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Cricket, Competition and the Amateur Ethos: Surrey and the Home Counties 1870-1970

Duncan Stone

**A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Abstract

By the late-nineteenth-century, cricket had a well-established national narrative. Namely; that the game's broadly pre-industrial, rural, and egalitarian culture had been replaced by the 'gentlemanly' ethos of amateurism; a culture which encouraged cricket for its own sake and specific norms of 'moral' behaviour exemplified by idioms' such as 'it's not cricket'. A century later, much of this narrative not only remained intact, it survived unchallenged. However, a regionally specific sub-narrative had emerged in relation to cricket outside of 'first-class' Test and County cricket.

Cricket in the North was 'working-class', 'professional', 'commercialised', and played within highly 'competitive' leagues, while cricket in the South was 'middle-class', 'amateur', 'non-commercial', and played in non-competitive 'friendly' fixtures. Whereas cricket in the North has attracted a good deal of academic attention, there remains a paucity of contextualised academic research of cricket in the South. Due to assumed social and cultural similarities, the so-called 'friendly' cricket of the South remains subsumed within the national narrative. Whereas we now know a good deal about who played cricket, and why, in the North, we know little, if anything, of those who played cricket, why they did so, and under what circumstances, in the South. This thesis, which focuses on the County of Surrey, thus examines the social and cultural development of 'club' cricket in the South for the first time.

In order to test the historical assumption that cricket in the South replicated the gentlemanly amateurism inherent to the game's national culture and historical discourse, this thesis shall not only examine the origins of these important cultural 'identities', but who was playing cricket, and under what social, environmental, economic, and cultural circumstances, in Surrey between 1870 and 1970. In basic terms, it will demonstrate that much of the historiography proves misleading, especially regarding the universality of non-competitive cricket. Moreover, this thesis will also establish that the introduction, implementation, and spread of non-competitive cricket was a class-specific and discriminatory ideology, which had close associations with the middle-classes' increasing insecurity and their migration to Surrey. The ideological basis upon which non-competitive cricket was based, was to have fundamentally negative repercussions relating to the game's cultural meaning and popularity, and the 're-introduction' of competitive league cricket to the South in 1968 may well have saved the sport from a slow and agonising extinction.

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Glossary and abbreviations

AGM – Annual General Meeting

AKCC – Association of Kent Cricket Clubs

BaHDCA – Brighton and Hove District Cricket Association

BCC – Banstead Cricket Club

CCC – Club Cricket Conference

CCCF – Club Cricketers’ Charity Fund

ECC – English County Championship

FA – Football Association

GWMCC – Guildford Working Mens’ Cricket Club

KCCC – Kent County Cricket Club

LaSCCCC – London and Southern Counties Club Cricket Conference

LCCC – London Club Cricket Conference

MaDCA – Manchester and District Cricket Association

MCC – Marylebone Cricket Club

NCCA – National Club Cricket Association

PEP – Political and Economic Planning

RFU – Rugby Football Union

SACC – Surrey Association of Cricket Clubs

SCA – Sussex Cricket Association

SCC – Surrey Clubs’ Championship

SCCC – Surrey County Cricket Club

SCFA – Surrey County Football Association

SHC – Surrey History Centre

TDCC – Thames Ditton Cricket Club

YCCC – Yorkshire County Cricket Club

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Foreword and Acknowledgements

During an interview for BBC Radio relating to the University of Huddersfield's Cricket Research Centre, the interviewer (a Yorkshireman), on hearing that my research related to club cricket in Surrey, appeared to dismiss any research of southern cricket on the grounds that "it's all friendly down there isn't it?" Such an attitude is understandable, for the friendly non-competitive cricket that pervaded southern club cricket during much of the twentieth-century was in stark contrast to the meaningful competitive leagues that dominated cricket in Yorkshire from the 1890s. Originally this thesis intended to examine the development of the regionalised cricket stereotypes of Yorkshire and Surrey, and the apparent relationship that each had with specific class groups, but after a year of research it became clear that a satisfactory examination of this subject was beyond the scope of a solitary PhD.

As cricket in Yorkshire, in the form of the Yorkshire County Cricket Club (YCCC) and the leagues, had already received a good deal of academic attention, the Yorkshire half of the original study was dropped in favour of the development of cricket in Surrey between 1870 and 1970. Surrey was chosen, as it remains a region with no concerted historical analysis (cricket or otherwise) due to its proximity and apparent subordination to London during this period. The emphasis of this thesis has changed a number of times since, and rather than an explicit analysis of regional or class identity, the thesis now examines the changing organisational structures of cricket, the 'middle-class' culture of club cricket, and how this culture relates to the gradual suburbanisation of Surrey. In basic terms, we are still unaware of what cricket in Surrey, outside of the 'professionalised' English County Championship (ECC), was really about, the form it took, and under whose influence it

operated. No professional historian had ever examined this level of club cricket, least of all in relation to Surrey.

Why this remained the case (cricket has suffered no shortage of literary or historical attention) may well have been the lack of any recognised archive. Consequently, in order to write this thesis it was necessary to discover and create a new archive. In this endeavour a good deal of luck (finding obscure but highly relevant books in second-hand shops) was required, along with the generosity and help of the 'gatekeepers' of the historical material traced. I must also acknowledge those within the cricket and academic communities who have provided large quantities of advice. With regard to the cricket community, special mention should go to Ronald Price, Andrew Hignell, and Keith and Jennifer Booth of the Cricket Society, and Jo Miller, previously archivist of the Surrey County Cricket Club (SCCC). The large quantities of photocopying, mugs of coffee, and Test Match tickets supplied by Jo, were especially appreciated. Of the academic community special mention much go to my original supervisor Peter Davies for making all of this possible, my current supervisors at the University of Huddersfield Barry Doyle and Rob Ellis, and their colleague Rob Light. Norman Baker, previously of the University at Buffalo (USA), also deserves sincere thanks for providing me with some of his unpublished research on post-war sport in Britain.

I would also like to thank David Rose of the *Surrey Advertiser* for printing my original appeal for information, and Ray Cotton and Roland Woods who not only responded to that appeal and agreed to being interviewed, but also provided a number of original documents relating to the Surrey Association of Cricket Clubs (SACC). Similar thanks must be expressed to Raman Subba Row and Norman Parks, two of the prime movers responsible for the establishment of the Surrey Clubs' Championship in 1968. Both agreed to extensive interviews and, like Ray and Roland, both insisted on buying me lunch. I must

also express my unending gratitude to Don Shelly of the Club Cricket Conference (CCC) who allowed me to take the CCC's complete set of minute books home with me for what was more leisurely research. It is doubtful that this thesis would exist had it not been for the access granted to this most important archive.

At the beginning of my research in 2008 the Surrey History Centre (SHC) only had one set of club minutes (Worplesdon CC). Thankfully, by the end of this research in 2012 – indicative perhaps of the growing realisation that such records have significant historical value – the SHC was in recent possession of a number of local clubs records including the Thames Ditton, Claygate, Banstead and Ewhurst CCs. I am grateful to the club officials who have deposited these records, and Paul Grover of the Cranleigh CC for allowing me access to his club's extensive and highly relevant archive. The SHC archivists have all been very helpful, and have displayed a great deal of patience, interest, and even concern for my welfare when I failed to take enough breaks during my research. For all of their help I thank them.

Historians, whichever their preferred field of interest, are reliant upon the help of archive services and those who proof-read their manuscripts, and I would like to thank Lisa Nahajec for her invaluable help in this regard. Apologies to all of those I have failed to mention, but your assistance has been registered. It is of course to my friends and family who have supported and encouraged me on this somewhat elongated journey, to which the final words of thanks belong. Special mention goes to: Darren and Cath and Rebecca and Daryl in Australia who helped and encouraged me to resurrect my Masters research, Tosh and Dan who brought out my competitive side, Jess for her valued support and most of all, my mother Celia and sister Ruth who are always there for me. It is to my granddad Bert of Farncombe CC, and my father Mick of Chiddingfold CC that this thesis is dedicated.

Cricket, Competition and the Amateur Ethos: Surrey and the Home Counties, 1870-1970

From the 1880s onwards English cricket experienced a subtle change, with the blending of the professionals from the industrial north and the amateurs from the genteel south.¹

Introduction

Cricket in twentieth-century England was always divided, most significantly by the class-based peculiarities of the amateur/professional distinction, but, as suggested above, there were also distinct regional divisions. Historically, cricket in the North and the South of England has been 'imagined' in diametrically opposite and stereotyped terms. The above quote from a display at the Bradman Museum at Bowral in N.S.W., Australia, implies that these constituted a 'competitive' professional North and a 'genteel' amateur South. Richard Holt has highlighted how these widely 'imagined' regional cricket identities were embodied in a description of Herbert Sutcliffe of Yorkshire and Jack Hobbs of Surrey (both working-class professionals) opening the batting for England: 'They were a pair whose virtues of northern *grit* and southern *grace* seemed to combine the perceived characteristic regional virtues of the English perfectly'.² Holt's quote implies that southern cricketers – even the professionals – were not only less competitive than their northern counterparts, but they played the game in a qualitatively different and aesthetic way. The broad scope of his research precluded an examination of the factors which combined to form these

¹ Bradman Museum visit, 12/2/2008.

² Richard Holt, "Cricket and Englishness: The Batsman as Hero," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*. 13, no. 1 (1996): 62. Italics added.

regionalised cricket 'virtues' however, nor how they have persisted in the regional, national, and indeed international consciousness, or whether they even were accurate.

These distinct cricket cultures seem to be widely accepted as fact, yet they did not appear to affect the respective overall success of these paradigmatic counties. The Yorkshire County Cricket Club (YCCC) (Est. 1863) and the Surrey County Cricket Club (SCCC) (Est. 1843) represent the two most successful clubs in the history of the English County Championship (ECC). Much of Yorkshire's success was attributed to the high standard of cricket played in the various leagues throughout the county.³ The leagues acted as a feeder to the Yorkshire XI, and large crowds and keenly felt local rivalries were thought helpful in forging the mental and physical strength required by cricketers in the ECC.⁴ However, the game's historiography suggests that league cricket was not played in the South, where a so-called 'friendly', non-competitive form of the game dominated what was known as 'club cricket'. Indeed sport in the South of England, be it cricket, football or rugby, was broadly associated with the 'contained competitiveness' allied to the amateur ethos, which also dominated the national narrative of the sport.⁵

The predominance of amateurism and amateur values throughout cricket's national discourse subsumes, or relegates, the cricket culture of Yorkshire, and the other league playing counties of the Midlands and the North of England, to that of a sub-culture. It is clear that the dominance of the southern shires in the early development of the game, and the predominance of southern elites within the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) who controlled it thereafter, have cultivated a very specific, and consistent, image for English

³ Although a number of historians have cited the leadership of Lord Hawke for much of YCCC's success, Hawke's task was aided by amateur regulations which undermined the independence previously enjoyed by professionals. Rob Light, "Ten Drunks and a Parson?: The Victorian Professional Cricketer Reconsidered," *Sport in History* 25, no. 1 (2005): 60–76.

⁴ A number of significant league competitions existed throughout all the major towns and cities of Yorkshire. Derek Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket* (London: Aurum, 1999).

⁵ Norman Baker, "Whose Hegemony? The Origins of the Amateur Ethos in Nineteenth Century English Society," *Sport in History* 24, no. 1 (2004): 1–16.

cricket. Namely, that English cricket was (and to some extent remains) 'amateur', 'gentlemanly', 'middle-class', and 'southern' in character. The upper-middle-class membership and metropolitan location of the highly influential MCC has certainly contributed to this southern bias, and yet the underlying 'locale' associated with much cricket writing remained the 'rural idyll'.⁶ The emphasis and origins of the game's historiography are discussed below, but such is the dominance of this romantic 'southern' ideal, it is assumed that counties such as Surrey reflected the same social and cultural values promoted in the national discourse.⁷ Did those who controlled and played cricket in the South of England really embody or emulate the social and cultural values within the national discourse?

The social, cultural and geographical factors discussed above notwithstanding, the current historiography does not sufficiently explain why different cricket cultures developed in the North and the South of England. Nor does it explain how the national narrative developed; when it became dominant; who cultivated and promoted it; nor why they did so. As will be suggested below (and again in Chapter Four), this narrative has arisen because many of those who have written on the 'history' of the game were 'insiders', who sought to re-enforce this image. Not only has there been no sustained critique of cricket's historical discourse, the lack of rigorous empirical studies of local 'grass-roots' cricket in the South of England, has perpetuated the class-based social and cultural regional stereotypes set out above.

Regionalised differences in philosophical approach to the game are central to each regional identity, and it was argued that these led to differences in ability, competitive

⁶ Neville Cardus was a music critic and cricket journalist, who many regard as the premier source of the 'literaturisation' of the sport, never tired of rural analogy when describing ECC matches in urban environments. Anthony Bateman, *Cricket, Literature and Culture: Symbolising the Nation, Destabilising Empire* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

⁷ Martin J Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 42.

spirit, and ultimately success. Indeed, this appears to be borne out by the fact that the counties that had a strong league system were the most successful between the wars, as only one southern county, Middlesex, won the ECC championship (twice) during this 21 year period. Yet, leading up to the outbreak of the First World War, the ECC title had been shared relatively equally by counties in the North and South of England, with two counties in the Midlands also winning the title between 1890 and 1914.⁸ How can we explain the equal division of success before 1914, but the northern counties dominance between the wars?

The answer may lie in recognising that cricket in Surrey was not always organised on a non-competitive basis, with league and cup matches a common sight upon cricket fields throughout the county up to the First World War. After 1918 however, what was known as 'competition cricket', particularly in the form of leagues, largely disappeared from those very same cricket fields. This disappearance coincided with the establishment of an organisation called the Club Cricket Conference (CCC) in 1915. The CCC, like the majority of sports bodies of the time, was a strictly amateur association that was led by well-known 'gentlemen' and influential metropolitan elites,⁹ and the long-term aim of these 'gentlemen amateurs' was to: 'To control and safeguard amateur cricket on strictly non-competitive lines'.¹⁰ So successful was the CCC in this endeavour that no 'meaningful' league cricket appears to have been played in Surrey or the other Home Counties for the next 48 years. As a result, the image of southern club cricket, as the historiography suggests, became marked by a distinctly 'gentlemanly', 'middle-class', and 'amateur', 'non-competitive' ethos.

⁸ The northern counties of Yorkshire (nine) and Lancashire (two) won the title eleven times, while the southern counties of Surrey (seven), Kent (four) and Middlesex (one) won twelve times. The 'Midland' counties of Nottinghamshire and Warwickshire won the title once each during this period.

⁹ Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 381; Baker, "Whose Hegemony?", 3.

¹⁰ CCC Minute Book, 26/10/1934.

In direct opposition to the highly competitive, professional and commercial leagues in the North, club cricket in the South, it was claimed, was played for its own sake, without the 'corrupting influence' of professionalism and 'commercial interests'. This thesis will demonstrate that such an image, and much of the rhetoric that helped to maintain it, was broadly illusory, for the game and its image was closely policed by not only the CCC, but by those who chronicled and reported the game. We must therefore ask why attitudes towards league competition changed among these gentlemen after 1914; why league competition was not only decried, but became associated with the northern working-classes, professionalism and commercial interests by those who controlled club cricket; and how the men who controlled the Conference were able to maintain an ethos of non-competitive cricket, at the expense of leagues, for almost half-a-century?

To answer these questions this thesis will first explore the transformation of attitudes towards competition in southern cricket. It shall also address the cultural background of the people who instigated or influenced such a change: the 'gentlemen amateurs'; the various reasons why such a change was deemed necessary; and the social and cultural repercussions this change brought about. What follows is thus the first academic study of club cricket in Surrey (with reference to metropolitan London and other 'home counties'). To a large extent it is also the first detailed study of amateurism in non-elite sport, and how those who chose to employ it changed competitive attitudes outside of 'first-class' cricket. The purpose of this thesis is to recover and chronicle how club cricket developed in Surrey between 1870 and 1970. It will also argue that the gradual changes in attitudes towards competition were influenced by the most significant social change in the county's history: the introduction of what became a dominant 'middle-class' in numerical, cultural, economic and political terms. The expansion of the middle-classes, and the gradual change in attitudes towards competition in Surrey, was intimately related to the county's slow

process of (sub) urbanisation. It will be demonstrated that anti-competitive cultural attitudes were not developed within the county by Surrey's existing middle-classes, but by the metropolitan elites who developed these attitudes, and the middle-class migrants who increasingly moved to Surrey from London after 1918.

The elites that populated the upper-echelons of cricket, as in late-Victorian and Edwardian politics, were a socially and educationally narrow group. This thesis will suggest that although the middle-class became an ever more heterogeneous group, the reformed public schools played a key role in the creation and dissemination of the universally understood 'middle-class' values integral to amateurism and the concept of the 'Gentleman Amateur'. The issue of amateurism within cricket provides an excellent context for an examination of the social changes created by an increasingly capitalist/commercial society before 1914. The effects these societal changes had upon social relations will be examined in both urban and rural contexts before and after the First World War, with particular attention being paid to how a small group of 'gentlemen amateurs' in charge of the CCC were able to impose a broader metropolitan cultural hegemony upon those living in London's peripheral regions. Furthermore, this study will provide a more contextualised understanding of class, region and identity in the twentieth-century.

The Historiography of Sport and Leisure

The different regional histories of cricket are the result of two small battles in the larger cultural war over the game's national image and cultural meaning, with different notions of amateurism at their heart. According to Pierre Bourdieu:

sport, like any other practice is an object of struggles between the fractions of the dominant class and also between social classes ... *the social definition of sport* is an object of struggles ... in which what is at stake *inter alia* is the monopolistic capacity to impose the legitimate

definition of sporting practice and the legitimate functioning of sporting activity – amateurism vs. professionalism, participant sport vs. spectator sport, distinctive (elite) sport vs. popular (mass) sport.¹¹

In this regard, the social groups who controlled and dictated the cultural form and meaning of local cricket throughout the regions were not always the same. Changes in the recreational culture of Britain, like the social groups who influenced cricket regionally, were far from uniform, and this variety ensured that the cultural foundations of cricket and the way the game was played were diverse. Which social groups were at the vanguard of such changes, or indeed influential in preserving elements of pre-modern culture, remains contested.¹² The non-competitive club cricket advocated by the CCC may represent an alternative version of reformed ‘modern’ sport, in that it not only rejected the ‘gladiatorial contests’ of old,¹³ but also the “‘pure” bourgeois values’ associated with the modern ‘capitalisation’ of sport.¹⁴

For decades, sport and leisure was regarded as a historical cul-de-sac, of little or no value, and it was not until the 1970s that the first serious examinations of leisure emerged. The inspiration for much of this scholarship was E. P. Thompson’s *The Making of the English Working Class*, which examined the working-class experience during the Industrial Revolution in terms of communities, popular culture, recreation, politics, religion and trade unionism.¹⁵ In establishing ‘history from below’, Thompson, and others like Raphael Samuel associated with The Historical Workshop, set the agenda for much of the history of leisure and sport for the next forty years. Consequently, a number of themes, allied to the

¹¹ Pierre Bourdieu, “Sport and Social Class,” *Social Sciences Information Cultural Studies Reader* (1978), 826.

¹² Robert W Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Hugh Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, C. 1780-c. 1880* (London: Croom Helm, 1980); Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885* (London: Methuen, 1987).

¹³ John Hargreaves, *Sport, Power and Culture: a Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 45.

¹⁴ Tony Collins, *Rugby’s Great Split: Class, Culture and the origins of Rugby League Football*, (London: Routledge, 2006), 198.

¹⁵ E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964).

nineteenth-century urbanised working-class experience, have dominated. These include: 'class'; the standardisation and commercialisation of leisure; drinking, gambling and respectability; social control, and what was termed 'rational recreation'.¹⁶

One of the first historians to demonstrate the importance of leisure as a serious historical subject was Robert Malcolmson, who suggested that the long-established and sophisticated recreational calendar of pre-modern agricultural England was almost completely 'swept away' by the growth of urban industrial society.¹⁷ This left 'a vacuum which would be only gradually reoccupied, and then of necessity by novel or radically revamped forms of diversion'.¹⁸ These new diversions emerged from the relatively new and influential middle-classes who had benefited from the public school reforms of the 1860s. Some have argued that the sports that they developed were promoted (both in moral and commercial terms) in order to address the perceived 'problem' of traditional working-class leisure.¹⁹ And yet, the studies that followed Malcolmson have questioned whether a vacuum ever existed as many pre-modern/traditional forms of leisure survived beyond the 1850s. However, all suggest that bear baiting, folk football and the like were 'extinct' by the 1890s.²⁰ Hugh Cunningham has argued that continuities in rural and urban communities not only persisted, but even went on to influence the on-going changes.²¹ No matter how long many traditional forms of leisure survived, it is apparent that 'the social and cultural meaning of non-work activities [of the working-class] attracted much attention

¹⁶ For instance, see: Tony Collins and Wray Vamplew, *Mud, Sweat, and Beers : a Cultural History of Sport and Alcohol* (Oxford: Berg, 2002); Wray Vamplew, *Pay up and Play the Game : Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004); F. M. L Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society : a Social History of Victorian Britain* (London: Fontana, 2008); Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*.

¹⁷ Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850*, 170.

¹⁸ Ibid. and John Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes 1870-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 2.

¹⁹ Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 5, and Robert, D. Storch, "The Problem of Working-class Leisure: Some Roots of Middle Class Moral Reform in the Industrial North, 1825-1850" in Donajgrodzki, A.P., (ed.) *Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London, 1977), 138-162.

²⁰ Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution*, 22.

²¹ Ibid., 10.

from [their middle-class] contemporaries, [who were] anxious that these were taking place out of the sight and out of the control of employers or responsible authorities'.²² The increased levels of free-time available to the working-classes meant that many thought it necessary to increasingly police, control, or prohibit traditional forms of leisure, or develop new 'rationalised' forms of leisure, which would ensure the moral and physical wellbeing of the working-class.

At its heart was 'Rational Recreation', which encouraged sport as a 'civilising' force for good or the inculcation of desirable character traits, and the moral and physical health of those participating. The concept has been regarded as a tool for the middle-class subordination of the working-classes by what look today like rather pessimistic Marxist historians.²³ Alternatively, in-line with Antonio Gramsci's more flexible interpretation of Marxism, Peter Bailey was quick to highlight that all forms of leisure or recreational culture were contested. He, like Bourdieu, argued that 'leisure was one of the major frontiers of social change in the nineteenth-century, and like most frontiers it was disputed territory'.²⁴ Stephen Jones' research into working-class leisure during the inter-war period drew very similar conclusions, but he went further in suggesting that working-class leisure was, and is, 'a political thing'.²⁵ Whether sport was deemed political or not, all of these studies highlight the historiographical bias towards working-class leisure within predominantly northern urban environments throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries. As Mike Huggins has noted:

Leisure historiography has a provenance as an offshoot of labour studies, and the 'new' social history of the 1960s, fed by the boom in sociology, moved away from a focus on middle-class

²² Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, 246.

