

Minutes of the 52nd AGM of the Association of Cricket Statisticians and Historians held virtually via Zoom on Saturday, 22 March 2025

Members present (53): David Allison, Philip Bailey, Ian Baker, Philip Banham, Pelham Barton, Roy Brockman, Dale Brown, John Bryant (Committee Chair), Paul Dyson, Rick Eyre, Jonathan Farmer, Ric Finlay, John Fletcher, Peter Gilbert, David Griffin, Peter Griffiths, Alan Grove, Peter Hardy, Jenny Heald, Andrew Hignell (Secretary), Andrew Ives, David Kendix (President), Julian Lawton Smith, Neil Leitch, Jeremy Lonsdale, Douglas Miller, Harriet Monkhouse, Denis Moore, Bryn Nathan, Huw Nathan, Derek Noakes, Jonathan Northall, Chris O'Brien, Chris Overson, Bill Polson, David Pracy, Andrew Radd, Jo Rice, Jerry Richards, Angus Rodger, Ian Russell, Andrew Samson, Paul G Smith, Alan Stewart, Steven Swain, Simon Sweetman, Rodney Ulyate, Garry Wallace (Treasurer), Keith Walmsley, Martyn Webster, Geoff Wellsted, John Wiltshire and John Winniffrith.

1. WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT

The President opened the meeting at 10.02 am by welcoming members from the UK and from places round the world, and remarked that the Association was lucky to have so many loyal and longstanding members. He noted that the fifth anniversary of the Covid restrictions had recently been marked and recalled the discussions about whether to postpone the 2020 AGM. At that time, the committee had taken the difficult, but correct, decision to call it off. While some may yearn for a return to an in-person AGM, the continued use of Zoom did make meetings more accessible to more members, and he believed it was important not to exclude people from the annual process of overseeing how our Association was being run and asking questions and providing challenge. He encouraged members to ask questions. He referred to Andrew Hignell, the Association's Honorary Secretary who had been taken seriously ill but was now on the mend, although he had not yet resumed his duties. He thanked other committee members, in particular Keith Walmsley, for keeping things running smoothly.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The President reported that apologies had been received from the following members: Robert Brooke, Chris Burgess, Roger Heavens, David Jeater, David Kelly, Ian Maun, Roger Moulton, Serena Nathan, Mick Pope, Alvan Seth-Smith, Brent Simmons, Guy Williams. In addition, apologies were received after the meeting from Peter Handford, William Powell and Mark Spooner.

3. REMEMBERING OUR DECEASED MEMBERS

During the year it was reported that the following members had died: Robin Abrahams, Martin Bevan, Stephen Bignell, Peter Brownlow, Howard Clayton, Roger Gibbons, Mark Loveday, Nigel McClery, Glyn Powell, Ian Scholefield, Graham Searle, Nicholas Sharp, David Treharne Smith, Cyril Waite, David Yorath. The meeting duly observed a period of silence in memory of all deceased. John Bryant highlighted Roger Gibbons, who had been the Association's Treasurer for some years; Howard Clayton, who had edited the *Second XI Annual*; and Robin Abrahams, for his work in the field of cricket statistics more broadly.

4. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE 2024 AGM

The President reminded members that the Minutes had been circulated earlier. No corrections or amendments had been requested, and after a show of hands the President announced that the motion for the approval of the AGM minutes (proposed by Angus Rodger and seconded by Chris O'Brien) had been passed unanimously.

5. TO RECEIVE AND, IF APPROVED, ADOPT THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2024

John Bryant said the year had seen the continuation of the trends in the evolution of the Association, including the gradual move to more online activities while at the same time also maintaining a substantial print presence. He highlighted that the new Women's Annual was at an advanced stage of preparation and the committee would communicate with members about this shortly. No questions were raised and, after a show of hands, the President announced that the motion (proposed by Neil Leitch and seconded by Jenny Heald) had been adopted unanimously.

6. TO RECEIVE AND, IF APPROVED, ADOPT THE REPORT OF THE TREASURER AND THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2024

The Treasurer said it was the ninth occasion on which he had presented the Treasurer's Report and he was very pleased to be able to say that this year's report continued the favourable trend of recent years. In the year ending 30 November 2024, ACS operations had generated a net profit after tax of £31,690. The ACS also generated a net cash flow of £5,506 which, after adjusting for two unusual and non-recurring events, turned into a positive net operating cash flow of £17,093. The balance sheet remains robust, and liquidity will meet all foreseeable obligations without any recourse to our financial reserves.

