

GOLDEN JUBILEE

14 OCTOBER 2023



THE ASSOCIATION OF CRICKET
STATISTICIANS AND HISTORIANS



A MESSAGE FROM THE ACS PRESIDENT

Fifty years ago, Robert Brooke and the late Dennis Lambert had the rather wonderful idea to start an Association for likeminded compilers of cricket statistics.

The achievements of the ACS over the subsequent decades have been well summarised in the opening article of this summer's Cricket Statistician. For many, the decision by Wisden to accept finally, and in full, the ACS's first-class Match Classifications was the culmination of our founding fathers' vision of a game in which there is clarity and consistency in the official records.

One achievement that could not have been envisaged fifty years ago is for the fruits of our members' labours to be shared almost instantly. Our online membership forum and the records section of our website are marvels of collaboration and research. It is this willingness to share – whether a revealing entry from a births and deaths register, a match report from a nineteenth century local newspaper or a newly-uncovered statistical gem – that epitomises the ACS and its membership.

But just as much as the numerous books compiled, questions answered and historical anomalies corrected, reaching our half century provides a chance to celebrate those who have done so much to support us in our shared quest for knowledge and accuracy.

In my 39 years of ACS membership (sorry I was late to the party – the original invitations went out when I was only seven), I have made friends with some of cricket's most brilliant minds and generous collaborators. Of those who are no longer with us, I will in particular be raising a glass in memory of Peter Wynne-Thomas, Derek Lodge, Brian Heald, Richard Streeton and Vic Isaacs.

Attending my first ACS meeting, I recall being awestruck being in the same room as people whose names I recognised from Wisden, Playfair and the various cricket record books I had devoured as a child. Yet there was barely an ego to be seen, just a collection of fellow enthusiasts happy to welcome a teenager into their midst.

As Robert Brooke wrote about us in 1981, "It is hard to prevent a middle-aged and backward-looking image when most of the contributors are middle-aged and backward-looking people." But as the ACS itself reaches middle age, I do believe that our membership has never been more open to original ideas and new ways of working. We have Zoom meetings, online databases and answer questions from various media almost instantly on Twitter.

The opportunities for in-person meetings have unfortunately been restricted in recent years. First the popular London meetings were discontinued. Then, when the pandemic struck, the AGM was forced to move online where, thanks to technology, it has remained. This means that the ACS clan has not gathered in person since the 2019 AGM. A gap of over four years should be more than enough of an excuse to arrange an in-person meeting, but the chance to celebrate our golden jubilee makes this an opportunity not to be missed.

I therefore appeal to all of you to join us for our celebratory lunch in Leicester on 14 October. It will provide a fresh opportunity to meet some old friends and perhaps some others who have thus far only been visible online. It will also give us the chance to consider to how we can remain informative and relevant in the years ahead.

I hope to see you there.

DAVID KENDIX