling with that lovely kookaburra ball, took 1-94 and was unbeaten on 12 in his only innings.

Kelly played 20 List A games across five seasons scoring 214 runs at 18 and taking 20 wickets at 34.

His moment of glory came in August 2024 at The Bowl. Hampshire were well in control of the One-Day Cup game with Derbyshire. Kelly had already picked up two wickets when he returned to bowl the 35th over. With the fifth ball he had Zak Chappell caught for 26 and then bowled Henry Moore first ball. Brad Wheal got Sam Connors in the next over and at the start of the 37th over, Kelly had the Derbyshire number 11 in his sights for the hat trick after Samit Patel, well set on 35, somehow got himself off strike. Kelly sent the superbly named Daryn Dupavillion back to the pavilion, lbw for a duck, to complete the hat trick and start an Imran Tahir style “run around” celebration. Kelly returned career best List A figures of 5-19. The hat trick was Hampshire’s first in list A cricket since 1981.It is something positive for Dom to take with him as he looks for new opportunities to further his cricketing career. He has seen success in club cricket being a key part of the outstanding St Cross Symondians team in recent years, particularly in 2026.

A thank you to Jimmy Adams

As we know the long association between Jimmy Adams and Hampshire CCC as player and coach, which began with his debut for the 2nd X1 in 1999, has just ended.

Jimmy and his family are moving to Tasmania where he is joining Cricket Tasmania in a full-time role as the lead batting coach for Tasmania and the Hobart Hurricanes. He has worked as assistant coach to the Hobart Hurricanes in the Big Bash for the last two seasons.

Alan Edwards wrote about Jimmy’s playing achievements on two occasions. The first in newsletter 346 marked the occasion when Jimmy spoke to the Society in September 2015 at the end of his benefit season. Newsletter 374 reflected on Jimmy’s career following his retirement as a player at the end of the 2018 season. Members can remind themselves by looking back on these issues via the Society website.

The overall batting statistics for Hampshire are impressive:

	M	I	NO	HS	R	AV	50’s	100’s
FC	216	381	30	262*	13298	37.88	70	23
List A	123	117	15	131	4032	39.52	30	2
T20	123	112	12	101*	2392	23.93	8	22
Total	462	610	57		19723		108	27

He captained the club between 2012 and 2015 and during his career was in teams which lifted five trophies. He captained the team which won the Clydesdale Bank 40 at Lords in 2012 and picked up the man of the match award for his 66 and two catches.

He was also in the team which won the Friends Life T20 final against Yorkshire at Sophia Gardens. Dimi Mascarenhas captained The T20 side for that campaign.

Following his retirement as a player, he went straight into the Hampshire coaching set up initially as 2nd team coach and then first team batting coach from 2022, the year Hampshire won the T20 Blast. In 2025 he took on the coaching of the first team in their One-Day Cup campaign (Adi Birrell was coaching The Brave) which saw them reach the final where they lost to Worcestershire.

It was not the way Jimmy would have wanted to go out with the team relegated to Division 2 of the county championship in 2026 after a near miss in 2025. Clearly the batting was not functioning well in first class cricket bringing great scrutiny on the coaching team and a need for change. He will leave with the grateful thanks and best wishes of all Hampshire supporters.

Liam Dawson's first-class career at Hampshire

Hampshire fans greeted the announcement from Liam in May 2026, that he was quitting red ball cricket with a little surprise but accepting that he had given everything in the cause and wanted to focus on his white ball game with England, Hampshire and the franchises in the back end of his career. Few could begrudge him that.

By the time Liam made his first class debut in September 2007 Liam was already in the England U19's. The debut came in a rain ruined away visit to Headingley where Liam did not bat or bowl. The game was notable for an undefeated century from our November speaker, Michael Carberry, and for the fact that it was the last appearance for the Hampshire captain, Shane Warne. It was not until mid July of the following season that Liam got another chance in the championship at Hove. He captured his first wicket when Nic Pothas stumped Zimbabwean, Murray Goodwin for 184. Hampshire fielded two Zimbabweans, Sean Irvine, and Greg Lamb in a 10-wicket defeat.