²³ See: Gareth Stedman Jones, *Working-class Culture and Working-class Politics in London, 1870-1900: Notes on the Remaking of a Working Class* (Sheffield); Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History, 1832-1982* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

²⁴ Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 5.

²⁵ Stephen G Jones, *Workers at Play: a Social and Economic History of Leisure, 1918-1939* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), 7; McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, 95-98 and 382.

'high' culture towards attempts to recreate the world of the Victorian working classes, exploring the world of leisure in an industrial society, the more ordered and 'rational' recreations and its more commercialized popular leisure.²⁶

There exists a fault-line of class interest between urban historians (discussed below) and historians of leisure and sport, with the former choosing to focus on the middle-classes, while the latter have prioritised the working-classes. Such has been the dominance of studies in working-class sport, that Huggins has argued that the middle-classes contribution to British sport is 'inexcusably undervalued and under-appreciated', and that 'scholarly overkill of one group has been coupled with neglect of another. The middle-classes have been made second-class citizens'.²⁷ Moreover, calls for 'history from below' and the politicised research interests of many historians led to the primacy of studies in the sport and leisure of the urban working-classes at the expense of the middle-classes who are associated with – seemingly homogenous – 'elitist' attitudes. What, therefore, may a study of middle-class cricket in Surrey tell us that these earlier studies of the predominantly northern urban working-classes have not? In particular, what will it reveal about the often asserted but rarely explained 'middle-class' attitudes towards competition and professionalism within and outside of urban environments?

Amateurism

The middle-classes developed their attitudes to early versions of 'reformed' sport within the public schools, and its developing 'public school ethos'. This gave birth to the cult of amateurism; a concept which has dictated where many historians of sport and leisure have directed their energies. The most notable study in this regard is J. A. Mangan's *Athleticism*

²⁶ Mike Huggins, "Second-class Citizens? English Middle-class Culture and Sport, 1850-1910: a Reconsideration," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 17, no. 1 (2000): 1–35.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

in the *Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, which investigates the advent of 'athleticism' as an educational ideology within the Public Schools.²⁸ Mangan sees the basis for the ideology of the games cult and the wider 'Public School Ethos' in the chivalric renaissance, primarily evoked in the books of Sir Walter Scott.²⁹ Social Darwinism, it is argued, also played a part but Scott's books and poems powerfully captured the imagination of students and masters alike.³⁰ The seeds for a 'code of behaviour for life – the reformation of the image of the gentleman as the idealised medieval knight, embodiment of the virtues of bravery, loyalty, courtesy towards women, children and social inferiors' were highly prized in Victorian society.³¹ These values, so it was argued by many headmasters of public schools, were best learned by playing team sports.³² It is important to note however, that although Mangan does not mention amateurism at any point in his highly influential study, his work on the ethos of 'athleticism' has been co-opted by other academics as a study of amateurism.

Richard Holt has pointed out how amateurism has been understood historically in two ways; firstly, it was viewed as the moral and educational expression of a Victorian 'manliness' and 'muscular Christianity', as advocated by Mangan, and secondly, as a means for the 'hegemonic' imposition of bourgeois values and social segregation, as suggested by John Hargreaves.³³ In *Sport, Power and Culture: A social and historical analysis of popular sports in Britain* (1986), Hargreaves argued that the repression and reform of popular sporting forms consolidated the 'bourgeois' model of sport unpacked by

²⁸ J. A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: the Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006).

²⁹ This is also discussed by Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

³⁰ Peter Parker, *The Old Lie: the Great War and the Public-school Ethos* (London: Constable, 1987).

³¹ Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, xxii.

³² Neil Wigglesworth, "A Discussion of Post-war Sport in Britain" in Robert Snape and Helen Pusard, "Recording Leisure Lives: Sports, Games and Pastimes in 20th Century Britain" (Leisure Studies Association, 2010).

³³ Richard Holt, "The Amateur Body and the Middle-class Man: Work, Health and Style in Victorian Britain," *Sport in History*, 26(3), 352-369.

Mangan, which then reshaped working class attitudes towards sport in its own image.³⁴ It is Mangan's ideas however, following the widespread academic rejection of Marxism, which appear to have won out, but it is important to note that neither author attempts to deconstruct amateurism, and both treat the concept, in many respects, as if it arrived fully formed. This thesis will argue that the amateurism embodied by the Victorian or Edwardian 'gentleman amateur' was influenced by chivalric notions, but that the evidence relating to its use sides with Hargreaves.

Whether the values the middle-classes developed in the public schools, and promoted via sport, imposed or engendered capitalist bourgeois values within the working-classes more broadly remains unclear. While Tony Collins has suggested that the working-classes were the most committed to such values in the development of professional rugby league,³⁵ Rob Light has argued that the middle-classes were not only unable to transplant 'rational' bourgeois values to cricket in Yorkshire, they were forced to adopt the traditional 'popular' values associated with pre-industrial leisure.³⁶ Duncan Stone, in agreeing with Light, has also suggested that there is evidence that the attitudes and cultural meanings attributed to cricket by the contemporary supporters of YCCC and SCCC appear to reflect the culture of whichever social group gained cultural control first.³⁷

Academics on both sides of this theoretical fence agree that amateurism was a product of the middle-classes who taught or attended the public schools, but while it appears to enjoy a universal understanding, amateurism, like class, remains a subject that defies a definitive definition or explanation. Indeed, amateurism was so integral to sport during this period that many researchers have struggled to separate the concept from sport itself. In

³⁴ Hargreaves, *Sport, Power and Culture*.

³⁵ Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, 198.

³⁶ Rob Light, *Cricket's Forgotten Past: A Social and Cultural History of the Game in the West Riding of Yorkshire 1820 – 1870*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, De Montfort University, June 2008.

³⁷ Duncan Stone, "Regional Cricket Identities: The Construction of Class Narratives and their Relationship to Contemporary Supporters" in Snape and Pusard, *Recording Leisure Lives*, 171-192.

academic terms, Lincoln Allison has argued that amateurism has been examined as if it was in-fact “‘really” something else, usually an expression of elitism or some other form of class prejudice’.³⁸ And yet so slippery is the concept, whether regarded as a philosophy, ideology or ‘ethos’, only one monograph devoted to the subject has been attempted. Sadly, Allison’s *Amateurism in Sport: An Analysis and Defence* is a highly personal, politicised and sentimental account of amateurism as an ethical and political theory. More useful to scholars has been the edited collection on the subject by Dilwyn Porter and Steven Wagg, and the disparate attempts to explain amateurism within wider contextualised sport history and sociology.³⁹

Eric Dunning and Ken Sheard's, *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players* (1979) represents an early attempt to understand amateurism. They argued that nineteenth-century amateurism could be interpreted as a distinctly modern ideological 'ethos' that emerged in the latter decades of the nineteenth-century to articulate and to promote the world view of the 'public school elites'.⁴⁰ Fellow sociologist Richard Gruneau, in reflecting upon their work in 2006, argued that sport's ability to 'build' character (in the image of the idealised British public schoolboy) was also seized upon by those who controlled a variety of sports' and individual clubs in Canada and the United States. Allied to new notions of respectability and temperance in North America by the 1870s, sports' clubs became a conduit for 'promoting a sense of membership and identity with the sponsoring community'.⁴¹ But the rise in league competition, and professionalism, outlined by Gruneau in the North American context, ultimately encouraged less representative (in terms of people from the

³⁸ Lincoln Allison, review of *Amateurism in British Sport: It Matters Not Who Won or Lost?*, (review no. 678) URL: <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/678> Accessed: 24 September, 2012.

³⁹ Porter, D. and Wagg, S., *Amateurism in British Sport: It Matters Not Who Won or Lost?* (London: Routledge, 2007). See also the special issue of *Contemporary British History*, 14 (2) (2000); the collection was republished as Adrian Smith and Dilwyn Porter, eds., *Amateurs and professionals in post-war British sport* (London, 2000).

⁴⁰ Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players : a Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1979).

⁴¹ Richard Gruneau, “‘Amateurism’ as a Sociological Problem: Some Reflections Inspired by Eric Dunning,” *Sport in Society* 9, no. 4 (2006): 559–582.

community) sides. Similar developments in British sport, despite the much later introduction of league formats in Britain,⁴² represent a significant departure from the traditional pre-industrial sports culture discussed in Chapter One, but Gruneau falls into the trap – despite an attempt to discuss the public schools’ role in the origins of amateurism – of broadly defining the concept by what it was not.⁴³

This was, as will be demonstrated throughout Chapters One and Three, a deliberate tactic frequently employed by the ‘gentlemen amateurs’ themselves. In a similar vein, Porter and Wagg suggest the ethos of amateurism was used to distinguish the professional sportsman from the amateur in broadly negative terms, and they note that the true origins and utility of amateurism in British sport, and English cricket specifically, remains unexplained.⁴⁴

Despite the narrow social origins of amateurism, sport controlled or played under amateur conditions was not always seen as a means for developing healthier minds and bodies, nor was any social segregation arising always pre-meditated or accidental.⁴⁵ In order to understand what it was, this study will test the historiography relating to amateurism and class, and question not only the social and cultural origins of ‘play for play’s sake’, loyalty, bravery, self-sacrifice and social responsibility discussed in Chapter One, but whether these values had any genuine connection to club cricket. It will also seek to redress the class imbalance within sports history, and in-part answer Huggins’ call for more research of the middle-classes.

⁴² Baseball leagues (frequently semi-professional) had existed in the United States from the 1860s, but the first wholly professional league of 1871 pre-dates a professionalised English Football League by 17 years. <http://usa.usembassy.de/sports-baseball.htm> Accessed, 25/9/2012.

⁴³ Gruneau, “‘Amateurism’ as a Sociological Problem.”

⁴⁴ Dilwyn Porter & Stephen Wagg (2006): “Introduction”, *Sport in History*, 26:3, 345-351.

⁴⁵ Lowerson suggests that it is ‘crudely deterministic to assume that any of the participants, with the possible exception of the entrepreneurs, actually sat down and articulated [how sport would represent specific classes or interests] before deciding which activity to pursue and when’, *Sport and the middle classes*, 3.

The middle-classes

Research on the development of the middle-classes, an almost exclusively urban phenomenon, has understandably centred upon the nineteenth-century; a time when urban development was at its peak. There are therefore very few detailed studies on the middle-classes who lived in small rural towns or rural districts generally.⁴⁶ The primary interest of the majority of these urban centric studies of the middle-classes has been political or religious affiliation or associational/voluntary culture.⁴⁷ Few venture as far as 1914 and, like much of the working-class dominated research on sport and leisure, these studies are of predominantly of 'northern' industrial towns and cities.⁴⁸ Major studies of the middle-classes in the twentieth-century are thus rare, and few choose to devote much – if any – specific attention to middle-class sport or leisure. Although middle-class 'culture' has been examined by some including Simon Gunn and Rachel Bell,⁴⁹ this culture, and the role of sport, has either been overlooked, or simply regarded as an extension of political, religious or associational life, rather than a possible reaction to wider social change.⁵⁰

Historians have thus generated a great deal of scholarly output on the middle-classes in terms of who they were (and are), what they did for a living, who they voted for or socialised with and where they lived. It is this final aspect, their relationship to the urban environment (as if 'the later-nineteenth-century countryside was "empty"'),⁵¹ that has

⁴⁶ Stephen Royle's "The development of small towns in Britain" is a rare example, but this article surveys the whole of Great Britain, thus overlooking specific detail. Martin Daunt (Ed.) *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain Volume III: 1840-1950*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 151-184.

⁴⁷ For instance: Doyle, B. "The Changing Functions of Urban Government: Councillors, Officials and Pressure Groups" in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain Volume III: 1840-1950*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 287-314; Derek Beattie, *Blackburn: The Development of a Lancashire Town*, (Halifax, 1992).

⁴⁸ R. J. Morris, "The middle class and British towns and cities of the Industrial Revolution, 1780-1870", in D. Fraser and A. Sutcliffe, eds., *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983); Richard Dennis *English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century: A Social Geography*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

⁴⁹ Simon Gunn and Rachel Bell, *Middle Classes: Their Rise and Sprawl* (London: Phoenix, 2003).

⁵⁰ Martin Gorsky, "Mutual aid and civil society: friendly societies in nineteenth-century Bristol", *Urban History*, 25 (1998), 306-314.

⁵¹ Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*, 49.

dominated almost every text.⁵² This emphasis is understandable considering the vast increase in the population who lived in urban areas, and the middle-classes' role in developing these towns and cities across the country.⁵³ However, the previously intimate relationship between the middle-class elites and the urban environment was broken in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century by the development of suburbs on the periphery of urban centres. Some urban historians have suggested that a form of middle-class 'dispersal' or a 'flight to the suburbs' occurred around the turn of the century, although Chapter One demonstrates that some contemporary observers thought the whole of the South-East of England was 'urban' by the turn of the twentieth-century.⁵⁴

More significant perhaps is the debate as to whether the middle-classes, who lived in towns or country, metropolis or province, were divided by geography and the economic, cultural, political and social dominance of London, or whether they formed, particularly during the inter-war period, a *national* middle-class? Although the middle-classes were a far from homogenous group, Richard Trainor has suggested that the middle-classes were 'characterized less by division than by unity' after 1918.⁵⁵ With regard to cricket during the inter-war period, Jack Williams has gone further in suggesting this unity manifested itself across all classes.⁵⁶ Regional variants did exist of course and these have been identified by W. D. Rubenstein, who argues that the predominantly industrial provincial (northern) elites were eclipsed and divided from the landowning, professional and commercial elites

⁵² Richard Trainor has acknowledged that the vast majority of this work has dealt with 'towns, cities and urban regions'. As well as the rural environment, sport and leisure is an area of middle-class culture that these studies overlook. "The Middle Class" in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, Volume 3, 673.

⁵³ R.J. Morris "The middle class and British towns and cities", 287.

⁵⁴ Simon Gunn, "Class, Identity and the Urban: The Middle Class in England, C. 1790-1950," *Urban History* 31, no. 1 (2004), 41; Halford John Mackinder, *Britain and the British Seas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907).

⁵⁵ Richard Trainor, "Neither Metropolitan Nor Provincial: The Interwar Middle Class" in David Nicholls and Alan Kidd, *The Making of the British Middle Class? : Studies of Regional and Cultural Diversity Since the Eighteenth Century* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 1998).

⁵⁶ Jack Williams, *Cricket and England : a Cultural and Social History of the Inter-war Years* (London: F. Cass, 1999).

who favoured London. He has placed these 'elites' in three broad groups:⁵⁷ 'the London-based commercial and financial elite, the landed elite, and the North of England/Celtic industrial elite, [who all] competed for wealth, status and power'.⁵⁸ Although Trainor's thesis relies upon the notion that the provinces developed a strong sense of their own middle-class identity and their role in society prior to 1914, Rubenstein suggests that the provincial middle-classes had achieved little or no influence by this time. Each theory has merit in the urban context, for the nature of urban (and suburban) development throughout the UK was far from uniform.

Who were the middle-classes?

There is no denying that the semi-rural counties surrounding London, like Surrey, have, in middle-class, regional and local terms, been largely ignored by historians of the late-nineteenth and twentieth-centuries. Thus, despite the broadly accepted theory that a southern metropolitan middle-class culture was 'nationalised', how this cultural identity was mediated within the South of England itself remains unknown. As will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Two, the county's proximity to London has ensured that Surrey, and the Home-Counties generally, are frequently regarded as a broadly homogenous cultural mass dominated by London since the mid-nineteenth-century. Such dominance has led to a lack of historical interest in Surrey, and a difficulty in applying models designed around data from very different regions, cities or towns, to the county and its inhabitants. Any study of Surrey therefore needs to examine this intimate relationship, and how it has grown closer over time in relation to transport and communication, economics,

⁵⁷ W.D. Rubenstein, "Wealth, Elites and the Class Structure of Modern Britain", *Past and Present*, 76 (1977), 99-126; Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*.

⁵⁸ W.D. Rubenstein, "Britain's Elites in the Interwar Period, 1918-1939" in Nicholls and Kidd, *The Making of the British Middle Class?*.

population growth, demographic and cultural change, as well as the physical encroachment of London upon Surrey's boundaries.

Consequently, the development and social control of cricket needs to be viewed in the context of these changes. Two methodological issues need to be addressed at this point: What do we mean by upper, middle or lower/working-class? And who, or what social group, is being referred to when discussing social or cricket 'elites', as opposed to the middle-classes more generally? Identities are, like the methods and scale in which they are researched, multifarious, complex and highly contested. Although this thesis will refer to 'classes', be they upper, middle or lower/working throughout, it does not attempt to contribute to such debates, for as Theodore Koditschek has highlighted, even the Victorian bourgeoisie are difficult to categorise as it was made up of a 'wide range of subgroups'.⁵⁹ In part, the simple allusion to these debates is due to the previous research by Stone. Unlike Light's research, where the cultural values and social control of cricket in Yorkshire were less defined, or remained based upon the pre-industrial leisure culture favoured by the working-classes,⁶⁰ Stone's work suggests that southern cricket relations were, in-line with Hargreaves' Marxist thesis, of an orthodox 'top-down' nature.⁶¹

When using 'class' as a sociological and descriptive term, this thesis uses the Registrar-General's Model of Social Class. This model was introduced in 1911 – approximately the time when the British class system had reached its zenith – and which remained in use until 1980; a time when a simple tri-partite understanding of class was regarded as outdated. Such a simplistic understanding was questionable before it was even introduced however, for the Hascombe Parish Nursing Association (near Godalming in Surrey) set its

⁵⁹ Theodore Koditschek, *Class Formation and Urban Industrial Society: Bradford, 1750-1850*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 2. Also see: Simon Gunn, 'Class, identity and the urban' and Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880*, (London: Psychology Press, 2002).

⁶⁰ Light, *Cricket's Forgotten Past*.

⁶¹ Duncan Stone, "Cricket's Regional Identities: The Development of Cricket and Identity in Yorkshire and Surrey," *Sport in Society* 11, no. 5 (2008): 501–516.

subscription rates according to four 'classes' in 1895: '1. Labourer; 2. Artisans and Gentlemen's Servants; 3. Farmers, Schoolmasters, and Bailiffs; 4. Gentry'.⁶² The rigid class distinctions, as employed by many urban historians of the North, are thus largely irrelevant to a more amorphous South, and Surrey in particular – even by 1895. The purpose of such references therefore is to identify a broadly understood group within society – the middle-class – and their relationship to cricket during the period covered by this study.

Class: wealth, values and culture

The central 'middle-class' agents' who established and controlled many of the elite clubs' and the CCC, represent one of Koditschek's 'subgroups', albeit one of relatively high status. As will be demonstrated in Chapter Four, these men appear to have typically been of a very narrow social and educational background and it is necessary to distinguish them as privileged and influential middle-class elites, separate from the middle-classes as a whole. And yet the role of these middle-class 'elites' – 'gentlemen amateurs' (a social construct discussed in greater detail in Chapter One) – in controlling and managing cricket is taken not only for granted, but rarely examined with any rigour or even contested. Recently, a number of sport historians and sociologists, such as Ben Carrington and Ian McDonald, have reassessed Marxist inspired scholarship and the primacy of financial wealth in assessing social actors' relationship to sport and leisure.⁶³ The private wealth, or other sources of income, which have helped historians to narrow definitions of the middle-classes, are not sufficient as a solitary indicator in explaining broader social phenomena however, because of the inherent ambiguities within 'classes'. This issue is addressed by

⁶² *The Hascombe Almanac, 1895*. Surrey Archaeological Society, Ref: 170/18/1.

⁶³ Ben Carrington and Ian McDonald, *Marxism, Cultural Studies and Sport* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009).

Rubenstein who has argued that many of the 'social elites' who attended the public schools, and formed the 'establishment', were not from affluent families. The social elites were not a homogenous 'upper-class' group as many social scientists and historians have suggested.⁶⁴

Unlike Diana Coole, who argues that the 'stubborn and systematic economic division' remains central to class construction, this thesis proposes – with regard to the cricket elites and their values under discussion – that financial considerations come second to traditional notions of who was, or was not, a 'gentleman' and the cultural values of 'athleticism' and 'amateurism' imparted by the public schools (great and small) that these 'elites' attended.⁶⁵ Furthermore, both of these factors have influenced the social and cultural specificity of cricket histories discussed below. Regardless of the extent or origin of familial wealth cited by Coole, and dismissed by Rubenstein, it will be proposed in Chapter One that it was the uniformed education and cultural values associated with athleticism/amateurism and gentlemanly 'fair play' that are most important. These values were internalised by scholars, and they frequently trumped any political affiliations which may have prompted the rejection of what were often elitist and socially divisive amateur values.

In this concern, those who were more left leaning, such as George Orwell and C. L. R. James, would not have approved of the privilege, exclusivity and social prejudice that permeated cricket, but they would have recognised, and approved, of the cultural rationale that such exclusivity was based upon.⁶⁶ It is, therefore, relevant that the majority of the men who established the CCC, ran the MCC, and wrote about the game from a particular

⁶⁴ W. D Rubenstein, "Education and the Social Origins of British Élites 1880-1970," *Past & Present* no. 112 (1986): 163–207.

⁶⁵ Diana Coole, 'Is class a difference that makes a difference?', cited in Simon Gunn, 'Class, identity and the urban: the middle class in England, c. 1790-1950', *Urban History*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2004), 30.

⁶⁶ James, in recognising the inherent contradiction at the heart of his political position and his love of the establishment dominated world of first-class cricket, stated that the northern leagues represented the purer, meritocratic, form of the game.

social and cultural viewpoint, had all attended elite public schools and very often an Oxbridge university. As many of these men held positions of high social, political or legal status, this group will be frequently referred to as 'elites', due to their power and influence within cricket nationally, or metropolitan London and Surrey, rather than in wider society. These cricket elites, as has been previously suggested, not only managed to maintain control over the vast majority of cricket and its presentation in the South, they were able to influence the game's meaning at regional and national levels.⁶⁷ Chapter One thus explains how the cultural values associated with amateurism and gentlemanly play emerged within the public schools, whereas Chapters' Three and Four demonstrate how they were applied to club cricket by the 'elites' who ran the CCC.

Sport and the middle-classes

Only one monograph has attempted to counter the weight of work on the working-classes and sport; John Lowerson's *Sport and the English middle classes, 1870-1914* (1993). This book interweaves the non-passive recreation, technology and entrepreneurship, voluntarism and increased social involvement of the middle-classes in developing the 'Great Sports Craze' that marked the period. Significantly, he notes that it is important for the researcher not to assume that such a craze was linked to 'a maturing industrial society and its cities alone', for many smaller population centres had specific sports clubs and facilities before the larger towns and cities. Indeed, he cites the work of the geographer

⁶⁷ Rowland Bowen, *Cricket: a History of Its Growth and Development Throughout the World*; (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1970); Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*; Duncan Stone, "It's All Friendly down There: The Club Cricket Conference, Amateurism and the Cultural Meaning of Cricket in the South of England," *Sport in Society* 15, no. 2 (2012): 194–208; Stone, "Cricket's Regional Identities" (2008 and 2010).