He focused on three major issues. The year had seen several non-recurring events that affected the overall results:

- Net profit and cash flow were both positively impacted by the donation of over £18,000 from the Women's Cricket Association. This donation is ring-fenced to support initiatives strictly related to women's cricket and will not be deployed to support ongoing ACS business. For maximum clarity, the net value of this donation is shown separately in the accounts.
- £30,000 of surplus cash was invested in further tranches of Legal and General units. This had the effect of artificially deflating reported cash flow but otherwise had no impact on the financial health of ACS. The total holding of Legal and General units benefited from a market appreciation in excess of £10,000 over the financial year. This can only be considered as a windfall gain and, as recent events have shown, market turbulence can also generate adverse movements.
- Auctions continued to generate a very positive impact. During the year this income stream added in excess of £8,000 to the bottom-line results. However, the future of this income stream is completely dependent on further donations.

Turning to what could be termed regular sources of income, the Treasurer said both major areas faced some headwinds. The continuing decline in membership numbers was not dramatic but had contributed to a consistent fall in membership income over the past few years. This was despite the fact that membership subscriptions have been held at their current level for seven years. The sales of publications, both statistical and narrative, continued to show a consistent decline. As an example, of the last 15 books published by the ACS as many as 11 have failed to sell even 120 copies. Three of the remaining four were only sustained by unusually high orders from the respective authors and compilers. Whilst these adverse trends did not pose any immediate threat to the financial security of the ACS, the committee will be keeping a close watch on future developments.

During the course of 2024, the ACS progressively migrated its auction support services and ACS Sales activities from City Press Leeds to York Publishing Services (YPS). YPS have considerable experience in the logistics and distribution of books, including purpose-built storage and handling facilities. In addition, they have also shown themselves to be a competitive source for printing of ACS publications, thereby enabling the ACS to spread its printing work among several suppliers. The migration is now bedded in and has provided operational and financial benefits to the ACS.

The sound financial position of the ACS has been buttressed by the continued efficient support of our Accountant, Judy Leng, who in addition to preparing the monthly accounts and annual financial statements also prepares and submits the VAT and Corporate Income Tax returns to HMRC on behalf of the ACS on a timely basis. The committee proposed the re-appointment of the Accountant for the next 12 months at her present annual fee of £3,230.

Based on the current positive cash position and the anticipated continued stability of cash flow in the immediate future, the committee considered that there is no need to raise membership subscriptions for the 2025/26 membership year starting 1 December 2025. This means that membership subscriptions will be maintained at their current level for an eighth consecutive year, having last been increased in 2018. However, it is the intention of the committee to present a restructuring of membership subscriptions at next year's meeting. The aim will be to focus on processes that will assist the retention of members and minimise the administrative effort involved.

There were no questions, and the President thanked the Treasurer for his continued stewardship of the Association's finances. After a show of hands, he announced that the motion for the Annual Accounts (proposed by Andrew Radd and seconded by Simon Sweetman) had been passed unanimously.

7. TO APPOINT, AND AGREE THE REMUNERATION OF AN INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT TO PREPARE THE ACCOUNTS AND TAX RETURNS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The motion (proposed by Pelham Barton and seconded by Simon Sweetman) was passed unanimously on a show of hands.

8. TO APPROVE THE MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR THE YEAR 2025/26

The motion (proposed by Neil Leitch and second by Angus Rodger) was passed unanimously on a show of hands.

9. COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The President said this item was for noting only as the election had again been uncontested. It had been many years since the last contested election, and he encouraged members to consider standing in future. The Association needed new blood and it had never been easier to be a committee member, since meetings were held online. The following will continue to serve on the committee:

John Bryant	Proposer – Roger Moulton	Secunder – Philip Bailey
Jeremy Lonsdale	Proposer – Mick Pope	Secunder – Annie Chave
Rodney Ulyate	Proposer – Brian Sanderson	Secunder – Martin Chandler
Garry Wallace	Proposer – Julian Lawton Smith	Secunder – Chris Overson

10. RULE CHANGES

Keith Walmsley outlined two minor rule changes proposed by the committee.

The first was a change of date for when membership lapsed for those who had not remitted their subscription by 1 December. This was to reflect the current practice whereby 18 January was the last date on which membership can be paid, in order to facilitate getting out AGM papers at the start of February.

Rule 18.3 (part) Subscriptions

Proposed wording

'Subscriptions for the ensuing financial year shall become due on 1st December, and the membership of any member whose subscription remains unpaid on 19th January shall lapse.'

The second rule was a clarification given that we were now holding in-person meetings in informal circumstances. The committee wanted to be clear that the current Rules do prescribe certain formalities for the Annual General Meeting and the Emergency General Meeting, and these did not apply to other 'general meetings' of the membership.

Rule 22 Interpretation of Rules

Proposed wording. Add (new paragraph)

'In these Rules, the unqualified item 'General Meeting' means only *either* an Annual General Meeting as referred to in Rule 16.1, or an Extraordinary General Meeting convened in accordance with Rule 16.6.'