Liam then played in the final four championship games of the season which included three wins as Hampshire finished third. In the home game with Durham at May's Bounty, he showed his grit and determination to help Hampshire to a 2-wicket win. Chasing 240 to win (the highest score of the game) on a tricky Basingstoke pitch Hampshire were in trouble at 77-5 when Liam joined Sean Irvine. Together they put on 94 before Liam was out for 28. Irvine's 94* saw Hampshire over the line.

In the season finale Hampshire travelled to Trent Bridge, Liam made a second ball duck in a total of 203 which Notts only just crawled past on first innings. Batting at seven again, this time Liam came in to join Nic Pothas with the luxury of 267-5 on the board. They stayed together to the declaration on 449 when Liam reached his maiden 100, with Pothas on 125. Dimi Mascarenhas and Imran Tahir took four wickets apiece, with Liam chipping in with a couple as Hampshire won comfortably.

Liam became (and still is) the youngest Hampshire player to make a first-class century at 18 years and 211 days.

In the early years of Liam's first-class career, he batted in that lower middle order spot, and his bowling opportunities were infrequent due to the presence of Imran Tahir. His batting performances saw him move up the order including on occasion becoming the partner of Jimmy Adams at the top of the order.

In 2011, Liam took on the opening role on a more regular basis when Michael Carberry was absent through illness. He scored 908 runs at 36 with five 50's and two big hundreds at The Rose Bowl against Warwickshire (152*) and Somerset (169). By contrast he only bowled 61 overs in 15 matches. Hampshire finished 9th and suffered relegation. He was bowling more in short form cricket and developing his reputation for accuracy and restricting scoring rates which he was soon to bring into red ball cricket.

In 2013 Liam scored over 1000 runs for the only time although he would come close in 2024. His 1031 runs at 49 included eight half centuries and two hundreds. Hampshire returned to Division 1 for the 2015 season although Liam had not played a significant part in the team winning Division 2 in 2014. In 2015 he went on a loan spell at Essex where he did well. Hampshire recalled him early

from the loan spell and rejuvenated, Liam did well on his return. He bagged only his second first class 5 wicket haul at Taunton and made 140 against Yorkshire at The Rose Bowl. Liam's batting remained consistent if unspectacular through the latter 2010's and early 2020's. He was regularly bowling 200-300 overs a season with an economy rate around 3 runs per over (career rate was 2.84) although I am sure he would have liked more in the wickets column.

The three years from 2022-2024 were undoubtedly the most successful in Liam's first-class career and coincided with Hampshire finishing 3rd twice and then runners up in 2024.

In April 2022 Liam hit his career best of 171 against Kent at Canterbury. In June, he followed that up with 7-68 (his first class best for Hampshire) in the second innings against Essex at Chelmsford to complete match figures of 10-139, his first ten wicket match return.

2023 saw Liam hit 840 runs at 40, with four 50's and three hundreds, and took 49 wickets at 20. In June at The Bowl, Dawson hit 141 and took 6-40 and 6-90 in an innings win. He became only the fourth Hampshire player to score a century and take ten wickets in the same game. Not surprisingly he was the PCA domestic "Most Valuable Player of the Year" and "County Championship Player of the Year"

2024 was even better. 956 runs at close to 60 (which was a better average than all the batters) with five 50's and three hundreds. Liam took 50 wickets in a season for the first time returning 54 wickets at 25 with five 5 wicket hauls. The highlight was his performance in the innings win at Old Trafford. Liam hit 104* and then took 5-47 and 5-52.

The awards were by now piling up. Liam regained the PCA awards he had won the previous year and added the "Player of the Year" award. He was the Cricket Writers "County Championship Player of the Year."

The performances in 2024 formed the basis of Wisden naming Liam as one of their five "Cricketers of the Year" in 2025. This made Liam the 17th Hampshire player to have earned this award and the first since Kevin Pietersen in 2006. Liam's performances in 2025 did not reach the heights of earlier seasons as the team struggled and narrowly escaped relegation. Liam scored his 17th and final red ball hundred for Hampshire at Chelmsford and took his 14th and final five wicket haul at home to Durham.

It all ended back at Chelmsford in May 2026. Liam made 13 in Hampshire's second innings to end on 9992 county championship runs at an average of 34 in 202 matches. Wiaan Mulder was Liam's 343rd and final county championship wicket as Hampshire headed to another defeat and eventual relegation. Liam bowled over 4,000 overs for those 343 wickets taken at an average of 33. When you add in 194 catches from those bucket hands it is undeniably a fantastic record.