John Bale who has shown that 'regional variations in growth must modify considerably any crude attempt at linking sports with simple class/occupational urban patterns'.⁶⁸

Despite such caution, Lowerson finds that the archive leads him to the 'key role ... certain parts of the middle classes' played in the spread of sport in England. The 'social elites' who shared professional, commercial or cultural lifestyles appear 'in contemporary literature or in club records ... too frequently to be lumped into an amorphous catch-all of class'. With regard to this thesis, Alun Howkins demonstrates how these new elites, who balanced professional work in London with a 'semi-gentry life' in the country, were 'strongest in the Home Counties'.⁶⁹ These professional groups (of whom 44.5 per cent lived or worked in London or its surrounding counties), who had expanded a great deal more between 1891 and 1911 compared to the male population nationally, were able, according to Lowerson, to wield social power locally; 'particularly where there were large groups of commuters'.⁷⁰ While the social elites may have represented the generals, these, often lower to middling middle-class, 'commuters', or community members, were the foot soldiers for the growth and spread of sport. Like Trainor, Lowerson also argues that the 'solid middle class' was largely complete by 1911, with the rapid growth and assimilation of tradesmen, shopkeepers and dealers – although he does note that their inclusion also contributed towards the class' ambiguity.⁷¹ As proposed by Ross McKibbin, and discussed in Chapter Four, this assimilation and reputed class unity was far from complete in Surrey, as 'class' became the leading point of social and political conflict during the inter-war period.⁷² Sport, via selective club membership, high subscription rates, exclusive fixture lists, and amateur-professional distinctions, was as often a means for intra-class

⁶⁸ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 7.

⁶⁹ Cited in Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 7-8.

⁷⁰ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 10.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁷² McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*.

differentiation, as much as it was a site for inter-class conflict.⁷³ The level that these clashes occurred (if at all) was dependent upon the individual sport, regional or even local differences in social structure and the extent to which a sport's governing body was able to resist lower-class influence.

Lowerson suggests that 'the pan-class deferential nature of much village cricket survived unabated', but, as demonstrated in Chapter Three, deference was not a feature of club cricket in Surrey in the years prior to the First World War. Conversely, as Chapter One highlights, cricket 'also offered, through elite associative groups like I Zingari (founded 1845), an avenue to exclusive play overlapping with the school and university structures'.⁷⁴ The ethos of highly exclusive amateur clubs such as I Zingari and the MCC, which were populated by the most elite of the elites, informed the literary discourse of cricket throughout the cricket media, establishment and popular press, and other branches of this discourse alike.⁷⁵ But as Lowerson concludes, all sport, a good deal of adulatory journalism and authorship, and the middle-class male's consciousness had become ingrained with the particular sporting values associated with the public schools by 1918. This is especially evident in much of the historiography of cricket.

Cricket's Historiography

As suggested by the Bowral quote and alluded to by Holt, despite the 'nationalised' rhetoric emanating from Lord's, the cricket regions of the North and the South of England

⁷³ Norman Baker has noted that Mike Huggins', *Flat Racing and British Society: A Social and Economic History*, (London, 2000) and Tony Collins', *Rugby's Great Split*, highlight 'distinct differences of interest and philosophy within the middle class'. Baker, "Whose hegemony?", 3-4. Also see: Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 21.

⁷⁴ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes*, 4.

⁷⁵ I Zingari became the elite club within the elite MCC. It eschewed any professional help and had no ground, encouraging invitations to country houses who may afford 'suitable hospitality and entertainment'. Birley, *A Social History*, 82-83, and 193.

have been regarded, socially, culturally, and historically, in diametrically opposite and stereotyped terms. Professionalism and competition in cricket have a very long history, and each have specific regional connotations within England. Although northern and southern rivalries pre-existed the formation of the English County Championship (ECC) in 1890, the years following the end of the First World War, saw an increasing polarisation of the cricketing regions regarding the attitudes and forms of the game within and outside of the ECC.⁷⁶ Professionalism was closely associated with industrialisation and increasing levels of urbanisation, which affected the North of England in particular. Because of the financial restrictions placed upon poorer athletes by amateurism, professionalism in cricket, until the abolition of the amateur/professional distinction in 1962, frequently implied a (northern) working-class presence. As Russell and Stone have discussed, the media either played down the presence of professionals in southern teams, or emphasised social differences between the professionals and their amateur counterparts by accentuating broadly invented aesthetic differences in their reputed styles of play.⁷⁷

The historical basis of these literary associations, although influenced by a multitude of factors, may be explained, in part, by the work of Rick Sissons. Sissons has revealed that Yorkshire (and Nottinghamshire) produced large numbers of professional cricketers. Whereas the thirty-six professionals listed in *Fred Lillywhite's Guide* of 1846 contained no Yorkshire professionals, only eight years later Yorkshire had produced the largest proportion listed in the guide of 1854 (27 out of 110).⁷⁸ Such an association, once established, was to prove highly durable, for almost a century later Harry Altham and E. W. Swanton thought industrial life in the North was more conducive to 'professional cricket

⁷⁶ North versus South matches had been played from 1836, and the relatively new county clubs were playing each other from the 1873 season, but these fixtures were random and infrequent, with some counties never meeting at all. The development of the ECC is discussed in more depth in Chapter One.

⁷⁷ Stone, "Regional Cricket Identities" (2010); Dave Russell, "Sport and Identity: The Case of Yorkshire County Cricket Club, 1890-1939," *Twentieth Century British History* 7, no. 2 (1996): 206–230.

⁷⁸ Ric Sissons, *The Players: a Social History of the Professional Cricketer* (London: Kingswood, 1988), 9-10.

than that of the agricultural South'.⁷⁹ Amateurism, or to play as an amateur, was therefore associated with the affluent upper and middle-classes, who developed it and who could afford to play without payment. But the extension of this analogy to all those who played in the South was as dubious as the assumption that all northern cricketers were fiercely competitive professionals. In line with the long-held stereotype, Yorkshire, Lancashire and Nottinghamshire sides were very often entirely professional, although these clubs would later introduce amateur captains, but it is significant that Surrey sides were also often entirely professional in the early years of the ECC.⁸⁰ Yet, as Russell has demonstrated, many of the YCCC's southern opponents (especially Middlesex, Essex and Hampshire) were dominated by amateur players after the establishment of the ECC in 1890.⁸¹

Thus, within the first-class game, notions of professionalism and amateurism, and the class associations that went with them, were ingrained stereotypes long before the end of the nineteenth-century. The increasing formalisation of on and off-field relationships between the two factions after 1870 reflected a middle-class reaction to social changes in wider society. The changing perceptions and meaning attached to the annual Gentlemen versus Players match, separate changing rooms, entrances to the ground and even hotel and travel arrangements, was the English class-system writ large. Average 'real wages' had risen by 80% between 1850-52 and 1900-02, while an increase in leisure time meant social groups, previously unable to afford the time or money, could enjoy watching ECC matches or playing cricket in similarly structured competitions from the late 1880s.⁸² Like

⁷⁹ This early association, which was based upon the nature of 'industrial' work, such as the hand-eye coordination of hand loom weavers, prevalent at famous Yorkshire 'nurseries' such as Lascales Hall was mistaken, as mechanisation would have reduced or killed-off such transferable skill by the 1880s. H. S Altham and E. W Swanton, *A History of Cricket* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1947), 115.

⁸⁰ Christopher Brookes, *English Cricket: the Game and Its Players Through the Ages* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978), 111.

⁸¹ Dave Russell, "Amateurs, Professionals and the Construction of Social Identity," *The Sports Historian* 16, no. 1 (1996): 64–80.

⁸² George H. Wood, "Real Wages and the Standard of Comfort since 1850", *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. 72, No. 1 (Mar., 1909), pp. 99. Such high figures have been questioned, but there appears to be a consensus that real wages, particularly for the working-classes rose during the period.

the urban capitalist society that had grown due to standardisation, commercialisation and competition in industry and commerce, new forms of sporting competition, replicated this commercial, mass consumer culture. This, in time, spawned a desire for clear meritocratic and unambiguous victories, and an improvement in standards of play.⁸³ Although 'fair play' took precedence, competitive values were broadly shared at a national level by those who controlled first-class cricket. As the split in rugby demonstrates, it was not competition but professionalism that proved to be the most significant flash point.

However, professionalism, despite a great deal of anti-professional rhetoric nationally, was not the primary point of conflict in southern club cricket after 1918. As will be examined in more detail in Chapter Three, the men who formed the CCC in 1916 were against competitive cricket and established a constitution that forbade any member club from entering a league or cup competition. Professionals, who were also employed as groundsmen, were frequently seen in club cricket, but following the hiatus caused by the First World War, league competitions virtually disappeared from southern cricket fields and newspapers. It is therefore no accident that amateur cricket in the South is known as 'club' and the predominantly amateur (semi-professional) cricket of the North as 'League'. Each title reflects not only the style of cricket practiced, and the ideological basis of each, but also the established social histories of cricket in each region. How or why these distinctive ideologies and cultural practices developed has remained unquestioned within the cricket historiography, and despite a good deal of empirical research by professional historians into the northern version of the game, our understanding of the game's development in the South remains based upon assumption.⁸⁴ We thus know a good deal more about where

⁸³ This final point may relate to Marxist notions of 'better sport' as a reflection of capitalistic production but, as Rob Light has argued, it is more flexible to regard competitions as a simple desire to 'know who's best' in local, national and international terms.

⁸⁴ Jeffrey Hill, "Firstclass Cricket and the Leagues: Some Notes on the Development of English Cricket, 1900-1940," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 4, no. 1 (1987): 68–81; Russell, "Sport and Identity"; Light, "Ten Drunks and a Parson?"

Sutcliffe and his image, described by Holt, came from, while we remain in the dark about the culture which created and sustained the image attributed to Hobbs, and the southern amateur. This thesis will be a case study of Hobbs' Surrey. However, before addressing the work of academic historians into league and cup cricket, the broader orthodox history requires assessment.

Inherent in the broader cricket histories has been the systematic exclusion of league cricket. The book that Rowland Bowen regards as 'easily the best',⁸⁵ *A History of Cricket* by H. S. Altham, despite two chapters on amateur cricket, only ever alludes to league cricket: a style of cricket which, even in the North, was essentially amateur. Subsequent authors, such as Sir Derek Birley, have revealed how cricket's 'bible', *Wisden*, which regarded the Lancashire and Yorkshire leagues as a 'menace', did not publish more than the most cursory of details regarding the northern leagues.⁸⁶ Outside of the regional media of the North where league cricket dominated, leagues were, when mentioned at all, portrayed in deeply negative terms. As the league cricket historian Roy Genders put it in 1952: 'If all the words written against the [league] system were put end to end they would stretch from Wigan Pier to Lord's'.⁸⁷ The Midland and northern leagues, and their 'vulgar competitive manner',⁸⁸ were thus portrayed, as Altham and Swanton had done previously, as an exclusively 'northern' phenomenon with close links to the industrial working-classes.⁸⁹ The 'sheer unredeemed snobbery' of the southern cricket elites towards such competitive, commercialised and professionalised undertakings,⁹⁰ has resulted, as far as the broader historiography suggests, in a historical assumption that leagues in the South

⁸⁵ Bowen, *Cricket*, 13.

⁸⁶ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 214.

⁸⁷ Roy Genders, *League Cricket in England*. (Laurie, 1952), 36.

⁸⁸ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 151.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 151.

simply did not exist.⁹¹ Thus in 1970 the league cricket historian John Kay, following the Surrey Clubs' Championship (SCC) inaugural season in 1968, stated, somewhat inaccurately, that Raman Subba Row's 'bold experiment' was the 'beginning of league cricket in territory previously totally opposed to such a move'.⁹² Moreover Birley, in his relatively recent (1998) award winning book, *A Social History of English Cricket*, reveals the latent, and persistent, snobbery of a substantial number of cricket historians. In acknowledging the importance of Subba Row's league, which he regarded as, 'The most significant social change ... of the South to the vulgar practice of the North', he then dedicates just 144 words to the subject.⁹³ As a result of these 'cherry-picked' social histories and socially-biased reporting, regionalised and class-based narratives for the sport have emerged, and these have had important repercussions regarding the relative regional identities of the North and the South.⁹⁴

The amateurs

Thus, for all that has been written about cricket, only a few genuine attempts have been made to either record or understand the social and historical significance of the 'league' or 'club' cricket that operated below the first-class levels of the game, and the geographical specificity of each. The orthodox national narrative has remained all that mattered, and as Jeff Hill has recognised:

The enduring pre-eminence of the first-class game rested to a large degree upon the willingness of the cricket playing and watching public to accept as 'traditional' – even 'natural' – a set of

⁹¹ Almost every league in the Midlands and the North was predominantly amateur, with the Lancashire League strictly enforcing a maximum of one professional per-side from 1900.

⁹² John Kay, *Cricket in the Leagues*, (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1970), 178.

⁹³ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 307.

⁹⁴ Stone, "Regional Cricket identities" (2010).

conventions about the organization of the game ... The chief process for articulating this particular ideology of cricket was the game's extensive literature.⁹⁵

Indeed there has been an undeniable prejudice against league cricket within the metropolitan establishment, cricket writers and cricket historians, who have followed this 'dominant amateur perspective'.⁹⁶ Why this anti-league attitude prevailed is revealed to some extent in Peter Wynne-Thomas' *Cricket's Historians*.⁹⁷ Wynne-Thomas traces the historical origins and development of cricket's histories via the men who wrote them (The Appendix shows the similar educational background of these authors). In doing so he notes, despite the immense amount written about cricket's history, that there are 'relatively few' histories that attempt to cover the game from its origins to its modern condition.⁹⁸ It is important to note that Wynne-Thomas appears confused as to what the job of a historian actually is. In his own words:

The compilation of "cricket records" has been a hobby of many ever since detailed cricket scores began to be published and these "records" necessarily involve historical research. I have therefore written two books in one, in that I have followed the history of "cricket records" in parallel with the general history of the game's development.⁹⁹

However, in ignoring all of the recent academic research on cricket discussed below, and dismissing the rare attempts to locate cricket in a wider social context, the author appears to display a limited understanding of the skills required of a professional historian. In a startling demonstration of this, the author states that: 'cricket simply mirrors the age in which it is played'.¹⁰⁰

In essence, Wynne-Thomas has written a book about cricket's antiquarians, and in his choice of 'historians' Wynne-Thomas has highlighted one reason why those who controlled

⁹⁵ Jeff Hill, "'First Class' Cricket and the Leagues", 69.

⁹⁶ Light, "Ten Drunks and a Parson?", 61.

⁹⁷ Peter Wynne-Thomas and Association of Cricket Statisticians (ACS), *Cricket's Historians* (Cardiff: Association of Cricket Statisticians, 2011).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 238.

the game were able to do so on their own terms and for so long.¹⁰¹ By the nineteenth-century's end, the authors of these histories, in the words of Charles Box – a man who may be regarded as cricket's first professional historian (in approach at least) – had established a narrative for the game based upon 'confusing a very few historical facts with a growing volume of fable'.¹⁰² Even H.S. Altham's *A History of Cricket* (1926) simply regurgitated the established 'facts' and followed the tradition of historical text-books of the time by concentrating exclusively on the 'kings and queens' of the game.¹⁰³ Anyone who dared to challenge this orthodoxy, or the social elites or institutions running the sport, were (and remain – even in death) to be discredited, and Wynne-Thomas demonstrates personal animosity towards particular researchers. The 'true' history of cricket is therefore rooted in the game's well versed narrative, and its 'authentic' proponents are those selected by Wynne-Thomas who already held significant positions within the game (See Appendix).

It is important to note that one author included by Wynne-Thomas was neither a statistician nor a historian; Neville Cardus, a journalist who frequently provided 'his *impressions* of play and even *imagined* conversations between players',¹⁰⁴ was, according to Hill, 'one of cricket's leading ideologists, perpetuating ideas about amateur leadership and professional subservience'.¹⁰⁵ As ably demonstrated by Anthony Bateman, Cardus' literary version of the period between 1890 and 1914 emphasises the aesthetics of technique and style,¹⁰⁶ and his impressionistic and biased reporting could not be further from the rigorous historical research that Wynne-Thomas demands. And yet Wynne-

¹⁰¹ Wynne-Thomas even dismisses *The Wisden Cricketer* magazine's staff and contributors for their 'paucity of historical knowledge' for voting Derek Birley's controversial *The Willow Wand* the best cricket book of all-time in 2010. Ibid., 238.

¹⁰² Ibid., 73.

¹⁰³ Bowen, *Cricket*, 13.

¹⁰⁴ Wynne-Thomas, *Cricket's Historians*, 113. Italics added.

¹⁰⁵ Jeffrey Hill, "Firstclass Cricket and the Leagues", 70.

¹⁰⁶ Anthony Bateman, *Cricket, Literature and Culture*.

Thomas acknowledges that Cardus is almost wholly 'responsible for one historical notion, that the Edwardian era was the "Golden Age of Cricket"'.¹⁰⁷

Unlike Cardus' aesthetic assessment of the period, Bowen plays down any notions of 'amateur flair' and offers a more pragmatic assessment based upon the initial establishment of the ECC and the leagues in the urbanised Midlands (the Birmingham League was first in 1888) and the North of England. It was the introduction of a formalised calendar of competition at all levels of cricket that led to a vast improvement of standards and technique. This is an opinion shared with Altham and Swanton (1948), who also made what are now mythologised associations between professionalism, competitiveness and success, and the industrialised communities that spawned them. Indeed, for them, the South, which remained 'agricultural', was criticised for being 'residential and parasitic' compared to the manufacturing cities of the Midlands and the North, which 'became increasingly powerful magnets to vigorous youth'.¹⁰⁸ Unfortunately, these associations were simple assumptions that one state of affairs produced the other, and no further research or context is added. In the words of Raphael Samuel; 'explanation masquerades as the simple reproduction of fact'.¹⁰⁹

Wynne-Thomas, and those within the cricket establishment who subscribe to the game's orthodox history, represent the 'gatekeepers' of cricket history's fiefdom. Despite the contextual limitations of their work, Bowen and Birley sought to question the established 'facts' and infiltrate the close-knit community that had ensured the survival of a deeply conservative and anachronistic historiography. A historiography which always favoured the MCC, but turned a blind-eye towards that institution's frequently shambolic handling of the sport, numerous controversies, and most relevantly regarding this thesis, the league

¹⁰⁷ Wynne-Thomas, *Cricket's Historians*, 114.

¹⁰⁸ Altham and Swanton, *A History of Cricket*, 96.

¹⁰⁹ Raphael Samuel, "What is Social History?". <http://www.historytoday.com/raphael-samuel/what-social-history> Accessed, 8/9/2012.

cricket played by less-esteemed people. Although the history of the sport is easily accessible to the general public, its scope and underlying conclusions – as demonstrated by John Major’s relatively recent work – remain broadly the same today as they were a century ago.¹¹⁰ The uniformity of this orthodox version of cricket history has misled a number of historians who have not interrogated the game’s image sufficiently. More recently, a number of professional historians have made significant and revealing inroads into territory, wilfully ignored previously, although much of this work is only available in specialist academic publications.

The professionals

Since the 1990s sport historians within the academy have been researching many previously ignored aspects of cricket, or they have made more rigorous attempts to place the game in its wider social context. Regrettably, the cost of these academic books and access to journals, allied to the increasing cult of the biography, has denied this work a no doubt engaged and curious wider audience. Christopher Brookes’ *English Cricket: The Game and Its Players Through the Ages* (1978) represents an early foray into an alternative approach to cricket history. However, it was Keith Sandiford’s *Cricket and the Victorians* (1994), following Tony Mason, Wray Vamplew and James Walvin’s empiricist histories of other sports,¹¹¹ which first demonstrated how cricket’s history provided an alternative method in explaining Victorian society.¹¹² A number of studies have now

¹¹⁰ John Roy Major, *More Than a Game: The Story of Cricket’s Early Years* (London: Harper Press, 2007).

¹¹¹ Tony Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980); Wray Vamplew, *The Turf: a Social and Economic History of Horse Racing* (London: Allen Lane, 1976); James Walvin, *Leisure and Society, 1830-1950* (London: Longman, 1978).

¹¹² Keith A. P Sandiford, *Cricket and the Victorians* (Aldershot: Ashgate Pub. Co., 1994).

examined the issues of colonialism and Empire,¹¹³ amateurs and professionals,¹¹⁴ regionalism,¹¹⁵ race and ethnicity,¹¹⁶ cricket and the media,¹¹⁷ and cricket literature,¹¹⁸ and there have been a significant number of special editions of academic journals devoted to cricket.¹¹⁹ The vast majority of these studies lack any specific relevance to the study at hand, for if not set in elite international or national contexts, almost all of the remaining works' are centred upon, or rely on evidence gleaned from, the North of England.

Sandiford was well aware of the paucity of research on league cricket,¹²⁰ which up to that point consisted of Roy Genders' *League Cricket in England* (1953), John Kay's *Cricket and the Leagues* (1970), and Jeff Hill's 'First-class' cricket and the leagues: some notes on the development of English cricket, 1900–40' (1987), but the scope of his research left little room for a detailed analysis of cricket leagues.¹²¹ Consequently, Sandiford does little to counter the prejudiced opinion of the Victorian and Edwardian elites that leagues were exclusively 'northern', 'professional' and that league clubs 'aimed at making a profit'.¹²² As suggested by Genders and Kay, league cricket clubs' were not operated for profit, as the cricket establishment and Sandiford suggest, but for what Wray Vamplew calls 'utility

¹¹³ Brian Stoddart, "Cricket, Social Formation and Cultural Continuity in Barbados: A Preliminary Ethnohistory", *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Winter, 1987); Hillary Beckles (ed), *Liberation Cricket: West Indies Cricket Culture*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

¹¹⁴ Keith A. P. Sandiford, "Amateurs and Professionals in Victorian County Cricket", *Albion*, Vol. 15, No. 1, Spring, 1983; Robert Light, "Ten Drunks and a Parson?"; Lincoln Allison, 'Batsman and Bowler: The Key Relation of Victorian England', *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Summer, 1980).

¹¹⁵ Russell, "Sport and Identity"; Stone, "Cricket's Regional Identities" (2008 and 2010).

¹¹⁶ Fletcher T, "'Who Do 'They' Cheer for?' Cricket, Diaspora, Hybridity and Divided Loyalties Amongst British Asians," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 47, no. 5 (2012): 612–631; Stephen Wagg, "To Be an Englishman: Nation, Ethnicity and English Cricket in the Global Age," *Sport in Society* 10, no. 1 (2007): 11–32; Jack Williams, *Cricket and Race* (Oxford: Berg, 2001).

¹¹⁷ Jack Williams, *Cricket and Broadcasting* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011); Nick Anstead and Ben O'Loughlin, "Twenty20 as Media Event," *Sport in Society* 14, no. 10 (2011): 1340–1357.