On a show of hands, the motion for rule change 1 (proposed by Stephen Swain and seconded by Chris O'Brien) was passed by at least the required two-thirds majority. The motion for rule change 2 (proposed by Pelham Barton and seconded by Ian Baker) was also passed by at least the required two-thirds majority.

The President said this ended the formulaic part of the meeting.

11. PRESENTATION OF THE BROOKE-LAMBERT TROPHY

The President then called upon Keith Walmsley to deliver the following citation, announcing the winner of the Statistician of the Year Award for 2023.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the winner this year of the Brooke-Lambert Trophy is a journalist and broadcaster. Now that's unusual in itself – you don't tend to find the likes of Nasser Hussain or even Mike Atherton getting very excited about the statistical side of the game, or about the more obscure corners of its history. But there are exceptions of course, and although our winner does indeed make his living in journalism and broadcasting, it is for his wide-ranging contributions to the record of our game that we make the award this year to the doyen of Northamptonshire cricket, Andrew Radd.

Andrew is Northampton born and bred, and cricket is in his blood: one of his grandfathers was born and lived in Wantage Road. Cricket, and its history, began to take over a large part of his life while he was still in primary school, and before long he was buying scoresheets from our only previous broadcaster-winner, Bill Frindall. In his early 20s – at about the time he joined the ACS – he embarked on a career in journalism, and became a full-time employee of the BBC – which, it may not be generally realised, he still is. Very much a radio man, Andrew's work over some 40 years includes not just covering cricket for BBC Radio Northampton, but also working on that station's newsdesk and on various other projects and programmes – including coverage of local and national elections since 1987.

But his continuing devotion to cricket – even if only officially as a hobby – is shown by the many ways in which he has demonstrated his commitment to his home county. Perhaps these can be listed as an ABC ...

A is for archivist. Andrew is one of that dedicated and highly-valued group of those who are determined to keep their county's cricket history and heritage alive, and to present it to the cricket-loving public in an interesting and accessible way. He has been Northants' official archivist since 2017, though he was involved in this area well before that date. In this field, among other things he has been the deviser of the county's player-numbers, and has been instrumental in launching the Hall of Fame and the Captains' Wall at Wantage Road.

B is for broadcaster. Andrew is a long-serving commentator and reporter on matches at Wantage Road for BBC Radio Northampton, keeping listeners up to date with all the goings-on on and off the pitch.

C is for compiler. For many years Andrew first compiled, and later edited, the Northants Yearbook, in succession to one of his mentors, the late Laurie Newell. He has also long been the go-to person at the club for details of the county's records and statistics.

But we must go back to A for the role in which he is perhaps most familiar to ACS members: as an Author. He co-wrote the Northants history for the Helm series, and also co-wrote the biography of Northants' cult hero of the mid-1970s David Steele. He also wrote the Northants book in the '100 Greats' series, and has produced two recent books for the ACS: a biography of George Thompson (Northants' first Test cricketer), and the long-awaited book on Northamptonshire Grounds. Last year Pitch published his well-received book Faces on a Wall, about the 40-odd cricketers who have captained Northants over the years (some of them odder than others: the subtitle of the book rightly refers to them as a 'curious collection'); by no

means all of them are household names, but their character and doings form an important part of their county's history, and keeping their memory alive is such an important contribution to presenting the county's heritage in an interesting and accessible – and very well-written – way.

So Andrew is very much not just a cricket-writer. He is a family man too, and – like many other winners of this trophy – a lover of classical music, as well as being, perhaps unsurprisingly, a local historian.

But it is very much for his activities in the field of cricket that we are pleased to make this award to Andrew today. I'll leave the last word to an adopted son of Northampton, Allan Lamb, who ends his Foreword to Faces on a Wall with these words, which sum up the contribution and the wisdom of our winner: 'As a journalist he has always told it as he sees it, good or bad; and if I ever need to know anything about the county there is only one person to go to'. Ladies and gentlemen, that 'one person' is the deserved winner to whom I am very pleased to virtually present this year's Brooke-Lambert Trophy – Andrew Radd.

The announcement was warmly applauded by those attending the meeting and Andrew Radd responded with a few words.

Thank you, Mr President, Mr Chairman and to Keith. Firstly, can I thank the Association for this extraordinary honour. In the last few minutes I have become an instant expert on imposter syndrome. It is extraordinary and almost surreal to be joining many individuals who I have admired over many years on the list. As Keith says, Bill Frindall, whose scoresheets I used to write off for so I could score whole Test matches off the tellie and TMS in the 1970s, and Martin Wilson, whose bibliography of Northamptonshire cricket was such a valuable resource to those of us who write about the county. Jeremy Lonsdale, who is on the call, was a massive help to me in bringing my George Thompson book for the Association safely into harbour. Stephen Chalke, Eric Midwinter, Pete Griffiths, Vic Isaacs, Julian Lawton Smith, and Mick Pope, whose Fred Bakewell biography I know is eagerly awaited. Andrew Samson and my old chum, Andrew Hignell, and how great it is see him on the call this morning.