The other first-class games played for Hampshire increases the numbers to 211 matches, 10,424 runs, 361 wickets and 204 catches.

Considering all these feats it is ironic that Liam's first-class best bowling figures were not for Hampshire. Playing for Mountaineers in Zimbabwe in the 2011/12 season, Liam took 7-51v ME in Mutare and scored 110* in the same game.

That is it for the statistics which only tell part of the story. And there is plenty of the story which is yet to unfold as Liam's career continues in white ball cricket. We will miss Liam's purposeful but ungainly walk to the crease with pads that look like they do not fit quite right but knowing there is a fighting chance he will right the listing ship. We will miss the precise field settings to his own bowling and the blow on the hands before settling the ball in that unique routine. We will miss the

enthusiastic wicket celebration and the “less than impressed” look when appeals to the umpire get a negative response. Liam made the most of his undoubted talent, trying desperately to win the county championship title for Hampshire. Quite a few near misses added to the frustration which Liam felt and articulated when explaining his decision to retire from red ball cricket. I also think like many of us he could see the writing on the wall from the great escape in 2025 and the start to the 2026 season. I do not blame him at all for giving up the red ball, to focus on the short form where he is enjoying success for England and in franchise cricket.

Spin Offs

A few things that are worthy of note and interest arising from some of the other pieces. A bit of history and some nostalgia throw in.

Dom Kelly’s hat trick was the first in List A cricket for Hampshire since Malcolm Marshall’s in the John Player League at Northlands Road against Surrey in July 1981.

Hampshire put Surrey in and in the 40 overs they made 167-8. Malcolm took his hat trick with the last three balls of the innings. His victims were Fareham born Graham Roope caught by David Turner for 18, followed by Jack Richards (caught by Bobby Parks) and Ian Payne for first ball ducks. Hampshire won by 4 wickets with 9 balls to spare. Nigel Cowley top scored with 52 to add to 3 for 23 from his 8 overs.

With all due respect to Dom Kelly, List A cricket is different now to how it was back then and highlights how cricket has changed. The massive differences being the scoring rates, the overall team scores in 40 over (and longer games), the quality of the players and the attendances.

Marshall’s hat trick victims included two England Test players. Our Test players played regularly in the John Player League and the other knock out competitions alongside the overseas players and naturally attracted huge crowds by modern standards. That season if you followed Hampshire you could watch (and many of us did) Javed Miandad, Imran Khan, Garth le Roux, John Wright, Peter Kirsten, Zaheer Abbas, Mike Procter, Clive Lloyd, Clive Rice, Richard Hadlee, Glenn Turner, Younis Ahmed, Alvin Kallicharan, Asif Iqbal, Eldine Baptiste, Ken McEwan, Viv Richards, Joel Garner and Brian Davison playing against us.

At various times in the season Hampshire, captained by Nick Pocock, fielded Test players of their own in Marshall, Greenidge, Terry and Chris Smith alongside Hampshire legends Turner, Jesty, Nicholas, and Tim Tremlett.

Still reminiscing but also picking up the thread on Liam Dawson’s red ball career it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the other sixteen Hampshire players chosen as Wisden “Cricketer of the Year”

Liam’s award “bestowed” upon him in 2025 by current editor Lawrence Booth, who spoke to the Society in 2025, puts him in exalted company amongst Hampshire cricketers, listed below:

1900 - Robert Poore	1959 - Roy Marshall and Derek Shackleton	1983 - Malcolm Marshall and Trevor Jesty
1911 - Charles Llewellyn	1969 - Barry Richards	1983 - Chris Smith
1912 - Phil Mead	1974 - Peter Sainsbury	1990 - Robin Smith
1914 - Alec Kennedy	1975 - Andy Roberts	2006 - Kevin Pietersen
1933 - Lionel Tennyson	1977 - Gordon Greenidge	

Of the 17 only six were born in England, Mead, Tennyson, Shackleton, Sainsbury, Jesty and Dawson. Sainsbury and Jesty are the only two born in Hampshire and the only members of this illustrious group not to have played Test cricket. Alec Kennedy, born in Edinburgh played for England. Poore was born in Dublin but played Test cricket for South Africa.