¹¹⁸ Anthony Bateman, "More Mighty Than the Bat, the Pen: Culture, Hegemony and the Literaturisation of Cricket," *Sport in History* 23, no. 1 (2003): 27–44; Eric Midwinter, *Quill on Willow: Cricket in Literature* (Chichester: Aeneas, 2001).

¹¹⁹ One of the most recent of these being: Duncan Stone and Peter Davies (eds), "New Perspectives on the Social History of Cricket," *Sport in Society*. Vol. 15 No. 2, March 2012.

¹²⁰ Sandiford, *Cricket and the Victorians*, 7.

¹²¹ Genders, *League Cricket in England*.; Kay, *Cricket in the Leagues*.; Hill, "Firstclass Cricket and the Leagues."

¹²² Sandiford, *Cricket and the Victorians*, 55–56.

maximisation'; i.e. the pursuit of victories rather than profits.¹²³ The one study that comes closest to examining the issues at hand is Jack Williams' *Cricket and England: A Cultural and Social History of the Inter-war Years* (1999). Williams leaves few topics untouched, and in discussing the image, control and commercialisation of the game along with its relationship to gender, Christianity, class and sportsmanship, he often refers to league cricket and the role of the CCC. But as much of Williams' evidence is based upon his previous work on Bolton, Lancashire and the North of England, the club cricket in Surrey and the other Home Counties remain unexplored in any detail.¹²⁴

The previously mentioned work by Genders and Kay, although examining league cricket in some detail, also overlook the South, having assumed the absence of the league format. Hill's research, and the work of others such as Dave Russell and Rob Light, should be recognised as important attempts to counter the game's hegemonic narrative and offer new historical analysis and context. Their analysis of northern regional identities and the development of a historical understanding of how and why an alternative conception of cricket (leagues) developed counters the southern bias within the orthodox 'national' cricket narrative. Although an important direction with regard to the national discourse, this work does re-enforce the northern preference within the professional historiography of sport, and league cricket in particular. Thus, all serious research on league cricket in England has, like sport history more broadly, a distinctly northern 'urban working-class' bias.¹²⁵ To compound this regionally specific view these studies tend to emphasise stereotypical traits such as northern egalitarianism and competitiveness, which are often

¹²³ Wray Vamplew, "The Economics of a Sports Industry: Scottish Gate-Money Football, 1890-1914," *Economic History Rev The Economic History Review* 35, no. 4 (1982): 549–567.

¹²⁴ Jack Williams, "The Economics of League Cricket: Lancashire League Clubs and Their Finances since the First World War", *British Society of Sports History Bulletin*, 9 (1990); "Cricket and Christianity in Lancashire, 1900-1939", *Local Historian*, 25, 2, (May 1995) and "Churches, Sport and Identities in the North, 1900-1939" in Jeff Hill and Jack Williams, *Sport and Identity in the North of England* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996).

¹²⁵ Russell, "Sport and Identity."; Robert Light, *Cricket's Forgotten Past*.

juxtaposed against an unempirical suggestion of socially selective southern gentility. Thus, although leagues and other semi-professional forms of cricket have been examined, club cricket in the South remains overlooked, and an empirical assessment of the sport's genuine character remains unknown. Indeed, overall the game played by ordinary 'grassroots' cricketers' in Surrey, and the social relations that shaped these games, remains a mystery – especially for the period after 1939. It is thus the aim of this thesis to rescue this form of cricket and those who controlled or played it from the historical blind spot in which they currently find themselves. By moving what was (for some) competitive club cricket in Surrey into view it will be possible to either challenge, or explain, the non-competitive stereotypes that have influenced the image of the game in Surrey and a significant element of the region's character for almost a century.

Structure of the thesis

In order to reconcile the historical relevance and position of club cricket in Surrey, this thesis aims to identify the cultural origins of amateurism, and which social groups promoted or benefited from its employment. Most importantly, it shall demonstrate how this ideological 'ethos' related to competition between 1870 and 1970, who promoted or rejected leagues, and why the Conference sought to outlaw league cricket after the First World War. Chapter One thus traces the development of the new middle-class sporting culture in the public schools, which usurped the popular pre-industrial culture and came to dominate British sport. The role of the public schools is also examined in terms of their role in the origin and development of reformed sport, and the 'gentlemen amateurs' vital to the increasingly centralised administration of sport. The more cohesive administration of sport

was but one element of the 'sportisation' process,¹²⁶ which led to increasing levels of commercialism, structured competitions (leagues), and the rise in status of the professional sportsman. The chapter concludes with the amateur response to such developments, which resulted in a hardening attitude towards competitive sport.

Chapter Two offers a sketch of Surrey in terms of its topographical and demographic evolution. This provides a timeline of how the county, and the social and cultural context in which cricket operated, changed between 1870 and 1914, with particular attention paid to the new middle-classes and increasing metropolitan influence. It thus questions the assumed pace of 'suburbanisation', and whether cricket in Surrey really had succumbed to the increasing metropolitan influence and middle-class values prior to the First World War. Whether cricket in Surrey retained a pre-industrial 'rural' culture and social relationships or not, being indicative of this significant change.

Chapter Three re-joins with the closing paragraphs of Chapter One, and develops the anti-professional attitudes that were emerging among some commentators at the turn of the century. It will demonstrate that a metropolitan, and distinctly middle-class, cricket organisation, the CCCF, was airing very strong views that not only decried professionalism, but the formalised competition (the ECC) that gave professional cricketers increasing status and prominence. However, it was to be the Fund's successor, the CCC, which was to constitutionalise these concerns and insist that club cricket in London, and the surrounding counties, be played in a non-competitive, 'friendly', format up to the outbreak of the Second World War.

So successful was the CCC in the 'criminalisation' of leagues between the wars that no serious challenge to its stance against competitions was made until after the Second

¹²⁶ Here the 'sportisation' process refers not to that developed by Norbert Elias in relation to the 'civilising process', but one more closely associated with industrialisation. I.e. That sport necessarily went through the same stages as industries (organisation, standardisation and commercialisation) regarding their expansion and global spread.

World War. Chapter Four is a case study of three attempts to establish 'senior' leagues in the Home Counties of Surrey, Sussex and Essex in 1949, following the heavy Ashes defeat to Don Bradman's 'Invincibles' in 1948. Much of the media was keen to discover what was wrong with English cricket, but it was the *Evening Standard's* attempt to encourage league cricket in the South of England that proved the most sustained. The Chapter examines the *Standard's* campaign, the way in which it reported the negotiations between the organisers of the proposed leagues and the Conference, and how, despite the Conference's apparent victory, it was forced to compromise in relation to competitive cricket in Surrey.

Having vanquished the challenges of 1949, the 1950s, in superficial terms, appears to have been a benign period within club cricket and the ECC. However, Chapter Five questions if this was really the case in a society that was undergoing the most fundamental and significant change. Against a backdrop of nationalisation and meritocracy the media, within and outside of sport, were increasingly questioning the nation's traditional figures of authority. This was especially prevalent in cricket, and those who ran ECC and Test match cricket were increasingly under pressure to modernise. The CCC also came under pressure in this regard, for like the 'first-class' game, club cricket was struggling for players and spectators. Although the national side were winning Ashes series once again, these issues could no longer be ignored and further calls were made for adopting 'modern' forms of competition. The MCC's reluctant changes to 'first-class' cricket in the early 1960s, not only demonstrated that change was possible without immediately destroying the game's character, they were to prove influential when it came to the reform of club cricket. The process through which Raman Subba Row, Norman Parks and their associates established the Surrey Clubs' Championship (SCC) in 1968, is thus recounted. Although the Conference attempted to block any move towards competitive league cricket, their

defensive position was now untenable, for as the Chapter reveals, the game was withering on the vine, and even those within the Conference came to realise that change was long overdue.

The SCC was the first 'senior' cricket league in the South for at least fifty years, and its introduction meant the beginning of the final, and most significant, transformation of club cricket in the South of England. All cricketers' were now able – should they so desire – to play competitive cricket on their own terms for the first time since before the First World War. This thesis will examine why it took so long for this simple right to be acknowledged by cricket's ruling elite.

Chapter One

The middle-classes and the development of modern sport: 1870-1914

Introduction

At the outbreak of the First World War, sport in England was dominated by men known as ‘gentlemen amateurs’ both on and off the field of play. These were middle-class men who, in stark contrast to their professional working-class counterparts, were seen to represent, in terms of style and attitude, the ‘best’ exponents of sport. The amateur ethos these ‘gentlemen’ embodied encouraged ‘sport for sport’s sake’, rather than for financial gain. This adage was promoted by the predominantly aristocratic patrons and middle-class administrators of British sport for approximately a century from the 1870s.¹ Amateurism represented the social interests of those who controlled British sport, and its use encouraged the employment of class-based distinctions, in aesthetic, cultural and moral terms, and these were especially prevalent in cricket.² However, formalised amateurism, in the form of definitions and rules, was only some 50 years old by 1914, whereas sporting activities, such as cricket, had been played for centuries. Clearly, cricket – like other long-established ‘pastimes’ – had developed in a world where the middle-classes and their amateur values did not exist.

This chapter will examine the development and application of amateurism by the ‘middle-class’ ‘gentlemen amateurs’ within British sport, and English cricket in particular. It will also highlight the symbiotic relationship ever stricter amateurism had with the progressive

¹ Christopher Brookes regards the dates between 1870 and 1945 as the ‘apogee of amateurism’. However, professionalism remained absent from sports such as athletics (1888) and rugby union (1995) until the late twentieth-century. Brookes, *English Cricket*, 7.

² Stone, “Cricket’s Regional Identities”, (2010).

‘industrialisation’ of sport. Organisation, the introduction of formalised competition, and the commercialisation of sport replicated aspects of the industrialisation process. In time these developments came to not only reproduce the rising agency, status and influence of the working-classes throughout wider society, but transcend them. Although a far from uniform process, it was these changes that the ‘gentlemen amateurs’ reacted to, in the form of ever more draconian measures designed to re-enforce their own status. However, this thesis will first set-out the sporting culture that dominated British sport and which classes recognised the values prescribed within this culture, in the years prior to the industrial revolution.

Although early members of the middle-class were at the forefront of the industrial revolution, the urbanisation generated by industrialisation was the catalyst for a vast expansion in middle-class numbers, and they were steadily to acquire greater influence throughout British society. This was especially apparent within the sporting realm where middle-class influence was particularly powerful. The cultural values that the middle-class amateurs introduced to sport were shaped by the public school system and it was the ‘gentleman amateur’ who embodied these values and influence. The role of the public schools, in creating generations of middle-class gentlemen with almost uniform attitudes towards sport, will thus be examined in tandem with the influence that the industrialisation process had on the development and organisation of the schools themselves and consequently British sports.³ Thus the chapter will examine the organisational differences between eighteenth-century organisations, such as the MCC, and nineteenth-century associations, such as the Football Association (FA), and in particular their attitudes towards competition and the professionalism it encouraged.

³ Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*; Collins, *Rugby’s Great Split*; Dunning and Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players*.

The late-Victorian and Edwardian periods were both highly competitive and socially fluid, and sport both reflected and rejected such changes. As will be discussed below, the establishment of the FA Cup and the professionalisation of football by the FA reflected these changes. It was the unintended consequences stimulated by these developments, especially the rise in status of the working-class professional – essentially a meritocratic development commensurate with the age – which led others to reject or react against them. By the outbreak of the First World War, those in charge of cricket not only decided to maintain the discriminatory rules relating to professionalism, they also began to question competition itself. This proved to be a cultural position which was to have significant consequences for the control and development of grass roots cricket in the South of England for much of the twentieth-century.

Traditional sporting culture: gambling

Although the centuries between 1500 and 1800 mark an era following feudalism,⁴ the vast social chasm between the highest and the lowest in the land persisted. Despite the aristocracy trebling in number between 1540 and 1640,⁵ social and economic privileges, and the obligations to social inferiors associated with such social status, persisted in the absence of a numerous ‘middle-class’. The casual observer would be forgiven for assuming that within such a socially dichotomous society, where the absence of a middle-class would suggest that social mobility was severely limited, sport would be marked by distinct and opposing cultural approaches. And yet, although the aristocratic classes and

⁴ When the moral philosopher Adam Smith coined the term “feudal system” in the eighteenth-century he meant by it a social and economic system defined by inherited social ranks, each of which possessed inherent social and economic privileges and obligations. In Smith’s feudal system wealth derived from agriculture, which was organized not according to market forces but on the basis of customary labour services owed by serfs to landowning nobles.

⁵ Brookes, *English Cricket*, 26.

their 'plebeian subjects' seldom ever met in direct sporting competition, prior to the 1800s when royal, aristocratic and plebeian competitors took part in sporting competition it was frequently for the same purposes; an assertion of individual, local or 'national' identity, an associated display of masculinity (strength and bravery) and an opportunity for drinking, feasting and gambling.⁶

As Emma Griffin has suggested, 'cultural practices cannot be directly mapped onto sections of society', for certain 'practices were simultaneously put to different uses by different social strata'.⁷ While large-scale events, such as the Derby at Epsom, were staged by the aristocracy to exhibit their wealth and status, the common people – despite fears of 'the mob' – were able to attend. Gambling was one cultural practice enjoyed by all classes took place at these events. It has been well established by historians that gambling, a key expression of competition, is central to the development, spread and popularity of sport.⁸ Evidence of gambling stems from the records of aristocratic patrons,⁹ and there is evidence that the Pelham family, aristocrats from Sussex, were betting on games by 1694.¹⁰ Aristocratic gambling on cricket matches eventually led to some of the earliest forms of regulation. In 1727 the Earl of Tankerville and the Duke of Richmond

⁶ Competition, be it between plebeian villagers or royalty is key. Just as popular pastimes were violent and often bloodthirsty, the records of Henry VIII are littered with references to competition, be it over the value of jewels, bear baiting or wrestling with the French: 'on Monday the 29th ... there was great wrestling between the English and French. The latter were all priests, and big men and strong, but they had most falls'. 'Henry VIII: October 1532, 25-31', *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 5: 1531-1532* (1880), pp. 619-636. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=77497> Date accessed: 31/1/2012.

⁷ Emma Griffin, *England's Revelry: a History of Popular Sports and Pastimes, 1660-1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2005), 12.

⁸ Wray Vamplew, "Playing with the Rules: Influences on the Development of Regulation in Sport," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 24, no. 7 (2007): 843–871; Derek Birley, *Sport and the Making of Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993); Richard Holt, *Sport and the British: a Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) and Rob Light, *Cricket's Forgotten Past*.

⁹ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 22; Brookes, *English Cricket*, 34-44.

¹⁰ David Underdown, *Start of Play: Cricket and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Allen Lane, 2000), 15.

drew up the first known rules in order to regulate the often vast sums wagered.¹¹ These 'Articles of Agreement' ultimately led to further revisions, the most famous being the original 'Laws' of cricket of 1744¹² and, significantly, these laws also indicated the employment of the very first professionals. Although the historiography is split regarding the paternalistic or exploitative treatment of the early professionals, status relations between the likes of Tankerville and their hired men were, despite the chasm in social status, generally good.¹³

By the mid-1700s, Georgian aristocrats had begun to organise matches in a more formal manner, and they had formed a number of 'gentlemen's clubs'. Although predominantly for good eating, drinking and gambling, they frequently involved sporting activities such as cricket. These clubs would have initially operated within a traditional sporting culture that centred upon local rivalries, and even if aristocrats occasionally turned matches into individual 'status contests' for large wagers, clubs such as Hambledon (Hampshire), Chertsey (Surrey), and Slindon (Sussex), were still seen to represent the 'healthy local patriotism' of the community as a whole.¹⁴ Although Christopher Brookes suggests that different cultural approaches to cricket co-existed, the older traditional culture survived the aristocratic patrons' move to London within both rural and urban England.¹⁵ This move reflected the aristocrats' increasing rejection of country/rural life, as metropolitan life – in the form of the stock market,¹⁶ museums, art galleries, the social 'season', and gentlemen's clubs' – became increasingly fashionable. However, the traditional culture of

¹¹ Birley, cites a stake of £1,000 per side between Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales and the Earl of Middlesex in 1733, 23. Similarly extravagant amounts (often more than double) were also placed upon wrestling matches or the racing at Newmarket, Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 14.

¹² These followed Jack Broughton's 1743 'rules' for boxing; another previously plebeian sport where aristocratic gambling was central.

¹³ Although Tankerville was 'one of the coachman thrashing types', it is unlikely he or his contemporaries would have mistreated men like Edward 'Lumpy' Stevens in whom they invested (collectively) up to £1,000 a year. Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 38-39.

¹⁴ Underdown, *Start of Play*, xix.

¹⁵ Brookes, *English Cricket*, 7. Hambledon played matches at Lord's against MCC into the late-eighteenth-century. Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 49.

¹⁶ The stock market was itself a form of respectable financial speculation.

sport, which encouraged competition, social mixing (or the patronage of working-class leisure), drinking, gambling and sport as an entertainment for all (be they commercialised or not), was increasingly challenged following the onset of the capitalist industrial society.¹⁷

Industrialisation and the rise of the middle-classes

Although the industrialisation of Britain was the root cause of the fundamental transformation of a disparate agricultural/rural population into a predominantly industrial/urban society, in many respects it was the urban environment itself which acted as the catalyst for significant social and cultural change. The agents of this change were the new urban middle-class who bridged the social void between the aristocracy and the labouring-classes for the first time. Their most significant contribution was their rejection of the aristocracy's decadent habits in favour of a new set of respectable values. The factory-system aside, one of the most immediate and obvious changes brought about by urbanisation and increasing middle-class numbers was the removal of the open spaces required to take part in traditional pastimes. As Horatio Smith observed in 1831:

Every vacant green spot has been converted into a street; field after field has been absorbed by the builder; all scenes of popular resort have been smothered with piles of brick; football and cricket grounds, bowling greens, and the enclosure of open spaces set apart for archery and other pastimes have been successfully parcelled out in squares, lanes or alleys.¹⁸

Rosemary Sweet suggests that urban growth of this kind peaked between 1821 and 1831,¹⁹ and that 'the groundwork for the modern town council, elected by a democratic, rate-paying franchise had been laid' by 1840.²⁰ Borough Councils were the middle-classes first route to political power, but the period between 1810 and 1850 not only witnessed the

¹⁷ Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 21.

¹⁸ Horatio Smith, *Festivals, Games and Amusements*, cited in Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, 2.

¹⁹ Rosemary Sweet, *The English Town, 1680-1840: Government, Society and Culture* (London: Longman, 1999), 227.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

expansion of the middle-class, but a significant amount of social protest. Luddism in the urban centres of the North, the Captain Swing protests in the rural South, and the nationwide Chartism campaign coincided with a rise in religious objections to violent pastimes such as football.²¹ Although enclosure resulted in the loss of open spaces previously used for traditional pastimes in rural areas,²² 'respectable citizens' within the more developed urban environs demanded action by the new police forces in eradicating 'irrational' pleasures, be they 'for the sake of a wager' or not. For all that has been written on the evangelical promotion of rational recreation, there is little evidence that it had any major influence within urban working-class communities,²³ although middle-class intervention did result in the suppression of disruptive mass participation events following the passing of the 1835 Highways Act. This Act, which Mason regards as the 'final nail in the coffin' of folk football, soon led to the game's criminalisation and disappearance from the streets of urban Bolton (1840s) and Derby (1846),²⁴ although smaller towns took longer to succumb to this form of middle-class influence.

Despite the self-confidence gained by the expanding middle-classes during the decades following the 1832 Reform Act,²⁵ these new urbanites had limited influence during the first half of the century. Indeed, they appear capable of little more than antagonising the working-class with whom they shared particular public spaces, such as the Anglican Church,²⁶ or by campaigning to abolish their long-held and popular 'rowdy' recreations.²⁷

²¹ Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, 2. Robert D. Storch, "The Policeman as Domestic Missionary: Urban Discipline and Popular Culture in Northern England, 1850-1880", *Journal of Social History* Vol. 9, No. 4 (Summer, 1976), pp. 481-509.

²² Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, 10.

²³ Rob Light, *Cricket's Forgotten Past*.

²⁴ Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 33. Tony Collins, 'Football', in Tony Collins, John Martin, Wray Vamplew, *Encyclopedia Of Traditional British Rural Sports*, (London: Routledge, 2005), 118.

²⁵ Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, 16-21.

²⁶ This was in the form of private pews in chancels and naves, which left little or no space for the poorer parishioners. *A charge, delivered at the ordinary visitation of the Archdeaconry of Surrey, November 1842* / Talbot Collection of British Pamphlets by Wilberforce, Samuel, 1842, 16. See: <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?view=image;size=50;id=uiuo.ark%3A%2F13960%2Ft87h1t014;page=root;seq=5> Accessed, 18/6/2012.

Indeed, it was only after the collapse of Chartism in 1848 that significant numbers of the middle-classes looked not towards the aristocracy as allies, but the classes below them. Like some of the sporting clubs established by eighteenth-century gentlemen, many of the voluntary organisations established by the new middle-class 'gentlemen' were on their way to becoming national institutions (YMCA, RSPCA).²⁸ They now formed what were new middle and working-class alliances against 'an idle tax-devouring aristocracy' that eschewed reform of the public schools and parliament.²⁹ The National Reform Association (NRA) was one such organisation and its founder Sir Joshua Walmsley noted in 1850 how 'the middle class had now recovered from the fears excited [by Chartism] ... and they were now convinced that the working class was as much a friend of order and a lover of peace as any other class in the community'.³⁰

The middle-classes, with the help of the respectable working-classes, now sought to reform the nation and prize away power from the aristocrats who had dominated the established institutions. Middle-class influence was no longer a simply local affair. By mid-century, the middle-classes, within the major urban centres, had reached a critical mass in terms of numbers, wealth and power, and there appears to be a general consensus among historians that they had gained a national foothold in political, economic, social and cultural terms by the 1870s.³¹ This level of influence was felt in many realms of society, including sport. As suggested by the desires of the NRA, this increasingly well organised group sought to reform the very institutions that would do more than any to form their particular cultural outlook and approach to sport: the public schools.

²⁷ See Bailey, *leisure and Class*; Lowerson *Sport and the English Middle Class*, and Storch, *Popular Culture and Custom in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Croom Helm, 1982).

²⁸ Matthew Roberts, *Political Movements in Urban England, 1832-1914* (Basingstoke [England]; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 50.

²⁹ *The Standard*, 8/1/1850.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes 1870-1914*, 5; Trainor, "The middle class", 673-674.

The Public Schools

Despite the undeniable importance of the public schools in expanding the middle-classes, and the apparent uniformity of public school education, Richard Trainor has rightly suggested that defining this 'class' is fraught with problems relating to time, location and culture.³² Yet, in spite of such variables, the broadly defined middle-class 'gentlemen' or 'social elites' who governed 'amateur' British sport up to 1914, shared (publicly at least) a communal cultural approach to sport. The centrality of sport to these values stemmed from their broadly common educational and athletic experience at the public schools and Oxbridge universities. In tandem with their social and financial position, the liberal education these men received at the public schools, and the social connections made, afforded them the opportunity to exert their collective will (in the form of amateurism) upon British sport for almost a century. Thus, the reform of sport, the manner in which it was organised, and the development and dissemination of amateurism all stem from the middle-class elites who increasingly dominated the public schools of the latter-nineteenth-century.³³

Originally, the public schools had been established for the charitable education of poor disadvantaged boys in order that they could transact the crown's business in Latin.³⁴ However, despite the most basic facilities and living standards, the social and economic background of scholars changed significantly as more and more aristocratic boys were

³² Ibid. Thompson also notes the diversity of the middle-class. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, 19.