To be in their company is very humbling and even more humbling is to receive this award named as it is after Rob Brooke and Dennis Lambert. I didn't know Dennis particularly well, nothing to do with his long association with the old enemy, Leicestershire, but Rob more than anybody else encouraged me to carry out original research, publishing my first contribution to the Journal in, I think, 1978. Rob and I would meet at New Street Station, take the rattler out to Birmingham University along the canal, and spend the day there trawling through their collection of old newspapers, making copious notes, and it is no exaggeration to say that Rob has been on my shoulder in all the book projects I have done since then, because he had no time for those who didn't do their research properly. And to fall foul of Rob Brooke, whose book reviews became the stuff of legend, was not something, certainly not a member of this Association, would want to do. I owe Rob a huge debt of gratitude and you will appreciate, with that being the case, how much this award means. This is not intended to be a 'State of the Union' address, but can I just say there is a tendency among some of those running the show in county cricket to believe that their clubs didn't exist until they arrived in the office. I doubt there is anyone attending this meeting who doesn't appreciate the importance of preserving and publicising the heritage of our wonderful counties, as Keith mentioned. The Association has a vital role to play in that, and our spokesman, the brilliant Dave Griffin, will certainly keep us up to the mark should we flag or fail in any way.

There are so many people to thank but can I just mention four gentlemen who are no longer still with us – Keith mentioned one of them, Laurie Newell, who for so long was the Association's go-to man for Northamptonshire, who passed on some of his records to me; John Watson, photograph collector extraordinary and a member of this Association; Maurice Kent, my predecessor as archivist at Northamptonshire who preserved so much priceless material by depositing it in the County Record Office; and my old friend Tony Kingston, the county's long-time scorer and much else besides, much missed by all of us at Northamptonshire and, as I am sure Higgers will vouch, well beyond. Also to my wife, Clare, and my son Olly, who I am delighted to say is a history student now at Durham. They have put up with an awful lot; all the winning anecdotes about Northamptonshire captains from the nineteenth century. Thanks to them and thanks again to the Association for making sure Northamptonshire at least wins something in 2025.

The President thanked Andrew Radd for his words and said how much he enjoyed listening to Andrew's commentaries, which were so much more than just ball by ball descriptions as he brought to them his additional knowledge, historical context, insights and humour. It was a rare gift to combine eloquence behind the microphone and deep knowledge in writing. He was therefore a well-deserved winner.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The President said there were two items of AOB which had been advised in advance.

Peter Griffiths talked through a slide which set out the assistance that the committee needed in several areas:

- data entry to the growing Online Cricket Bibliography, which will be migrated onto the ACS website and will need managing;
- researching brief biographies of women cricketers. Currently we have little or no information about 400 women who play cricket for major teams, and the picture is even worse going back into the past;
- general IT-related projects, including a redesign of the ACS website which currently required CSS skills;
- creating indexes of online content to support the ability to search archival information. In the last 30 days, for example, we had added 9,000 pages to the ACS website (as had been the case in previous months) and with so much information, an online search function would be helpful; and
- cataloguing of auction material, which had to be done in York.

In addition, all projects needed publicity. Training could be given on all areas except CSS and Peter Griffiths said he would send out an email shortly to members with more details.

For the second item of Any Other Business, Keith Walmsley raised the subject of ACS membership numbers. He said the committee was considering allocating numbers to all ACS members. This was designed to help the running of the Association and would lead to other benefits for members such as being able to use their unique number to access the auctions rather than having to register each time. If the committee decided to go ahead, more information would be provided.

The President closed the formal meeting at 10.48am, after which an informal discussion took place.

Simon Sweetman raised the issue of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and said he thought it would have an impact on the Association. Recently, he had had a worrying experience when using an AI tool to research a subject about which he knew about. This had thrown up information which was total fantasy. He saw the risk of such tools producing completely spurious statistics and wondered whether the ACS should be monitoring this field. Peter Griffiths agreed and said he did not consider AI was currently good enough to help, for example, with the indexing work he had mentioned earlier. Derek Noakes also agreed it was a very important point but added that there were other interesting developments which could be of value to the ACS. Harriet Monkhouse added that there were emerging concerns about the theft of copyright material which the ACS should follow up.

There were no other items of AOB and John Bryant ended the informal discussion at 10.56am.