Five South African born players are in this group. Llewellyn and Richards played for their country of birth whilst Pietersen and the Smith brothers represented England. Brothers Robin and Chris Smith are one of ten pairs of siblings chosen as Wisden "Cricketer of the Year." The four West Indians, Greenidge, Roy and Malcolm Marshall, all Bajans, together with Antiguan, Andy Roberts are legends of Hampshire and world cricket.

In researching for this piece, it highlighted how different the game was in times when amateurs mixed with professionals. We are so familiar with the career of the modern professional who primarily comes through a development structure. Many of the Society's guest speakers have told us of a different pathway for earlier generations. Going right back to look at the players for the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century the stories are varied and fascinating. Look out for some of these stories in the future.

We have Liam to thank for the next connection, the Hampshire cricketers to have scored a century and taken 10 wickets in the same match. There are only four and Liam is the only one of this select band to have done it twice. We must go a long way back to find the others.

The first two occurrences in first class cricket for Hampshire were in 1876 and 1882, before the start of the county championship competition in 1895 which coincided with Hampshire's move to Northlands Road from The Antelope Ground in St Mary's Southampton.

In August 1876, Arthur Ridley scored 104 and took 5-52 and 5-61 against Kent at Faversham. Ridley had earlier that season taken 10 wickets in a match against Kent and Derbyshire in home games at the Antelope Ground. Born in north Hampshire, Ridley was a right arm medium pace "lob bowler" who played 10 games for Hampshire between 1875 and 1878.

In May 1882, Francis Lacey scored 157 and 50* and took 4-32 and 7-89 against Sussex at Hove. Born in Dorset he played for Hampshire 45 times between 1880 and 1897 including 12 games in the early years of the county championship and captained the club for a time in that period. He was a right-hand bat and right-handed slow "round arm" bowler. In 1898 he became Secretary of MCC a role he undertook for 28 years and for which he received a knighthood. The third instance was altogether more recent in 1901 and features a remarkably interesting character worthy of a more detailed recollection in a later edition. Charlie Llewellyn was born in South Africa and played 15 Tests for his country between 1896 and 1912. Llewellyn, a left-handed batter, and slow/medium left arm bowler did the first-class double (1000 runs and 100 wickets) in 1901 and took ten wickets in a match on four occasions that season. At Taunton he made 153 and took 7- 45 and 5-68 in the county championship. We went on to do the double again in 1908 and 1910 a season where his performances earned him that Wisden accolade.

Hampshire Triple Centurions

Our next guest speaker Michael Carberry is one of only four Hampshire triple centurions in first class/championship cricket with his 300* in 2011. I find it quite remarkable that there have only been five triple centuries considering the quality of the players to have represented the county and the number of matches played.

Maybe not so surprising in recent times because of player attitudes to building an innings (despite playing four days games) poor techniques and tricky pitches. In 2026 Hampshire as a team, only

reached 300 on six occasions in 24 innings so a triple century would be reaching for the moon or a lot further away than that.

The first to reach 300 in an innings for Hampshire was Robert Poore at Taunton in July 1899, the season which earned him his Wisden accolade. He made 304 and shared in a stand of 411 with Eddie Wynard who made 225. This partnership is still the Hampshire record partnership for the sixth wicket after 127 years.

Dick Moore scored 316 against Warwickshire at Dean Park in 1937 which is still the highest individual score by a Hampshire batter despite there being three opportunities for batters to overtake this milestone in “recent” years

In 2004 John Crawley made 301* against Notts in a high scoring draw at Trent Bridge. The following year Notts were on the receiving end again as Crawley hit 311* at the Rose Bowl to set up a declaration and an innings victory in the last game of the season when Hampshire finished as runners up.

Carberry with his 300* created a new county third wicket partnership with Neil McKenzie in 2011.

John Crawley is second and fourth on the individual highest first-class score for Hampshire and is also in seventh place for his 272, made on his Hampshire debut against Kent at Canterbury in 2002. This is the highest score by a Hampshire player on debut. Of his 13 centuries for The Rose and Crown, seven exceed 148 and Notts were on the receiving end on five occasions. CP (Phil) Mead is sixth on the highest score list. With 138 first class centuries for Hampshire, it is surprising than he never made one of them into a triple century with his highest score being 280* against Notts in 1921 when he ran out of partners.

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