³³ W. D. Rubinstein, *Capitalism, Culture, and Decline in Britain: 1750-1990* (London: Routledge, 1994), 104–111.

³⁴ 'Westminster college as established by Elizabeth [1st], and attached by her to the collegiate church, is described in books of the time as "A publique schoole for Grammar, Rhethorick, Poetrie, and for the Latin and Greek Languages." It was designed at first for not more than 120 boys, including the "Queen's Scholars," who were to be chosen in preference from among the choristers or from the sons of the chapter tenants'. "Westminster School", *Old and New London: Volume 3* (1878), pp. 462-483. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=45168> Accessed, 3/2/2012.

sent to schools such as Eton, Westminster and Harrow.³⁵ The gradual displacement of the poor scholars led to vast differences in status between the aristocratic scholars and those supposedly in charge. The resulting power vacuum within the schools manifested itself in a number of open rebellions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries,³⁶ including one organised by the future gentleman cricketer Byron at Harrow in 1805.³⁷ Such were the levels of ill-discipline and violence at the public schools, it was abundantly clear to many within and outside of the system that reform was necessary.³⁸

The public schools, or more specifically the pupils, had been largely left to their own devices for centuries. Although attempts to control the pupils had been made at other schools, it was the changes established by Thomas Arnold at Rugby between 1828 and 1842, which were to have far reaching repercussions regarding the development of sport. Despite much adulatory authorship, it is now well established that Arnold's reform of the prefect-fagging system served only to set in place the conditions required for the reforms relevant to the development of what were termed muscular Christianity, modern sport, and the amateur ethos.³⁹ Arnold's primary aim was to regain control of his school by instilling a code of Christian conduct in the future gentlemen and rulers of the Empire. As Arnold put it himself: 'what we must look for here is, first, religious and moral principle; secondly, gentlemanly conduct; thirdly, intellectual ability'.⁴⁰ Although Arnold, who was no lover of games, would have disapproved, this was to be achieved, in part, via participation in sport.

³⁵ As Bamford notes, the social class of the scholars was paramount in defining what a public school was. Eton, Winchester, Westminster, Harrow, Charterhouse, Rugby and Shrewsbury represented the most elite public schools in this regard. T. W Bamford, *Rise of the Public Schools: a Study of Boys' Public Boarding Schools in England and Wales from 1837 to the Present Day* (London: Nelson, 1967), 38.

³⁶ William Laurence Burn, *The Age of Equipoise; a Study of the mid-Victorian Generation*. (New York: Norton, 1964), 67.

³⁷ Rubinstein, *Capitalism, Culture, and Decline in Britain*, 104.

³⁸ Parker, *The Old Lie*, 40.

³⁹ The 'prefect/fagging' system placed school discipline in the hands of the older scholars. Prefects were thus entitled to treat the younger boys as they saw fit.

⁴⁰ See the Rugby School website http://www.rugbyschool.net/welcome/history_traditions.php?o=1 accessed 29/11/10.

The emphasis placed upon sport and character, rather than bookish intellectualism ultimately led to Rudyard Kipling's satirical image of the 'flannelled fool',⁴¹ and yet the public school's value in instilling positive character traits, as it is still argued for sport today, was never in question. The public school system itself was under some external pressure however, and many concerned middle-class parents were airing their grievances in the pages of national newspapers. Criticisms that these schools were failing the sons of middle-class parents appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* and *The Times* during 1852. Letters from 'Pater Familias'⁴² and 'the Spectacle Maker' not only called into question the prefect system that allowed older boys to 'act as a savage tyrant' and cane their junior schoolfellows,⁴³ but also the financial motives of those running these schools. Most seriously 'the Spectacle Maker' accused those running Westminster School of the misappropriation of public funds at the additional expense ('of upwards a guinea a week') of the parents of boys who 'live as plainly as boys can live'.⁴⁴ One correspondent showed that life within the schools was fiercely competitive, even for food. 'A Charity Boy' recalled his time at Westminster and how the food provided was basic and slight, with 'the dinner for 40 sometimes lasting only six minutes'.⁴⁵ Such conditions led the ever more confident middle-classes to challenge these ancient institutions, expose wrong doings, and call for change – even if 'value for money' formed the basis of such demands.

Despite the broader concerns of middle-class parents, the Clarendon Commission's Report (1861-1864) concluded that the debt owed by 'English' society to the public schools

⁴¹ For an analysis of Kipling's 'The Islanders' (1902) see: http://www.kipling.org.uk/rg_islanders1.htm accessed 28/2/2013.

⁴² 'Paterfamilias' was also the adopted pseudonym of the Eton educated journalist Matthew Higgins, who wrote a series of influential letters to *The Cornhill Magazine* in the early 1860s about 'the neglect of mathematics'. Parker, *The Old Lie*, 40.

⁴³ *Morning Chronicle*, 12/7/1852.

⁴⁴ *The Times*, 15/5/1852. The Spectacle Maker was almost a decade ahead of those who would eventually cite Eton's greed, mismanagement and 'squandering of public money' to provoke the Clarendon Commission. Colin Shrosbee, *Public Schools and Private Education: The Clarendon Commission, 1861-64, and the Public Schools Acts*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 48.

⁴⁵ *The Times*, 17/5/1852.

was hard to estimate.⁴⁶ The schools, according to Howard Staunton,⁴⁷ had remained 'supremely medieval in character', and, as this was seen as positive, significant change to all but the violence engendered by 'fagging' was to be resisted.⁴⁸ The scholar's 'capacity to govern others and control themselves, their aptitude for combining freedom with order, their public spirit, their vigour and manliness of character ... their love of healthy sports and exercise' meant that the public school system had, perhaps, 'the largest share in moulding the character of the English gentleman'.⁴⁹ Academic excellence was far from a priority.

Although the Public Schools Act of 1868 gave new powers to governing bodies, and encouraged the introduction of new subjects such as mathematics, a natural science and modern foreign languages (as opposed to dead ones), the Liberal led State, which had instigated the Royal Commission,⁵⁰ left the 'Clarendon nine' virtually untouched.⁵¹ That so little changed was defended by Staunton thus: 'No English institution can be fairly measured by an ideal standard; for if so estimated nearly every English institution would be forthwith condemned. ... The Great Endowed Schools are less to be considered as educational agencies, in the intellectual sense, than as social agencies'.⁵² The education of the upper-classes and the wealthier middle-classes in the elite public schools was now officially a lower priority than the sociability and loyalty engendered by games.

⁴⁶ The Taunton Commission of 1864-1867, which followed, investigated the endowed schools.

⁴⁷ Staunton was a chess master, Shakespearian scholar and educationalist. However, there is no record of him ever attending a public school or a university.

⁴⁸ Howard Staunton, *The Great Schools of England; an Account of the Foundation, Endowments, and Discipline of the Chief Seminaries of Learning in England*; (London: S. Low, Son, and Marston, 1865), xviii.

⁴⁹ Clarendon Commission cited in Parker, *The Old Lie*, 41-42. Sir Richard Webster reiterated such notions at a dinner for the Cranleigh CC, stating; 'it gave him the greatest pleasure to know that in some small way he could assist games and sports, because he knew how good they were for the character, and how much happiness they brought to men'. *Woking News*, 2/10/1897.

⁵⁰ Shrosbee, *Public Schools and Private Education*, 48-49.

⁵¹ The 'nine' 'Clarendon Schools' also included Merchant Taylors and St Paul's. However, not being boarding schools, these last two did not, according to Bamford, satisfy the essential upper-class qualification. Bamford, *Rise of the Public Schools*, xii.

⁵² Staunton, *The Great Schools of England*, xviii – xix.

Like athleticism, the teaching of the classics, which remained the ‘foundation of an education for centuries’, was to be left untouched, and this led to a fusion of classical and chivalrous ideals with sport providing the perfect stage for their embodiment.⁵³ Staunton had recognised the flaws within the public schools, and elite institutions generally, but despite these failings he was eager to suggest that they were ‘the theatres of athletic manners, and the training places of [the] gallant, generous spirit for the English gentleman’.⁵⁴ Building ‘character’, loyalty to fellow scholars, and above all else the school,⁵⁵ was the foremost and enduring principle of the public schools and the foundation stone of the old boy network; the nation’s ‘most powerful form of freemasonry’.⁵⁶ Middle-class unity depended upon these shared principles, and thanks to public school fiction such as *Tom Brown’s School Days*, these values were not only being cited a century later, the adoption of the public school model throughout the Grammar School system and beyond ensured it was widely disseminated and became popular among other classes.⁵⁷

As Geoffrey Best notes:

Proof of the diffusing power of the public school ethos is provided by the extraordinary popularity of ‘public school’ fiction – frequently found at immense and ridiculous removes from reality – among boys in ‘state’ elementary and secondary schools, or by the fact that the British Borstal institution, a successful device for the disciplining of juvenile criminals in the inter-war period, was modelled expressly on the public school house system and ideas of personal conduct.⁵⁸

Ideas of ‘gentlemanly’ conduct were based upon the well-established aristocratic values, which had been popularised following the publication of Walter Scott’s best-selling novel *Ivanhoe* in 1820. ‘Scott had created a type of character which ... was to become a model

⁵³ Ibid., 41 and 85. See also Wiener, ‘Greek and Roman classics [were] the basis of any liberal education... Headmasters, more or less equating the classics (together with Christianity of course) with civilization’.

English Culture, 18.

⁵⁴ Staunton, *The Great Schools of England*, xviii–xix.

⁵⁵ Parker, *The Old Lie*, 83.

⁵⁶ The phrase ‘old boy network’ it is used to convey the network of preferential social and business connections among the alumni of various prestigious schools. Parker, *The Old Lie*, 43.

⁵⁷ *Surrey Comet*, 8/12/1937.

⁵⁸ Geoffrey Best, “Militarism and the Victorian Public School”, in Brian Simon et al., “The Victorian Public School: Studies in the Development of an Educational Institution : a Symposium” (Gill and Macmillan, 1975), 130.

for young [middle-class] men in real life',⁵⁹ and notions of birthright, aristocratic heraldry and *noblesse oblige* permeated every facet of public school life up to 1914.⁶⁰ Innumerable analogies were made, and Sir Henry Newbolt's gushing observation that the public schools had 'derived the housemaster from the knight, to whose castle boys were sent as pages' was typical.⁶¹ Newbolt's association, and the increasing middle-class desire to adopt the title of 'gentleman', disguised the growing conflict over who was entitled to use the designation. By the end of the century, 'when power and wealth were passing more and more into the hands of the middle classes, the debate between intrinsic and merely inherited nobility was again relevant'.⁶² The increasing number of public schools – Nathaniel Woodard established eleven public schools including Lancing (1848) and Hurstpierpoint (1849) between 1848 and his death in 1891 – ensured an ever increasing number of middle-class 'gentlemen'.⁶³ The Clarendon Commission's reluctance to reform the curriculum ensured that an ability to utilise Latin would help to distinguish these graduates as such.

Unlike the title of 'gentleman', the classics had no aristocratic connotations, but its values and use soon came to represent a specifically middle-class contribution to the concept of the gentleman amateur. Originally taught to 'educate a clerical class ... which would transact the nation's business in Latin',⁶⁴ this objective was to change following the Renaissance. The 'utilitarian value of [the] classics' weakened, as English, a language suitable for both writing and speaking, was increasingly used.⁶⁵ This change brought about a different emphasis in classical teaching, and the classics were now studied as literature

⁵⁹ Girouard, *The Return to Camelot*, 37.

⁶⁰ Scott's stories popularised the values of *noblesse oblige*; a concept, which promoted the idea that those with wealth, power and status accept the social responsibilities that come with them.

⁶¹ H. Newbolt, *The Book of the Happy Warrior*, (1917), p. vii, cited in Girouard, *The Return to Camelot*, 164.

⁶² Norman Vance, "The Ideal of Manliness", in Bamford, *Rise of the Public Schools*, 115.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁶⁴ Parker, *The Old Lie*, 84.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 85.

rather than simply grammar.⁶⁶ Allied with an increasing interest in antiquity and archaeology; previously lost cultures were, in the form of poetry, art, architecture and philosophy becoming ever more popular and ancient Greek philosophy now found a place next to Latin on the public school curriculum. A 'broadening interest in the intellect' soon became the 'mark of a cultured man', and schools such as Westminster, Eton and Harrow eventually became 'the enclaves for the upper and the wealthier middle classes for whom the Classics served no other purpose than that of a status symbol'.⁶⁷ The influence of the classics was to be especially visible in amateur sport, particularly cricket, where aesthetics and the use of Latin by cricket writers became thinly veiled signifiers of class.

The development of middle-class values

High expectations of behaviour, moral integrity and the code of respectability, which defined the public face of the gentleman, became 'essential constituents of middle-class identity and class consciousness'.⁶⁸ As the public school cult of athleticism developed, such traits were said to be increasingly witnessed upon sports fields. This, allied to headmasters' such as G.E.L. Cotton of Marlborough using the pulpit to 'expound a Christian version of the Graeco-Renaissance concept of the "whole man"',⁶⁹ led to the Rev. E. Warre's declaration in *Athletics, or Physical Exercise and Recreation*: "Tis not a soul,

⁶⁶ It is a curious anomaly of the late nineteenth-century public schools, where academic achievement was demoted in favour of moral and social character traits, that the frequently compulsory games were juxtaposed by compulsory Greek and Latin.

⁶⁷ Parker, *The Old Lie*, 85; Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*, 18–19. "In the last century the education here, as at most of our public schools, was almost wholly confined to the dead languages. Mrs. Piozzi, in her "Johnsoniana," quotes the words of Dr. Johnson on this subject. "A boy should never be sent to Eton or Westminster before he is twelve years old at the least; for if in the years of his babyhood he escapes that general and transcendent knowledge without which life is perpetually put to a stand, he will never get it at a public school, where, if he does not learn Latin and Greek, he learns nothing."'" Cited in "Westminster School", *Old and New London: Volume 3* (1878), pp. 462-483. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=45168> Accessed, 3/2/2012.

⁶⁸ Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 65.

⁶⁹ Mangan, "Athleticism: A Case Study of the Evolution of an Educational Ideology", in Simon *et al.*, *The Victorian Public School*, 151.

'tis not a body we are training up, but a man, and we must not divide him'.⁷⁰ Or as the classicists preferred it: *mens sana in corpore sano*.⁷¹ There thus developed a uniformed social and cultural identity within the public schools which combined traditional aristocratic notions of *noblesse oblige* with an adapted version of classical philosophy.⁷² Both concepts were to manifest themselves within Victorian and Edwardian sport in the guise of the gentleman amateur, and although social change would largely kill off the sporting 'gentleman' after 1918, the classical associations that informed amateurism, would continue to influence the culture and administration of British sport into the twenty-first century.⁷³

The expansion of the public schools and the middle-classes were mutually dependent, and both relied upon the wealth created by the industrial revolution. Indeed the public schools had become 'factories' themselves, by manufacturing a culturally uniform middle-class who, despite often vast differences in social background, wealth and political persuasion, appeared to unite when it came to the application of sporting values. W. D. Rubinstein has highlighted that many who attended the public schools, such as George Orwell, were not from wealthy families and he proposes that this undermines the homogeneity attributed to 'social elites' by some within the academic community.⁷⁴ In this concern Rubenstein has a case, for social homogeneity was not attributable to 'gentlemen' during the late-Victorian and Edwardian eras. The increasing diversity of a 'gentleman's' background led to much

⁷⁰ Rev. E. Warre, *Athletics, or Physical Exercise and Recreation, Part 1*, William Clowes and Sons Limited, International Health Exhibition, (London: Charing Cross, 1884), 91.

⁷¹ The Latin phrase 'A healthy mind in a healthy body' had been associated with education as early as 1693 in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* by John Locke. It was further popularised following the development of 'athleticism' in the public schools after 1860. Warre, *Athletics, or Physical Exercise and Recreation*, 3.

⁷² 'The honour code, *noblesse oblige*, a legacy of the vows of medieval knighthood, was the ultimate sanction behind all the sporting contests, from the turf to prize-fighting, in which the nobility and gentry interested themselves [during the eighteenth-century]'. Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 19.

⁷³ The British Olympic Association's (BOA) attempt to ban Dwain Chambers and David Millar from London 2012 for previous drug offences, when they were able to represent Great Britain at other international events, is a direct legacy of the influence of amateurism within British sport, and the BOA's social and cultural history in particular.

⁷⁴ Rubinstein, "Education and the Social Origins of British Élités 1880-1970," 166–167.

public debate as to what, or who, was a gentleman. As early as 1879 it was being noted that ‘the word gentleman is used a great deal and indiscriminately’,⁷⁵ and Daniel Johnston in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* wrote in 1901 that ‘the title of gentleman covers interpretations of a thousand shades, and is ... conveniently vague’.⁷⁶ Similar confusion as to what role different types of ‘trade’, a particularly urban aspect of middle-class identity, had upon eligibility was another source of confusion.⁷⁷ And yet, those who Rubenstein regards as social elites, and even those of lower-middle-class stock, who developed ‘ungentlemanly’ political affiliations, appear to have adopted a very specific approach to sport, or a ‘sporting’ way to behave, which characterised itself as ‘gentlemanly’.

Such an approach is exemplified by two actively left-wing products of public schools; the previously mentioned Orwell, and C. L. R. James, who both demonstrate the influence this type of education had on scholars for the rest of their lives. Following a disturbance at a speech by the British fascist Oswald Mosley, Orwell, who had played the much celebrated Wall Game at Eton and was critical of sport,⁷⁸ told one of those ejected for heckling that ‘you ought to be British, fair play and all that sort of thing’.⁷⁹ C.L.R. James, a black West Indian of lower middle-class origin, who was an avowed Marxist, and cricket journalist, admitted to holding very traditional values in this regard, following his very similar

⁷⁵ *The Star*, 2/9/1879. Esquire (Esq.) was in use from 1475 (Caxton) and emphasised differing, yet related, aspects of chivalry, arms bearing powers, nobility and land ownership into the twentieth-century. *Oxford English Dictionary*, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/64453?redirectedFrom=esq.#eid5252604> Accessed, 8/5/2012. By the end of the nineteenth-century, the term esquire was being associated ‘by general concession’ with the professions. See: Boutell, Charles, *English Heraldry*, (London: Cassell, Petter and Galpin, 1867), 120.

⁷⁶ Daniel Johnston, ‘The Evolution of the Modern Gentleman’, *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 291 (July to December 1901), 189. Even radicals who believed in meritocracy, and criticised aristocrat and mill owner equally, would not regard the latter as a gentleman. Girouard, *The Return to Camelot*, 133.

⁷⁷ In 1900, during a debate entitled ‘What is a Gentleman?’ the Baptist Debating Society of Aldershot heard it argued ‘that it was almost impossible for a gentleman to engage in trade, for if you would be successful you could not be absolutely honourable, and if not honourable you were not a gentleman’. *Aldershot News*, 3/2/1900. See also: *Daily Mirror*, 18/4/1906.

⁷⁸ Michael Shelden, *Orwell: the Authorised Biography* (London: Politico’s, 2006), 229; George Orwell, ‘The Sporting Spirit’, in *George Orwell Essays*, (London: Penguin Books, 1994), 321-323.

⁷⁹ Shelden, *Orwell: the Authorised Biography*, 251–252.

educational experience at Queen's Royal College in Trinidad.⁸⁰ James, like others attending colonial public schools was deeply influenced by what must be regarded as the main reason why the romantic ideal of public school life, and the moral value of sport, settled in the public consciousness: *Tom Brown's Schooldays* by Thomas Hughes.⁸¹

Tom Brown's Schooldays sold over 11,000 copies in its first year of publication (1857), and thousands of pupils (and many of their parents) were enthralled by the adventures and sporting exploits of Tom, and how he overcomes the bullying Flashman at Rugby School. The significance of the book – which was even read out to students in Indian 'public schools' –⁸² has almost nothing to do with the plot, and everything to do with the portrayal of Rugby's social values, cultural norms, and sport. Both cricket and Rugby's version of 'football' are described, and as Tony Collins notes, Hughes' fictional account of the latter was 'the match that would take the game and its values out of the school, across Britain and around the world'.⁸³ Collins goes further in suggesting that *Tom Brown's Schooldays* 'gave the sport a "meaning", above and beyond the intrinsic enjoyment of chasing a ball around a field' for 'almost the first time'.⁸⁴ As Parker suggests above, the moral association of sport and Christianity 'encouraged' by Arnold and devoutly promoted within the pages of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, became common parlance.⁸⁵ But, this was not an example of sport (football or otherwise) being attributed a 'meaning' for the first time – the Rev. Pycroft's *The Cricket Field* had not only praised cricket for its embodiment of 'orderly and sensible' English virtues and character, he had also made associations between

⁸⁰ C. L. R James, *Beyond a Boundary* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2000), 33. For an in-depth analysis of James' experience of 'Colonial Victorianism' see: Christian Høgsbjerg, "'We Lived According to the Tenets of Matthew Arnold': Reflections on the 'Colonial Victorianism' of the Young C. L. R. James," *Twentieth Century British History* (2012) doi: 10.1093/tcbh/hws010 First published online: May 18, 2012. Accessed, 28/2/2013.

⁸¹ Parker, *The Old Lie*, 77.

⁸² Toby C. Rider, "Muscular Christianity", in J. Nauright and C. Parrish (Eds.), *Sports Around the World: History, Culture and Practice. Volume One: General Topics, Africa, Asia, Middle East, and Oceania*, (Oxford: ABC-Clio, 2012), 143.

⁸³ Tony Collins, *A Social History of English Rugby Union* (London: Routledge, 2009), 6.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁸⁵ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 94–95.

cricket and Christian ethics as early as 1851.⁸⁶ What this development represents is simply the introduction of a new 'middle-class' meaning for sport. With the public school educated middle-classes leading the way, the new 'moral' sports culture would not only replace the traditional sporting culture that had informed sport prior to the industrial revolution, it would often deny it (gambling in particular) had ever existed.

'Sportisation': Organisation, commercialisation and competition

Thus, this new meaning of sport was derived from the early nineteenth-century culture and curriculum of schools such as Rugby, which helped to create a 'standardised' ideal for the schools and pupils to follow for the next century. The standardisation of values among the products of the public schools sits well with similar developments that had ensured the success of the industrial revolution. Standardisation, competition and commercialisation were as important to the success of the public schools' as they were for industrial output.⁸⁷ The classical curriculum, the house system, and inter-school competition in commercial, educational and athletic contexts shaped the public school system – particularly after 1864. Although many of the values of the public school's 'gentlemanly' ethos were antithetical to commercialised trade and industry, a number of sports had emulated the processes that shaped the industrial revolution.⁸⁸ Whereas cricket had begun this process before any other team sport, the game's commercial development and geographical reach was hindered by the MCC's eighteenth-century model of 'organisation'⁸⁹ and the lack of

⁸⁶ James Pycroft, *The Cricket Field: Or, The History and the Science of the Game of Cricket*. (Boston: Mayhew and Baker, 1859), 17.

⁸⁷ The public schools like any business were in competition with each other, and many expanded or improved facilities in order to attract more boys from the right families.

⁸⁸ Wray Vamplew suggests there were seven stages in the development of rules. Although standardisation and organisation are included, he does not cite commercialisation directly, although he acknowledges the influence of 'economics'. Vamplew, "Playing with the Rules", 843-871.

⁸⁹ The MCC, like numerous eighteenth-century organisations, was a private members club. Although the MCC remained a private club into the twentieth-century, it had very reluctantly assumed control of cricket.

infrastructure prior to the widespread industrialisation of Britain.⁹⁰ The 'Articles of Agreement' of 1727, the first 'Laws' of 1744, and the establishment of the MCC in 1787 were simply small but significant steps along this road. Cricket was still in the midst of this sportisation process during the nineteenth-century, but arguably the first game that completed all the stages of 'sportisation' that football, cricket and eventually rugby (union) would go through was another of Howard Staunton's interests: chess.

Chess had been played for more than 1,000 years, and yet it took an increasingly industrial and globalised society to provide the framework that enabled the transformation of what had been a multifarious global pastime into a universally understood, standardised and competitive 'sport'. At the beginning of the nineteenth-century there were no organised national or county chess associations, and, like cricket, serious play was confined to challenge matches between a few masters for a purse. Although these matches were usually played at one of the well-known chess meeting rooms or London-based gentlemen's clubs', Staunton, one of the leading players of his day, had played Pierre St. Amant in Paris in November 1843 for 100 guineas a-side.⁹¹

The sportisation and popularisation of chess required the overlapping stages cited above. Firstly, commercialism: Staunton had established the *Chess Player's Chronicle* in 1841, and later took over the *Illustrated London News*' chess column. 'Chess problems' in the press and books were popular and represented but one branch of this burgeoning competitive and commercialised pastime. Standardisation resulted in internationally recognised rules in 1860,⁹² but it also embraced commercialism, and Staunton had

⁹⁰ See: Rob Light, "Cricket in the eighteenth century", in Anthony Bateman and Jeff Hill, *The Cambridge Companion to Cricket* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

⁹¹ "Howard Staunton in 1908" by H.J.R. Murray (June 2007) http://web.archive.org/web/20071208141521/http://sbchess.sinfree.net/Staunton_BCM.html. Accessed, 28/2/2013. See also: "100 Year History of the British Chess Federation". http://www.englishchess.org.uk/?page_id=12933 Accessed, 21/2/2012.

⁹² The first internationally agreed code of chess laws were published in 1860 by Staunton. 100 Year History of the British Chess Federation. http://www.englishchess.org.uk/?page_id=12933 Accessed, 21/2/2012.

personally endorsed the now classic 'Staunton's pieces', which had been designed and marketed by Jaques of London from 1849.⁹³ Organisation, in the form of clubs and associations, had been ongoing from the early 1840s, and two main bodies emerged – the British Chess Association and the Counties Chess Association. Interestingly, both of these associations originated in Yorkshire, but in-line with Robert Morris' work on clubs and societies, the National Association was to be based in London.⁹⁴ Competition, in the form of regional, national and international tournaments helped to complete the sportisation of chess. Staunton had organised the first recognised international tournament in 1851 to coincide with the Great Exhibition,⁹⁵ and after 1860 regular competitions were established. Significantly, as it pre-dates the foundation of the Football League by two years, the London Chess League was founded in 1886, though the British Chess Federation state its origins can be dated back to 1883.⁹⁶

As we shall see, the stages that transformed chess cited above, were to be mirrored by almost every major sport that developed throughout the nineteenth century. However, if chess represents a relatively smooth process, class conflict within the middle-classes and with the increasingly organised and visible working-classes were to drastically affect the development of other sports and their organisation.

⁹³ Staunton signed every box and received a commission <http://www.jaqueslondon.co.uk/chess/history> Accessed, 21/2/2012.

⁹⁴ Although London remained the centre of activities, the British Chess Association (BCA) was originally the Yorkshire Chess Association. 'Formed in 1841 by the Halifax, Huddersfield, Leeds and Wakefield clubs; in 1852 it became the Northern and Midland Counties Chess Association. As its influence increased it changed its name to the British Chess Association'. It is interesting to note that the British Chess Association had a paid manager; the professional chess master Johann Lowenthal, until his death in 1876. "100 Year History of the British Chess Federation". http://www.englishchess.org.uk/?page_id=12933 Accessed 21/2/2012. Similarly, Robert Morris has noted how regional groups connected with national associations had their funds re-directed towards London. 'Clubs, societies and associations' in *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950: Social agencies and Institutions*, Volume Three, 413.

⁹⁵ See: H. Staunton, *The chess tournament: A collection of the games played at this celebrated assemblage, illustrated by copious diagrams, and notes, critical and explanatory* (1852), Google books. Accessed 21/2/2012.

⁹⁶ "100 Year History of the British Chess Federation". http://www.englishchess.org.uk/?page_id=12933 Accessed 21/2/2012.

Organisation

Whereas the pre-industrial 'gentry' had been eager to arrange and promote spectator sports, the enclosure of rural land, increasing urbanisation, and a new emphasis on labour discipline, all combined to deprive the masses of the time and space to pursue their traditional pleasures. 'Simultaneously, the reformist zeal of evangelical middle-class moralists made the old blood sports—cockfights, bear baiting, and bull running especially, not to mention prize-fighting—utterly disreputable and illegal'.⁹⁷ Thus, according to Malcolmson, the lack of physical space and the loss of landed (rural) aristocratic patronage had virtually brought traditional leisure, including folk football, to an end by the 1850s.⁹⁸ Although pockets of resistance (discussed in Chapter Three) remained where the middle-classes were unable to exert influence, Malcolmson has suggested that the urban working-classes suffered from a 'vacuum' of leisure provision, by the mid-nineteenth-century.⁹⁹ This position is countered by Hugh Cunningham, who argues that the working-classes were able to 'think and act' for themselves, and utilise the increasingly commercialised entertainment the urban environment had to offer.¹⁰⁰ However, such conclusions, based upon studies of cities or large industrial towns, fail to convey what was happening in less developed or rural areas. Furthermore, the music hall and the other alternative entertainments that Cunningham cites were not 'sport' *per se*.¹⁰¹

Cricket was one sport which bridged the agricultural and industrialised regions of Britain during the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries. Although the social conflicts of the early nineteenth-century appear to have prompted many aristocratic patrons to abandon the

⁹⁷ William J. Baker, "The State of British Sport History", *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Spring, 1983), 56-57.

⁹⁸ Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850*, 89.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 170.

¹⁰⁰ Cited in Peter Lambert and Phillipp R Schofield, *Making History: An Introduction to the History and Practices of a Discipline* (London: Routledge, 2009), 264.

¹⁰¹ Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c. 1780-c. 1880*.

game,¹⁰² by the 1860s the MCC, and a number of new county clubs, were arranging matches that drew large crowds. Like the matches arranged by Hambledon during the previous century these matches were either 'one-off' challenges between county sides, annual fixtures such as the famous Gentlemen v. Players, or matches against 'England'. Gambling, good eating and drinking remained central, but no organised structure akin to the ECC existed. These semi-commercialised matches differed to the country house variety of cricket which operated in parallel to the fledgling county clubs. This highly 'social' form of cricket, where drawing large crowds and 'winning' was less important, was exemplified by I Zingari (est. 1845), the elite club within the already exclusive MCC. The renaissance of country house cricket that I Zingari represent, and the lack of an organised county championship, was indicative of the MCC remaining a private club tied to an eighteenth-century organisational structure, in which the middle-classes had little influence.

In social and cultural terms the MCC had remained wedded to its eighteenth-century origins. But their position as the premier club and 'law-givers' was under challenge from the 'brash, highly professionalised and successful Surrey club, who had a far better ground, wicket and team than anything at Lord's'.¹⁰³ The MCC's failure to organise itself or the game witnessed the fledgling county game losing ground to the entrepreneurial professional XIs, who enjoyed a good deal of commercial success and popularity in the early 1860s. However, the resumption of fixtures between Surrey and Nottinghamshire, following a quarrel over a disputed result, and the MCC's appointment of R. A. Fitzgerald as secretary in 1863, would rectify this position and return public sympathies to the

¹⁰² David Lemmon and Peter May, *The Official History of Surrey County Cricket Club* (London: Christopher Helm, 1989), 12.

¹⁰³ The Hon. Sec. of the recently established Kent County Cricket Club, following an unfavourable decision by MCC regarding one of their players, had suggested (privately) that a 'congress of representatives for the cricketing counties' be established in place of the MCC. Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 98.

counties.¹⁰⁴ Fitzgerald introduced a series of measures – mostly commercial – which almost doubled the membership of the club in just five years. Although ‘passing the dreaded Surrey’, the MCC’s aristocratic membership was severely diluted in the process. There was to be ‘no reduction of pomposity’ however.¹⁰⁵

1863 was also a significant year for sport elsewhere, and the foundation of the FA represented the spread of the new nineteenth-century model for the organisation of sport, previously witnessed in chess. Unlike the MCC and the emerging county clubs, ‘both acmes of aristocratic patronage and middle-class exclusiveness’,¹⁰⁶ who were reluctant to develop a federal structure of organisation, the FA was an association where all members had an equal say. In contrast to the MCC’s ‘unitary’ system, the FA created a more democratic federal system of governance, in which the Association became the representative head of numerous affiliated county associations throughout England. Football, under the aegis of the FA, and later in tandem with the Football League, was the first sport to introduce national cup and league competitions. As will be discussed below, the introduction of these competitions led not only to football’s conversion to full-time professionalism but to the almost complete cultural capitulation of the middle-classes who had developed and controlled the game. These ‘northern’ developments were to have significant repercussions in cricket, for they did not go unnoticed by the predominantly southern cricket establishment.

In line with many other voluntary organisations established at this time, the FA was a middle-class alliance, and it appears to have functioned well until tensions within these middle-classes emerged. The FA’s membership, which was initially dominated by elite

¹⁰⁴ Brookes, *English Cricket*, 115.

¹⁰⁵ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 99. Henry Perkins, FitzGerald’s successor in 1876, was a good deal more ‘businesslike’. Not only was he paid £500 a year, he further diluted the aristocratic nature of the MCC by almost doubling the membership once again. Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 131.

¹⁰⁶ Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, 70.

public school or Oxbridge 'Old Boy' clubs, had been gradually infiltrated by clubs which reflected the increasing freedom and autonomy of the working-classes. A number of events had conspired to give the working-classes more free time, and this, allied to the increasing importance of clubs as extensions of civic and commercial competition between towns and cities, increased the game's popularity among the working-classes.¹⁰⁷ This led to growing commercialisation, and an increasing number of clubs who represented urban communities rather than small class groups.¹⁰⁸ However, in the period prior to the establishment of county associations and the FA's federal system of organisation, the predominantly London-based 'Old Boy' clubs had held sway. As a result the long-standing status rivalries between the public schools were played out over differences between the 'handling' (Rugby) and 'dribbling' (Eton, Harrow and Cambridge) versions of football. Such tensions had been established features of the broader competition between these schools, and as Dunning and Sheard note, the Rugby School cricket captain, having written to arrange a fixture with Eton around 1850, was rebuffed by his counterpart with the reply: 'Rugby, Rugby ... well, we'll think about it if you can tell me where it is'.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, many of the 1849 rules of Eton football were 'diametrically opposed to those recorded at Rugby a few years before'.¹¹⁰

The intra-class tensions between the FA's early membership, some of whom were harbouring embryonic fears of working-class professionalism and the 'unruly' crowds attracted to matches, were never far from the surface. Although differences over the 'hacking' rule have been cited as a significant reason,¹¹¹ it would appear equally feasible

¹⁰⁷ Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, 23, and Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 150.

¹⁰⁸ Sam Duckitt, founder of the Halifax Football Club in 1873, explained: 'We saw reports in the papers of football matches being played at Leeds, Bradford, and elsewhere and thought that Halifax ought to have a club also'. Collins, *A Social History of English Rugby Union*, 25.

¹⁰⁹ Dunning and Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players*, 83.

¹¹⁰ Eric Dunning, "The Origins of Modern Football and the Public School Ethos", in Simon et al., *The Victorian Public School*, 176.

¹¹¹ Tony Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, 23, and Tony Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, 19.

that the status differences that marked each side of the debate were central to the Rugby Football Union's (RFU) breakaway from its parent body. A further, often overlooked, factor was the FA's establishment of the FA Cup only a month prior to the split. If the RFU's rejection of the Calcutta Cup in 1878 as a rugby equivalent to the FA Cup is a guide, this may well have proved to be the deal breaker.¹¹² The significance of the FA Cup is hard to underestimate, not only in terms of the introduction of formalised competition, but with regard to the commercialisation, professionalisation and nationwide popularity of the game – ultimately at the expense of rugby, the then front runner.

Competition

The FA Cup was the brainchild of the FA's secretary; the Old Harrovian, C. W. Alcock. Alcock – who was also the secretary of SCCC (£200 per annum in 1871),¹¹³ had organised the first Test match in England, and was the editor of *Cricket*. He is reputed to have based the FA Cup upon Harrow's inter-house football competition, The Cock House Cup.¹¹⁴ All the original fifteen participants (except fellow amateur clubs Queen's Park Glasgow and Donington School (Spalding) in the East-Midlands) were from the metropolitan or greater London area, and amateur middle-class clubs from the South dominated the FA Cup until a team of cotton workers, Blackburn Olympic, won the 1882–83 competition.¹¹⁵ Indicative of the increased working-class participation and the FA Cup's role in the game's democratisation, knock-out competitions brought clubs of different social-class into direct competition for the first time. These cross-class meetings, despite the fact that they were

¹¹² The defunct Calcutta (Rugby) Football Club had envisaged that the cup they had gifted the RFU was to be used as a club competition trophy, but the RFU 'were unwilling to promote a knockout competition between their clubs in case it should lead them down the road towards professionalism, so they decided to use the trophy for international competition'.

<http://www.rfu.com/twickenhamstadium/worldrugbymuseum/rugbyhistory/calcuttacup> Accessed, 11/3/2013.

¹¹³ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 116.

¹¹⁴ Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, 16.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.

infrequent and at the whim of the draw, understandably heightened the interest of the public and ambitious clubs. Within twelve years (1883-84) 100 clubs from across England were entering the FA Cup, and dozens of similar knock-out cup competitions had sprung up in a variety of sports, including cricket and rugby. The FA Cup had undeniably encouraged an increase in professionalism, and this had 'helped to animate the socially exclusive clubs' opposition to cup ties'.¹¹⁶ However, as cup-ties were infrequent and did not interfere with customary fixtures with like-minded and demographically similar clubs, the Old Boy's clubs continued to enter the competition, despite an increasing number of players being paid to play from 1880.¹¹⁷

These paid players, like their counterparts in cricket, had also enjoyed a brief period of autonomy during the early 1860s. In the absence of a regularised formal competition and residency/qualification rules, the professional footballers were essentially free-agents who were able to represent whichever club was prepared to pay them the most. Such an issue was prevalent in a number of sports, but unlike the county cricket clubs who introduced qualification rules in 1873,¹¹⁸ or the 'dreadfully conservative and reserved' RFU of 1895, who chose to split the sport along amateur and professional lines,¹¹⁹ the FA chose to adopt a pragmatic stance regarding professionalism. The simplicity of the rules and the success of the FA Cup had led to the soccer variant of football usurping its rugby cousin in every respect of the public consciousness, and yet the FA's adoption of professionalism in 1885 hinged upon two significant points: firstly, the influence of Alcock, and secondly, the fact that no other field sport had been wholly professionalised before.

¹¹⁶ Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, 29.

¹¹⁷ Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, 69-78.

¹¹⁸ SCCC secretary Alcock was at the forefront of these rules, which affected both amateurs and professionals. Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 119.

¹¹⁹ *Woking News*, 18/1/1895.

The FA Cup had ensured that senior-level football, as a 'voluntary leisure activity' was over.¹²⁰ Whether the FA liked it or not, the game was facing an increasingly irresistible tide of professionalism, and with Alcock at the helm they had a man with the experience to control it. The FA was thus able to use the management of professionals in cricket as a template, and transfer the power of the then independent professional footballer to the clubs.¹²¹ There is little doubt that Alcock had failed to realise the size of the genie he was unleashing, for, unlike the 'amateur' minded men who dominated the county cricket clubs', the more commercially minded men who ran the senior football clubs exploited this development rather than suppressed it. These men, particularly those who ran clubs in the Midlands and the North, soon realised that the FA Cup was insufficient for raising the revenue necessary for an increasingly professional sport. *Ad hoc* matches against local opposition had remained the staple fixtures, but as these and the infrequent FA Cup fixtures did not provide a regular income, a league format was identified as a possible solution. As Birley notes with regard to cricket:

the idea of a championship was the inevitable outcome of commercialised leisure in an age of competition. ... Since the new idea represented a shift from older values stemming from the gentlemanly honour code to a system based on merit – something like competitive examinations for the Civil Service, which was already controversial – it did not appeal to everyone.¹²²

In light of the unexpected loss of control within football that first competition, commercialisation, and then professionalisation had brought about, those in charge of cricket (and rugby union in particular) were to prove increasingly resistant to the idea of establishing meritocratic competitions in the form of leagues.

¹²⁰ Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, 72.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 70-75.

¹²² Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 130.

League competition arrives in English sport

Had it not been for the success and popularity of the FA Cup, it is questionable that the Football League would have been introduced. The significance of the Football League, a separate organisation to the FA, thus pales, in terms of the popularisation of football, when compared to the impact of the FA Cup. National knock-out competitions aside, the league format itself was a significant departure from the localised matches which made up most fixture lists. While the early years of the FA Cup were dominated by middle-class clubs in or around London, the Football League was established (1888), and initially competed for, by twelve clubs from the Midlands and the North. Mason suggests that the league avoided the often unequal contests in early cup rounds, which reduced spectator interest, and established a week-on-week competition 'based on the notion of two points for a win and one for a drawn match'. In opposition to the amateur attitudes which were to prevail in southern club cricket between 1918 and 1968, it was hoped that league competition between the leading teams would maintain spectator interest.¹²³ Like the FA Cup beforehand, a football hungry public embraced the concept of the Football League, and by 1892 a second division was introduced, along with promotion and relegation (as opposed to re-election). Although the Football League had assured the game's long-term future as the national game, its success and popular appeal was not regarded as a desirable development by the MCC.

Cricket's previously unchallengeable position as the national game had been undermined by the MCC's reluctance to assume control. Although the MCC had attempted to inaugurate a knock-out competition akin to the FA Cup in early 1873, it found interest among the counties severely limited. Interestingly, Alcock, who had not only created the

¹²³ Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, 17.

FA Cup but captained the amateur side Wanderers to its inaugural victory,¹²⁴ had warned the MCC ‘not to meddle with cups lest they encourage others to take up the idea and thus threaten the emergent county game’.¹²⁵ Following the aborted silver cup competition, the MCC decided to leave the *laissez faire* structure of county matches to stagnate, and ‘in the absence of formal rules’ it was left to the press to decide who the county ‘champions’ were until 1890.¹²⁶ Even when addressed, the new method of deciding the champion county also remained contentious. Defeats were simply subtracted from victories to decide the champion county, and as counties chose who they played, a good deal of consternation was expressed by those who felt the system illogical or unfair. Following the SCCC’s ‘defeat’ to Lancashire in 1897, this system, and the overly relaxed nature of the ECC, was criticised in a speech to the Shalford CC by Mr. Broderick, M.P.:¹²⁷

Although they did not win the county competition, it was only through the ridiculous system of computation adopted, a system which allowed a county like Lancashire – who had been beaten twice by Surrey, and who had played more drawn games and won fewer matches than Surrey – to come out on top of the table. It was difficult for him, even in these days of Board School arithmetic, to follow the system of calculation. It was, he thought, a matter that called for the serious intervention of Parliament (laughter), and, if anyone would bring in a Bill for a better system of computation he would be happy to vote for it (laughter). They knew he was a Radical (laughter) – in cricket he most distinctly was, and he ventured to make a suggestion. County cricket began a great deal too late in the day. They who were engaged in business understood why village matches did not begin till one o’clock or two o’clock; that in county cricket could not be more absurd, than that men who were engaged wholly in cricket should begin to play about 12:30, draw stumps at two o’clock till 3.30 for luncheon, and then stop again at six or 6.30 at the latest. To say that men could not physically play more than 4.5 hours a day was a libel on the British race (laughter).¹²⁸

¹²⁴ C.B. Fry, ‘Teams that have Won the Football Association Cup’, *The Strand Magazine*, 1902, 455. <http://archive.org/details/TeamsThatHaveWonTheAssociationCup>. Accessed, 6/3/2013.

¹²⁵ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 119. Alcock was something of a feudalist when it came to the status of cricket professionals. Birley notes that he blamed the Australians for ‘the sudden and extraordinary change which took place in the bearing of professionals’ in 1882. It is hard to ignore the large, cross-class, attendances and the media attention in this regard however (134). Alcock’s contradictory attitude is peculiar as he was happy to establish the FA Cup two years previously, a cricket cup competition in Surrey in 1881, and ultimately oversee the professionalisation of football in January 1885. Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, 74.

¹²⁶ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 120.

¹²⁷ Broderick was the son of the Viscount Midleton, and had been educated at Eton and Baliol College Oxford. He was member for Guildford and Under-secretary of State for War. *Kalgoorlie Western Argus* (Western Australia), 28/10/1898.

¹²⁸ *Woking News*, 2/10/1897.

Despite Broderick's concerns, the inconvenient scheduling and informal nature of the county championship had failed to deter public interest. Bank Holiday matches were seized upon by the masses, and newspaper reports were avidly read by an increasingly literate population. And yet, the conservative attitudes of those who ran the game meant that a simple unambiguous points system was still some years away.¹²⁹ Dobbs puts this reluctance succinctly; 'to the country-house set, the very concept of a league had all the connotations of the northern masses swaying, cheering and booing at football matches'.¹³⁰ And yet, the inertia of the MCC notwithstanding, leagues were being introduced at lower levels of cricket. As in football, cups such as the Heavy Woollen Cup (1883) had led the way, but the success of the Football League ensured that leagues were soon established all over the country. In line with the historical neglect of the southern leagues, Rowland Bowen argues that the Midlands and the North of England chose to adopt league competition as a deliberate move away from the 'false cant'/morality he believed was being woven into the cricketing ethos of the South.¹³¹ Bowen is accurate in his claim that the southern dominated ECC was being imbued with a moralistic and prejudicial (in class terms) amateur ethos, but this was really only applied to the 'national' game. Furthermore, this new system of values represented the social elites of the MCC and the county clubs' 'retreat' from the traditional sporting culture that had stimulated communal identities and the social mixing between the classes. The various leagues encouraged or maintained these traditions and although 'the leagues were quintessentially phenomena of the new industrial Britain', their historical association with the urban industrial districts of the Midlands and the North is highly misleading in the period up to 1914.¹³²

¹²⁹ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 131 and 145.

¹³⁰ Brian Dobbs, *Edwardians at Play: Sport, 1890-1914* (London: Pelham, 1973), 129.

¹³¹ Bowen, *Cricket*, 116.

¹³² Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 152.

Commercialisation and the professional

Despite the historical neglect of both the rural and urban cricket leagues established throughout the South after 1888 (Chapter Two), it was apparent, particularly in the urban industrial North, that working-class participation at elite levels of sport was causing problems. The gentlemen in charge of amateur sport had developed these team sports within a public school system that promoted very different values, and they soon developed an opinion that (meritocratic) cup competitions, with their extrinsic cups and prizes, attracted poor sportsmanship (cheating), rough play, professionalism and 'rowdy' working-class crowds. Collins emphatically demonstrates that violence, disputed decisions, and poor sportsmanship pre-existed the establishment of formal competitions and the presence of working-class professionals and their supporters.¹³³

Indeed, so-called 'gentlemen' were fiercely competitive, commonly broke the rules of the game, and stretched the definition of an amateur to its very limit.¹³⁴ Lawsuits over disputed matches for large wagers were common in the eighteenth-century,¹³⁵ and nineteenth-century amateurs such as W. W. Read, England cricket captain and committee member of the staunchly amateur Surrey County Football Association (SCFA), received £1,137 in expenses during the Australian tour of 1887-1889.¹³⁶ In a similar vein, Andrew Stoddart, fellow cricket 'shamateur',¹³⁷ was paid over £200 for a football tour to Australia and New Zealand.¹³⁸ Athletics, despite its high-minded anti-professional rhetoric, was also organised

¹³³ Bob Horne has also demonstrated this trend in Brighouse during the 1840s and 1850s, "Early Cricket in Brighouse: From Its Origins up to 1875," *Sport in Society* 15, no. 2 (2012): 265–282.

¹³⁴ Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, 12-14.

¹³⁵ Mike Marqusee, 'Changing Ends: The History of Cricket', *History Today* Volume: 60 Issue: 8 2010. <http://www.historytoday.com/mike-marqusee/changing-ends-history-cricket> Accessed, 17/4/2013.

¹³⁶ Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, 44.

¹³⁷ 'Shamateurism' described the relatively common practise of amateurs accepting indirect payment – in the form of expenses or 'honorary' administrative jobs – for their talent and time as cricketers. Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 146.

¹³⁸ Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, 57-58.

on a commercial basis and had similar problems.¹³⁹ A. R. Downer, an amateur athlete of the 1890s, met few 'gentlemen' in competition, and he noted that almost every athlete, amateur or professional, competed to supplement their income or provide a wage:

How many so-called [gentlemen] amateurs run for the pure love of the sport? Do not the most, in fact, by far the most, enter and try to win only at those meetings where the best prizes are given, and in many cases, where there is the most gambling.¹⁴⁰

Despite the high-minded rhetoric, the gambling habits of old proved resilient. Furthermore, the mere competition for prizes led to 'ungentlemanly' court cases over amateur sports awards. In a spat over some fish knives and forks worth £10, the winning athlete, a Mr Wheeler (who was also a member of the Barnes Football and Richmond Cricket Clubs'), had been denied the prize as he did not qualify as a 'gentleman amateur'. The 'gentleman amateur' was thus a separate category of amateur, which according to the Crystal Palace Athletic Club excluded 'any person who had run in a race as a means of livelihood, or who was a mechanic or a tradesman'.¹⁴¹ Manual labour was detrimental to being considered a gentleman, but such a definition did not exist in the 'Putney laws' for rowing, which had been adopted by the Ribble Rowing Club in Manchester.¹⁴² Giving evidence to another court case over a disputed prize, Walter Platt, editor of *Athlete* stated that 'it was well enough understood what the term [gentleman amateur] meant; it was a *lex non scripta*, and could not be found in any code of rules'.¹⁴³ Like amateurism itself, the status of the gentleman amateur was enforceable, but remained so subjective and vague as to be legally meaningless. The ambiguity of this rather typical generalisation was highlighted by one witness who 'considered himself entitled to be called a "gentleman amateur," although

¹³⁹ The first point of business at the AAA's AGM of 1896 was the announcement that the AAA Championship Meeting at Stamford Bridge had 'produced a profit of £245 16s 2d'. *Woking News*, 3/4/1896.

¹⁴⁰ Downer, *Champion Sprinter of the World* cited in Phil Vasili, *The First Black Footballer, Arthur Wharton, 1865-1930: An Absence of Memory* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 47.

¹⁴¹ *The Morning Post*, 22/1/1873. In many southern athletics clubs only 'gentlemen amateurs' were allowed to compete, and it was not until 1880, with the formation of the Amateur Athletic Association, that runners other than gentlemen were allowed to compete. *Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁴² The 'Putney laws' were established by the representatives of the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Clubs at the Putney Rowing Club.

¹⁴³ *Lex non scripta* referred to an 'unwritten law'.

he did receive a weekly wage'.¹⁴⁴ The naivety of Platt, who was to later become secretary of the Northern Counties Athletics Association, and others like him, is surprising, for many gentlemen amateurs competed for money, particularly within cricket.¹⁴⁵

This was but one aspect of amateurism's underbelly, which many were happy to condone. George Lacy of Barmouth thought that any amateur who claimed more than their basic expenses was an acceptable state of affairs: 'What if some of the gentlemen *do* get a penny more than their legitimate expenses, does it make them worse cricketers, or less gentlemen?' He went on to dismiss the discriminatory social distinctions encouraged by amateurism: '[Although] it is idle to deny there *are* class distinctions, and, democracy notwithstanding, there will be so long as human nature remains human nature'. Most significantly, he warned that the county championship was 'reducing cricket to the level of mere popular show', and that 'the great increase in attendance at them [was] not made up of lovers of cricket, but of seekers of excitement'. Lacy failed to recognise that those seeing exciting entertainment harked back to an older traditional popular culture rather than the rationalised late-nineteenth-century amateur model. In a demonstration of the increasingly common 'nature' of those sympathetic to amateurism, Lacy thought that they ought to be excluded 'by raising the entrance money to at least a shilling'.¹⁴⁶ Like the football league, the working –classes were flocking to ECC matches, but whereas those in control of football clubs welcomed the working-man and his sixpence W. G. Grace was one who thought the 'amateurs would not stand for rowdy crowd behaviour for long and give up the county games, form [exclusive amateur] clubs, and decide fixtures among themselves'.¹⁴⁷ Although the amateurs within the 'first-class' game failed to execute such a

¹⁴⁴ *The Lancaster Gazette*, 11/12/1875.

¹⁴⁵ Vasili, *The First Black Footballer*, Arthur Wharton, 1865-1930, 48.

¹⁴⁶ *Cricket*, 25/11/1894, 444.

¹⁴⁷ *Woking News*, 23/8/1895.

threat, as will be demonstrated, these were issues that led to the metropolitan elite within the club game to do exactly what Grace had predicted.

The amateur response

Although such men had been at the forefront of the establishment of a variety of sporting bodies (increasingly prefixed with the word amateur after 1860), their pre-eminent position within sport was being seriously challenged in an increasingly competitive and professional era. How concerted this challenge was in real terms is hard to determine, but it is clear from the reactionary measures taken by those in charge of a number of sports that they took this threat seriously. Football's professionalisation had occurred at a time when the effects of such a decision were unknown. The subsequent capitulation of the sport to men scarcely recognisable to the public school elites as 'gentlemen' encouraged a number of sports, including cricket, to persist with gentlemanly amateurism into the twentieth-century. Although social dilution was a sign of 'democratic' times, the pre-1914 gentlemen amateurs (as portrayed by E. W. Hornung's *Raffles*),¹⁴⁸ were not prepared to surrender their social position to the working-classes.

Indeed the 'gentlemen' in charge of cricket, like the strictly amateur sport of rugby union, had not only continued to shun meritocratic competitions, they felt compelled to defend their social position via the introduction of increasingly demeaning distinctions upon the professionals. After 1870 separate changing rooms, entrances to the ground, referring to amateurs as 'Sir' or 'Mr', the positioning of initials on scorecards and members-only pavilions, were how those who ran cricket kept their social distance from those they needed to make the game viable. Such restrictions simply reflected the insecurity of those

¹⁴⁸ Raffles, the fictional gentleman thief and amateur batsman was constantly getting the better of professional policeman and bowler alike.

in charge, as a resurgent popular sporting culture threatened the culturally specific form of sport preferred by the public school elites who had seized control of sport in the middle decades of the nineteenth-century.

As early as 1892 *The Globe* had commented on the rising status of the professional cricketer. The news that the Surrey professional George Lohmann was to 'winter abroad' on medical advice had been advertised in the 'personal paragraphs which immediately succeed the Court Circular in *The Times*'. The article then proclaimed: 'What ampler or more significant recognition of the social importance of the professional cricketer could be wished for?' It concluded that: 'The exclusive privileges of the aristocracy of birth are a thing of the past. The average man takes quite as much interest in the fortunes and movements of the aristocracy of sport'.¹⁴⁹

By the Edwardian era, the status security enjoyed by the mid-Victorian middle-classes was in sharp decline, and the authority of the gentleman amateur was further challenged.¹⁵⁰ In 1913 *The Field* explained the state of affairs that had existed previously:

One great distinction, far sharper than it is to-day, cut across all sport, and, indeed every department of activity, the distinction, namely, between those who were gentlemen and those who were not. Nothing could alter or qualify this distinction of birth. If a gentleman 'turned professional,' as we say, he remained a gentleman. ... In fact, when a gentleman and not-gentleman met in athletic rivalry ... the feeling that it was 'man to man' yielded to the knowledge that it was man against gentleman.¹⁵¹

This feeling was progressively undermined by public interest in the increasingly commercialised County Championship and Test matches, which led to a rise in the status of the professionals such as Lohmann. *The Field* continued:

In the present stage of evolution games have been both democratized and universalized. As soon as the patronage of the public was assured it was inevitable that some games should be exploited on business principles. This result has had its good influences. There is one

¹⁴⁹ *Cricket*, 29/12/1892, 508.

¹⁵⁰ To the traditional Victorian upper and middle-classes, the Edwardian period may well have appeared to be the end of the world as they had once known it. The political influence of the landed classes had been reduced, and reform of the House of Lords was concomitant to the rise of the urban-led Labour movement.

¹⁵¹ *New York Times*, 16/3/1913.

interesting effect of public patronage generally, which shows how public games react upon social life; that is, that not the professional only, but the amateur also, have become in a sense 'the servants of the public'.¹⁵²

As the Lohmann story suggests, such a state-of-affairs had been established long before 1913, and, among more enlightened quarters, even the status of the amateur had been regarded as anachronistic as early as 1873. *The Sporting Gazette* suggesting that the concept of the amateur sportsman had 'passed into a fresh stage of its history, and the amateur is now so-called to distinguish him from the professional, not in reference to the respective merits of each, but in reference to their respective social standing'.¹⁵³ And yet, the image of the amateur-led 'golden age', constructed and disseminated by the gentlemen amateurs and their acolytes, dominates the game's history.

Conclusion

The industrial revolution had led to the creation of an urbanised middle-class who utilised sport to promote a new uniform set of cultural values. Initially associated with 'athleticism', these values, under the guise of amateurism, were to replace the pre-industrial culture of sport, which many of the public school educated middle-classes now regarded as undesirable. Thus, the gambling, relatively easy social mixing, drinking and community identities associated with pre-industrial sports were either eradicated or strictly policed from the mid-nineteenth-century by middle-class men who increasingly sought respectable or rational leisure. These Victorian and Edwardian gentlemen sought to embody a combination of aristocratic *noblesse oblige* and a philosophical approach to sport that had been adapted from the classical studies that dominated the public school curriculum. The resulting concept of the 'gentleman amateur' proved to be one of the most significant

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ *The Sporting Gazette*, 20/9/1873.

middle-class constructs of the Victorian and Edwardian eras; but the 'ethos' he was supposed to embody, and the utility of amateurism within sport, became increasingly ideological rather than philosophical.

Whereas their aristocratic predecessors had been relatively happy to share sports fields or patronise working-class leisure, the urban middle-classes retreated from such interactions. Such a development was regarded as necessary by the increasingly insecure middle-classes as the egalitarian social developments of the industrial age began to affect their social position within and outside of sport. The 'industrialised' development and commercialisation of sport undermined the fundamental link between the middle-class and the construction of their gentlemanly ideal. Indeed the very nature of 'fair play' so critical to the development and spread of Victorian sport and the British national identity referred to by Orwell, had steadily opened these middle-class sportsmen to the ignominy of defeat at the hands of their social inferiors. Such a possibility was especially prevalent within the new meritocratic cup and league competitions. These competitions, allied to the commercial age in which they operated, had led to increasing levels of professionalism among working-class competitors, and this class-based distinction between the amateurs and the professionals was exploited in order to maintain social distance within those sports which rejected universal professionalism.

Unlike football and rugby league, which had adopted professionalism, or athletics, rowing and rugby union, which had chosen to remain strictly amateur, cricket's pre-industrial history enabled amateurs and professionals to co-exist. Despite the firm grip it had on the professionals – a cohort of men who essentially remained indentured servants well into the twentieth-century – the MCC recognised that a formalised, meritocratic, national competition would possibly lead to a loss of control similar to that witnessed in football following the creation of the Football League in 1888. Increasingly therefore it was

competition itself, rather than professionalism, that was questioned within middle-class cricket circles. Such questions were based upon the presence of large 'rowdy' working-class crowds, and the rising status of the professional. Although the ECC was to slowly develop into a recognisable league, the social elite's reservations about the role which meritocratic league competitions played in encouraging professionalism, and the presence of working-class players, manifested themselves within the metropolitan club game differently. As hinted by W. G. Grace above, and examined in more detail in Chapter Three, calls were soon made for the abolition of the ECC. Leagues were indeed banned, and an increased emphasis upon the choice of opposition, and a leisurely 'sociability' before sporting success, were repeatedly cited as reasons to maintain non-competitive cricket. And yet, contrary to the historiography, cricket leagues had sprouted up all over England prior to the First World War.

The establishment of cricket leagues in the North were not, as proposed by Bowen, a deliberate move away from the 'cant' of the predominantly southern amateurs.¹⁵⁴ In fact, quite the opposite is true. Although Bowen is correct in identifying the type of ideological (moralistic and prejudicial) ethos increasingly associated with cricket in the South, outside of the 'first-class' game these values were hard to enforce. And yet, it would appear that two distinct regionalised cricket cultures did develop within England: the competitive league cricket of the 'North', and the genteel friendly club cricket of the 'South'. The following chapter examines whether this image of southern club cricket is accurate with regard to the social and cultural development of the game in Surrey prior to the outbreak of the First World War.

¹⁵⁴ Bowen, *Cricket*, 116.

Chapter Two

The Development of Society and Sport in Surrey: 1870-1914

Introduction

In 1895 the semi-professional Northern Rugby Football Union (later the Rugby League) broke away from the metropolitan dominated, and strictly amateur, RFU in an act laden with both regional and class connotations. The breakaway was indicative of the survival, or 'revival', of traditional alternatives to the now dominant amateur sporting culture in particular regions of Britain. The existence of these alternative cultures notwithstanding, the dominance of metropolitan amateurs did have serious repercussions in other terms. Most significantly, this affected the national image (and official histories) of most sports, which reflected the doings and attitudes of what was very often an elite minority. As discussed in the introductory chapter, these hegemonic portrayals were unable, or their authors unwilling, to fully accommodate the alternative sporting cultures that existed most obviously across the Midlands and the North of England, and this was especially true with regard to cricket.¹ The regional (southern) and cultural (gentlemanly amateurism) specificity of cricket's 'national' narrative contrasts significantly with the predominance of competitive leagues in urban centres across the North. This has engendered a historical assumption that sport in the regions adjacent to London, and cricket in particular, replicated this national narrative. Certainly 'village cricket', with its close associations with the ruling elites and the southern English idiom,² has informed the historical orthodoxy and the public

¹ Stone, "Regional Cricket Identities", (2008 and 2010).

² Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*, 42.

school/amateur classes' romantic ideal.³ But did the cricket played in Surrey prior to 1914 really reflect this historical ideal?

In order to answer this question, it is necessary to examine the social development of Surrey and identify at which stage prior to the First World War the County (or particular areas within) became an urban or suburban stronghold of middle-class influence. Given the growth of London, it might be assumed that the middle-classes were able to usurp the traditional elites and exert significant influence from the 1870s.⁴ If correct, it would be a fair assumption that the new cultural values attributed to sport by the metropolitan elites within the RFU, MCC and AAA would be evident in the organisation of sports throughout Surrey. For instance, had the traditional pre-industrial pastimes and associated levels of violence, drinking, community identity, cross-class participation, competition and limited forms of commercialism survived? Or, as suggested by Tranter, Malcolmson and Bailey, had they have been removed in favour of 'rationalised' respectable leisure, and other sporting pursuits, played for their own sake by specific classes, rather than between them?⁵

This chapter will thus examine the relationship between Surrey and London in terms of how the metropolis consumed, re-populated and influenced Surrey in demographic, social and cultural terms. By using cricket as a barometer of change, it will test the extent to which the middle-class 'suburbanisation' of Surrey took place prior to the First World War, and it will suggest that Surrey had not succumbed to middle-class suburbanisation by 1914.⁶ In this concern it will be demonstrated that the middle-classes, who were becoming

³ As suggested in the previous chapter, even radicals such as Orwell employed such imagery.

⁴ F. M. L. Thompson, *The Rise of Suburbia* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982); Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (London: Folio Society, 1996).

⁵ N. L. Tranter and Economic History Society, *Sport, Economy, and Society in Britain, 1750-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2; Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 140–144; Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850*, 89.

⁶ In *The Rise of Suburbia*, Thompson suggests that any population centre with over 50,000 inhabitants would have 'suburbs'. Surrey does not fit into this categorisation. He also suggests that the introduction of railways 'permitted' or supported the growth of suburbanisation, rather than made such a development virtually inevitable, as the human traffic was already there. Again the distances involved suggest this was not strictly

increasingly influential at both a local and national level within urban environments, were seemingly unable to dislodge traditional social hierarchies or customs in Surrey prior to the First World War. In order to answer such questions it is necessary to set-out what Surrey is; not simply in terms of geography, but also in respect to its social, economic and cultural identity. This analysis will then provide the context for an examination of how the county, its population, and the cricket played within, developed. It will first highlight how boundary changes undermined the county's urbanisation at the very point MacKinder suggested/implied it was almost complete. Second, it will examine how cricket below the first-class level, be it 'village' or not, as well as other sports within Surrey operated in relation to London.⁷ The chapter begins however, with a discussion of the county's image, and how a confusing dichotomy has developed between the urban image promoted by a number of historians and geographers, and the rural image inherent in much of the cricket literature.

Surrey: rural, suburban or urban?

In a manner all south-eastern England is a single urban community; for steam and electricity are changing our geographical conceptions. A city in an economic sense is no longer an area covered continuously with streets and houses.⁸

Despite Mackinder's confident statement, the south-east of England remains a curious amalgam of city and country. London dominates this area of England like no other, as many who live in the 'country', work in the 'city'. The economic and cultural omnipresence of London dictates the 'imagined communities' of the South-East and the county of Surrey

applicable in west and east Surrey. F. M. L Thompson, *The Rise of Suburbia* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), 31–33.

⁷ The SCFA, although dominated by metropolitans, catered for football throughout Surrey. Cricket on the other hand was not organised in the same way. With the exception of the national/international MCC, there is no evidence that a similar organising body existed prior to 1915.

⁸ Mackinder, *Britain and the British Seas*, 258.

in particular. This metropolitan 'omnipresence' reached maturity in the post-Second World War period, and it was summed up by Peter Brandon in 1977:

[Surrey is] dominated by London as no other county in England is dominated by a mighty city and so there is hardly anywhere in Surrey where one can feel free of London... It now has an urban image... the once-loved cosy familiarity of Surrey with memories of blue hills in the distance, glowing fires, cups of tea and toast, now seem to many, over-cultivated, over-manicured, and over-built. Parts of Surrey are covered in a hybrid half-country, half-city subtopia that seems almost worse than the urban sprawl.⁹

Despite his somewhat resigned point of view (Surreyites still drink tea and eat toast), Brandon touched upon the confused nature of Surrey's identity. It remains the most wooded county in Great Britain with 22% woodland coverage (37,564 hectares) compared to a national average of 12%,¹⁰ and yet, Surrey is the most densely populated county in the south-eastern region.¹¹ Dwarfed, overrun and periodically consumed by London, yet with ample and indeed beautiful countryside, much of the county remains 'rural', or is deemed Green Belt.¹² However, Christopher Hussey observed that much of Surrey's countryside, or 'green belt',¹³ was a: 'vast created landscape neutral enough to our eyes, but in reality managed as much for picturesque appearance as for economic returns'.¹⁴ Although population numbers remained steady, Mackinder's statement of 1902 suggests that rural towns and villages, following the introduction of the railways, were becoming increasingly 'suburbanised'. Ever more inhabitants now earned their living away in London rather than locally from the land or in the numerous small-scale industries. Consequently, as London, and its suburban middle-classes, expanded ever further out into the surrounding countryside, so did the capital's influence on the lives of those living in Surrey. Peter Wagstaff, who provides a more academic description of Brandon's views, has noted

⁹ Peter Brandon, *A History of Surrey* (London: Phillimore, 1977), 11–12.

¹⁰ "Economic Profile of Surrey" <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/environment-housing-and-planning/development-in-surrey/economic-development-in-surrey/economic-profile-of-surrey> Accessed, 21/5/2012.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Brandon argues that the concept of the Green Belt 'saved Surrey from being a vast commuter dormitory'. Brandon, *A History of Surrey*, 121.

¹³ The so-called 'green belt', a policy for controlling urban growth and preserving rural areas, makes up 73% of Surrey. <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/environment-housing-and-planning/development-in-surrey/economic-development-in-surrey/economic-profile-of-surrey> Accessed, 2/4/2013.

¹⁴ Brandon, *A History of Surrey*, 12.

how 'cities such as London ... have clearly performed [the] function of [a] central point in ... political, economic and sometimes cultural terms, [thus] assimilating their peripheral regions'.¹⁵ Surrey, throughout its history, is one county of England that has capitulated to this process more than any other, while still remaining a recognisable and 'independent' entity.¹⁶

Despite Alun Howkins' suggestion that Surrey is 'symbolically the most suburban county in England', many of these claims of urbanisation, or even suburbanisation, and Surrey's 'independence' as a political entity are debatable.¹⁷ Although the county continued to lose much of its urban territory in the north into the 1960s and became increasingly dependent upon the migration of prosperous Londoners for their wealth, towns in the east and west of Surrey remained 'rural' in character into the twentieth-century. Indeed, if the definition of 'rural' used by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is employed, the total rural population of 261,000 in 2006 accounted for a surprisingly large 24% of Surrey's total population.¹⁸ Culturally, the image of an independent Surrey is even less secure. Today Surrey has no regional daily newspaper (only London's *Evening Standard*), or television company (Surrey receives only London, other regional (*ITV Meridian*)¹⁹ or nationally based programming). No Surrey specific radio station exists on the BBC network, as *BBC Sussex and Surrey Radio* serves the county. Apart from one countywide weekly newspaper (*Surrey Advertiser*) and one independent radio station (*Eagle Radio*), which also broadcasts to North-East Hampshire, contemporary Surrey is almost totally dependent upon London's media for its news and cultural representation.

This process of metropolitan political, economic and cultural hegemony, had been slowly

¹⁵ Peter Wagstaff, *Regionalism in the European Union* (Exeter: Intellect, 1999), 6–7.

¹⁶ In this concern, Middlesex, despite existing as a County Cricket Club has ceased to exist as a recognized political territory – Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 311.

¹⁷ Alun Howkins, *The Death of Rural England: a Social History of the Countryside Since 1900* (London: Routledge, 2003), 164.

¹⁸ <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/environment-housing-and-planning/development-in-surrey/economic-development-in-surrey/economic-profile-of-surrey> Accessed, 2/4/2013.

¹⁹ ITV's *Meridian* serves Kent, Hampshire, Sussex and parts of Surrey.

developing for centuries by the time Mackinder suggested it was complete at the turn of the twentieth-century:

The metropolis in its largest meaning includes all the counties for whose inhabitants London is "Town," whose men do habitual business there, whose women buy and spend there, whose morning paper is printed there, whose standard of thought is determined there. ... Birmingham, in Industrial England, is the nearest independent community, with its own heartbeat, with subject boroughs which call it "Town," with its own daily newspapers guiding opinion along lines not wholly dictated from London.²⁰

Under such circumstances the same doubts apply to the economic independence of the County. As Mackinder suggested over a century ago, the men (and increasingly women) of Surrey 'do habitual business' within London, and for the most part, these were often members of the expanding professional and commercial middle-classes. This *bourgeois* class not only filled a social void between upper-class land owners and those who largely worked upon their land, they usurped the original population's habitat as parts of Surrey became increasingly suburbanised.²¹ In time, the members of this new class also went on to alter the meaning, form and structure of their leisure, with cricket at the forefront of this change. But, as will be examined, the development of this class, and the demographic and cultural changes within Surrey they instigated, took many generations to complete. This chapter will test the validity of Mackinder's statements, especially whether the 'metropolitan' middle-classes began to dominate as early as he suggested, by examining the origins and social make-up of cricket clubs throughout Surrey.

²⁰ Mackinder, *Britain and the British Seas*, 258.

²¹ Such was the social cachet of a Surrey address and the economic dominance of these gentlemen, that Surrey today contains five of the top ten most expensive 'suburbs' in Britain. Caroline McGhie, "Property in the suburbs: Britain's top 10 richest suburbs" <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/investmentinproperty/3360057/Property-in-the-suburbs-Britains-top-10-richest-suburbs.html> Accessed, 17/8/2012.

Early development, 1750-1850

Although Henry VIII and Elizabeth I had utilised Surrey as a place of residence and recreation, it was the broadly aristocratic gentleman who were to increasingly populate the county and develop leisure and other sporting activities in the eighteenth-century. As early as 1680, a century before the inaugural running of The Derby, Epsom was 'already fashionable', and 'The Virtuoso' in 1704 noted [that the town] was a "suburban excursion" for the "sprucer sort of fellow".²² The invasion of the Surrey countryside by metropolitan gentlemen continued, and house building, or the redevelopment of older sites such as Hatchlands Park near East Clandon, 'was rife between 1690 and 1730, with the gentlemen of this period representing the very first 'Surrey commuters'. By the 1720s, the building of country houses was so widespread in Surrey that Daniel Defoe observed how 'the ten miles from Guildford to Leatherhead make one continual line of gentlemen's houses ... and their parks or gardens almost touch each other'.²³ And as Connell states; 'the exodus from London [that these new aristocratic/upper-middle classes started, has] never lost its social status'.²⁴ Although these men and their families formed the first small bridge between the landed rich and the poor, their influence was negligible. Cricket clubs such as Hambledon (Hampshire) and Slindon (Sussex) were transformed by the landed elites, but as Rob Light suggests, these aristocratic cricketers' shared or accommodated the traditional values of competition and local identity:

the roots of both the club and most of its players were firmly set in rural Hampshire [despite many of the best players hailing from Surrey], and on occasions such as when Hambledon played England for £1,000 in 1777 the importance of the contest went far beyond the stake money that had been wagered.²⁵

²² John Connell, *The End of Tradition: Country Life in Central Surrey* (London: Routledge, 1978), 4–5.

²³ *Ibid.*, 5. Another constant line of buildings also existed within Surrey and Hampshire; Public Houses between Portsmouth and London marked the well-trodden trade routes. Farnham, another medium to small town, had more than 52 Public Houses well into the twentieth-century.

²⁴ Connell, *The End of Tradition*, 5.

²⁵ Rob Light, *Cricket's Forgotten Past*, 39.

The sharing of common values was indicative of how little the communities of Surrey had changed by the end of the eighteenth-century. Much of the county – even in the north – remained ‘remote from urban and industrial influence’, and much of the indigenous population ‘exist[ed] in autonomous ignorance, until overrun by other relationships emanating from London’.²⁶ These relationships ultimately took the form of an increasingly expanding middle-class, their properties and institutions. The small-scale and widely-spread nature of industries as diverse as delftware in Lambeth, glass in Chiddingfold, quarries in Limpsfield and Leatherhead, tanneries in Gomshall, Farnham, Bermondsey and Southwark, gunpowder in Godstone, Ewell and Chilworth, paper in Godalming, lime in Dorking, spring water from Caterham and countywide timber/charcoal, forestry and agricultural production remained the case throughout the industrial revolution (1750-1850).²⁷

Agriculture in Surrey, although efficient and famous for the corn and livestock markets in Farnham and Guildford, did not provide the capital with much of the food it demanded. It was to be brewing however, which existed in Guildford, Farnham, Leatherhead, and the northern districts of the county, which would be Surrey’s most enduring industry. Other industries, following the demise of the wool trade, struggled to make much impact until London finally provided access in the form of bridges and freer trade. The increasing financial, social, political and cultural influence of London, in the form of the Stock Exchange, the ‘season’, parliament and the House of Lords, the MCC and other gentlemen’s clubs’, witnessed the exodus of the landed cricketing patrons to London by the end of the eighteenth-century.²⁸ Cricket, which Pycroft had disingenuously suggested

²⁶ Brandon, *A History of Surrey*, 14.

²⁷ H. E Malden, *The Victoria History of the County of Surrey. Vol. 2* (London: Constable, 1905), 243–249.

²⁸ The aristocracy were increasingly ‘urbane’ from the late eighteenth-century. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*, 47.

had ‘*become* the common practice among the common people in ... Surrey’ by 1800, was thus left to return (if it had ever changed?) to the traditional values of old.²⁹

Economic differences between the rich and poor, as Marqusee has pointed out, ‘were becoming acute’, and following the French Revolution, the Peterloo Massacre and the social conflicts discussed in Chapter One, many cricket historians have suggested that the cricketing aristocracy retreated from the game.³⁰ Certainly, the early decades of the nineteenth-century were punctuated by social unrest, but whether the presence of a new middle-class after 1830 calmed or accentuated such problems in Surrey is unclear. The Reform Act of 1832, designed as it was to benefit the new northern industrial/commercial centres such as Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and Bradford in political terms, meant little changed in the rural parts of the South as a whole and Surrey in particular.³¹

Like their eighteenth-century predecessors, this ‘second wave’ of immigrants to Surrey made little impact. Despite rising up the social hierarchy quickly (particularly in more rural parts), Connell notes that they ‘had no position in the parallel economic hierarchy: they were in the village, but not of it’.³² The radical Cobbett bitterly observed in 1830, that the new arrivals in Surrey were not the established gentry, and how any ‘emulation’ of the social mixing, patronage of leisure, or *noblesse oblige*, demonstrated by their predecessors was severely lacking. They were:

A gentry, only now-and-then residing at all, having no relish for country delights, foreign in their manners, distant and haughty in their behaviour, looking to the soil only for their rents ... unacquainted with its cultivators, despising them and their pursuits ... The war and paper system had brought in nabobs, negro-drivers, Generals, Admirals, Governors ... loan jobbers, lottery dealers, bankers [and] stockjobbers.³³

²⁹ Pycroft, *The Cricket Field*, 82. Italics added.

³⁰ Brookes, *English Cricket*, 48; Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 46–48.

³¹ Apart from a break between 1830 and 1858, the Onslow family represented Guildford as MPs for 220 years. “Earls Of Onslow, Of Clandon Park, West Clandon: Family Records”

http://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/GetRecord/SHCOL_G173 Accessed, 24/11/2009.

³² Connell, *The End of Tradition*, 3.

³³ Ibid.

Howitt, writing in 1840, agreed, but despite providing an early indication of the four classes utilised by the Hascombe Parish Nursing Association by 1895,³⁴ he thought that the rural heart of Surrey remained unaffected:

The population was growing quite rapidly closer to London but in central Surrey the only new arrivals for some centuries had been the gentlemen. They had produced a curiously dichotomous society. As one observer commented: "A vast number of aristocracy reside in the country for its proximity to town; and besides them there are the farmers and their labourers; the servants of the aristocracy estates – a numerous and very peculiar class; and the few tradesmen who supply the great houses. The many gradations of rank and property which are found in more trading, manufacturing and mixed districts do not exist here".³⁵

Thus, the insignificant numbers of the new middle-class, and their reluctance to involve themselves in traditional rural culture by mid-century, meant that relations between the classes remained predicated upon traditional cultural values, and much of the traditional leisure calendar remained intact. In the years prior to any middle-class patronage or notions of rational recreation, alternative methods were needed to secure playing facilities, with local cricketers in Farnham and Cranleigh essentially helping themselves to suitable areas of land. Underdown notes how some of Farnham's 'inhabitants converted part of the Bishop of Winchester's park into a cricket ground, without bothering to ask anyone for permission',³⁶ and approximately one hundred years later, Cranleigh cricketers enclosed a suitable part of the common in 1856.³⁷ This was behaviour that was to be, where possible, no longer tolerated in urban areas.

In the urban areas, where space and social integration was more limited, the 'respectable' middle-classes were, literally, gaining ground. Dave Russell has detailed how the upper and middle-classes perceived what many historians have regarded as exclusively working-

³⁴ *The Hascombe Almanac, 1895*. Surrey Archaeological Society, Ref: 170/18/1.

³⁵ William Howitt, *The Rural Life of England*. (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1972), 594; Thompson notes that domestic servants were a 'large group without an identity, not incorporated into working-class culture, organisation, or politics, and lacking a culture of their own'. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, 247.

³⁶ Underdown, *Start of Play*, 19 and 170.

³⁷ Cranleigh CC's honorary Treasurer in 1902; Albert Napper's father had enclosed a playing area in 1856. Richard Everard Webster and Charles William Alcock, *Surrey Cricket: Its History and Associations ...* (London: Longmans, 1902), 416.

class folk football: '[Folk] football was ... seen as a threat to the social and political order ... Its habit of bringing the younger element of the lower orders into public spaces in large numbers [was] increasingly seen as inappropriate and, indeed, positively dangerous in an age of mass political radicalism and subsequent fear of public order'.³⁸ As in the Midlands and the North, a number of games across the urbanised north of Surrey either 'fell into desuetude or were suppressed', and these included Richmond (1840), East Molesey (1857) and eventually Kingston-upon-Thames (1867).³⁹ The creation and rising influence of the middle-classes in urban areas had begun to dissolve traditional social ties, and even engender some hostility by the early 1840s. Ironically, this manifested itself in the one institution the reformers wanted the working-classes to spend more time in; the Church.⁴⁰

The Archdeacon of Surrey, Samuel Wilberforce, had toured the parishes of the county in 1841 and drew some interesting conclusions regarding the increased influence of the middle-classes in urban areas and the repercussions this had upon Church attendance by the poor. Wilberforce thought that the poor were being driven out of attending Church of England services by those with wealth or parish influence via the 'private appropriation of what once were acknowledged as the common rights of the parishioners'.⁴¹ While this process remained on-going in the rural districts of Surrey, Wilberforce argued it had already excluded the poor within the urban districts.⁴² He decried the 'tendency of all things round us is to break our people into separate and unsympathising classes [and thought] ... The unity of the Church's worship, in which the rich and poor might mix

³⁸ Dave Russell, *Football and the English : a Social History of Association Football in England, 1863-1995* (Preston: Carnegie Pub., 1997), 6.

³⁹ Ibid., 7; Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 33; Tony Collins, "Football", 118.

⁴⁰ F. M. L. Thompson, "Social Control in Victorian Britain," *The Economic History Review* 34, no. 2 (1981): 200.

⁴¹ This particular appropriation was in the form of private pews in chancels and naves, but enclosure would have replicated this process. *A charge, delivered at the ordinary visitation of the Archdeaconry of Surrey, November 1842* / Talbot Collection of British Pamphlets by Wilberforce, Samuel, 1842, 16. See: <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?view=image;size=50;id=uiuo.ark%3A%2F13960%2Ft87h1t014;page=root;seq=5> Accessed, 18/6/2012.

⁴² Ibid., 18-19.

together freely, would be a blessed safeguard from this danger'.⁴³ Such a desire was not strictly for social harmony however, but to enable the Church of England to regain control of the absentee working-classes and maintain its position of importance in society. The Chartist protests he witnessed in Surrey were thus, for Wilberforce, not only the result of 'the unequal distribution of wealth',⁴⁴ but the Church's neglect of, and failure to maintain 'control' of the (urbanised) working-classes; control which should, as a 'first duty', 'see that all men "behave orderly, soberly, and reverently"'.⁴⁵

Urbanisation and the appropriation of public space by an ever expanding middle-class desirous of respectability had thus broken down traditional community relationships and led to a new form of class antagonism in northern Surrey, where the Chartists had received a good deal of support.⁴⁶ According to Sweet, 'destitution and social protest had become uncomfortably obvious features of urban life', but it is clear that in Surrey's rural regions, hunger and political unrest also persisted, and protests were common.⁴⁷

The coming of the middle-classes: 1850-1900

Although the significant role of the railways in providing the catalyst for the transformation of the nation after 1830 is broadly agreed upon, the role of the railways in the suburbanisation of Surrey is less clear.⁴⁸ Despite its proximity to London, the county never reached the levels of industrial production, or, outside of its northern districts, the density

⁴³ Ibid., 19.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 29.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 21.

⁴⁶ Surrey towns provided thousands of signatories to the Chartist Petition of 1842: Lambeth, 6,600; Bermondsey, 5,600; Croydon, 1,800. Far in excess of the Potteries as a whole which only provided 2,000, and Halifax's 600. *Northern Star*, 7/5/1842 cited in "The six Chartist petitions of 1839-51" <http://www.chartists.net/Chartist-petitions.htm#second> Accessed, 20/6/2012.

⁴⁷ Sweet, *The English Town, 1680-1840*, 227.

⁴⁸ F. M. L. Thompson, "The case against the historical inevitability of suburbs", in David C Goodman, *The European Cities and Technology Reader: Industrial to Post-industrial City* (London: Routledge, in association with the Open University, 1999), 31–37.

of population witnessed elsewhere despite the widespread introduction of the railways from 1844 (Guildford to Woking line). Indicative of the social unrest that punctuated this period of change in Surrey, the navvies building the Godalming railway extension rioted with the loss of life in 1855.⁴⁹ Many of these major routes between the coast and London passed through a number of towns in Surrey and connected some towns and villages for the first time. As many ancillary routes were not completed until the late 1880s,⁵⁰ it was to be another two or three decades before the full economic, social and cultural impact of the introduction of the railways was to be felt in some rural areas.⁵¹ In this concern, much of the housing development (villas rather than terrace houses) noted by Bartholomew in 1870 would have been almost exclusively within the urban/suburban areas of north Surrey adjacent to railway stations serving the metropolis. Commensurate with the needs of the commuting middle-classes, by 1887, Croydon in the metropolitan north-east of the County had six railway stations, while the small town of Godalming in the west, which only had a population of 8,500, had two.⁵²

London's population had more than doubled in the first half of the nineteenth-century, from a little under a million people in 1801 to almost two and a half million in 1851.⁵³ The expansion of the railway system in Surrey encouraged population growth also, but this was

⁴⁹ *Illustrated London News*, Vol. unknown 1855: Riot and loss of life at Godalming (Rail navies), 131. SHC Ref: J/572/23. There were further protests in 1858. See: *Illustrated London News*, Vol. 33 1858: Portsmouth rail dispute (Godalming to Havant line), 35. SHC Ref: J/572/29.

⁵⁰ For instance, the Lingfield and Dormansland railway line in the east of Surrey was completed in 1888. See: SHC Ref: 7425/1.

⁵¹ Even within what is now entirely urban Middlesex, the method of railway construction, which catered for long distance travel rather than short commutes, left large tracts of countryside untouched. "Middlesex vs Surrey, Essex, Kent", http://middlesexcountypress.com/?page_id=81 Accessed, 5/2/2013.

⁵² John Bartholomew's *Gazetteer of the British Isles*, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/descriptions/entry_page.jsp?text_id=1900340 Accessed, 21/5/2012. 'Between 1851 and 1901, the number of people employed on the railways in Surrey (excluding construction) increased by nearly twelve-fold – from 353 people to 4,361 people'. "Surrey", www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide.../surrey/surrey-area-monitor.pdf Accessed, 21/5/2012. Surbiton grew from a total of 541 households in 1851 to 2,022 in 1891. Christopher French, "Who Lived in Suburbia? Surbiton in the Second Half of the 19th Century," *Family & Community History* 10, no. 2 (2007): 93–109.

⁵³ John M Clarke, *The Brookwood Necropolis Railway* (Oxford: Oakwood, 1995), 9.

to be overwhelmingly dominated by the middle-classes.⁵⁴ This dominance ensured that ‘the amenities of climate and scenery, the vicinity of the metropolis, and the complete means of railway communication ... caused many parts of Surrey to be studded over with mansions and villas’, rather than the tens of thousands of terraced houses witnessed in industrialised England.⁵⁵

Significant fears of cholera epidemics in an increasingly crowded London, led to the London Necropolis Act of 1852, and the capital’s deceased were now also brought by train to the new Brookwood Cemetery (Est. 1854) near Woking.⁵⁶ Although Woking’s population was to grow around this significant enterprise – the crematorium (Est. 1878) was extended to ten acres by 1911 –⁵⁷ large numbers of London’s dead appear to have formed the vast majority of Surrey’s new ‘residents’.⁵⁸ Despite the sumptuous landscaping of Brookwood, other population centres had less morbid surroundings with which to attract the professional classes. ‘Towns’ like Byfleet, not far from Woking, described itself in 1896 as ‘a resort for business people’,⁵⁹ but indicative of the slow nature of the development of this and other residential areas in Surrey, the population of Byfleet stood at only 1,688 in 1901.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ By 1951 agricultural workers formed less than 1% of the working population. *200 years of the Census in... SURREY*, www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide.../surrey/surrey-area-monitor.pdf Accessed, 21/5/2012.

⁵⁵ *John Bartholomew’s Gazetteer of the British Isles*, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/descriptions/entry_page.jsp?text_id=1949270&word=NULL Accessed, 19/5/2012.

⁵⁶ At this time Woking would have been firmly located in the west of the county, although today, post boundary changes; it is regarded as being in the ‘north’.

⁵⁷ This included one of Britain’s earliest Muslim communities, which led to the first purpose built mosque in 1889, and the country’s first Muslim cemetery at Horsell Common in 1917. “Woking’s muslim heritage”, <http://www.woking.gov.uk/woking/heritage/muslim> and “Woking: Muslim Burial Ground”, http://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/themes/places/surrey/woking/woking/woking_muslim_burial_ground/ Accessed, 2/4/2013.

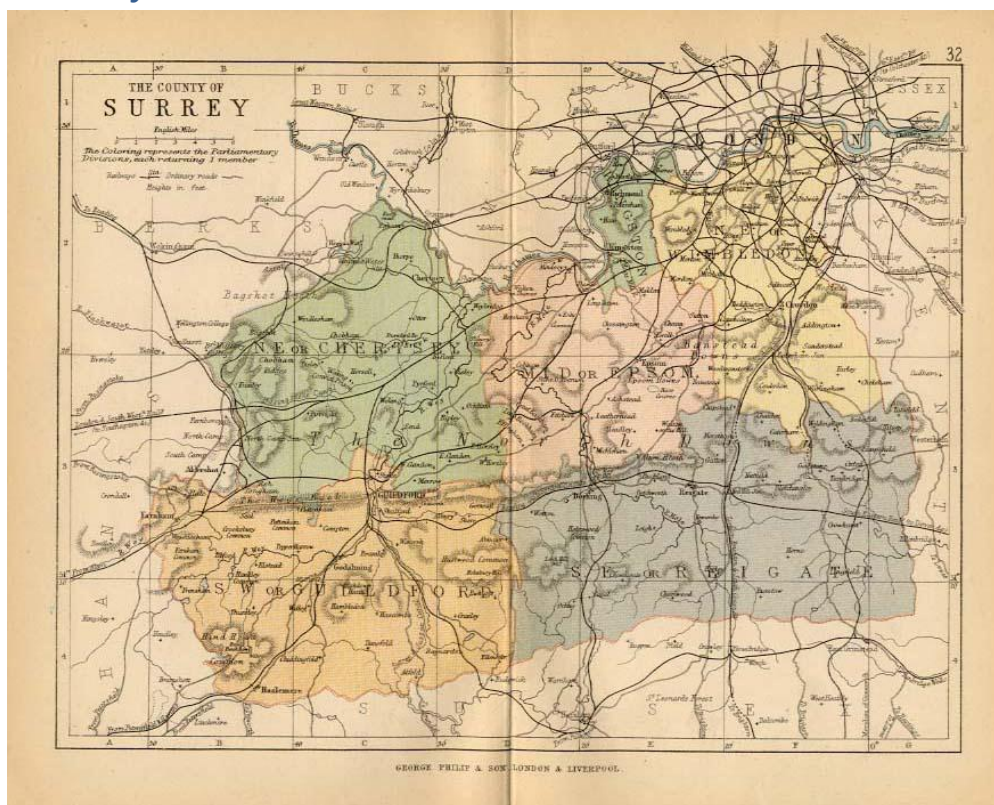
⁵⁸ Brookwood, at over 2,000 acres, was the largest nineteenth-century cemetery in the world. “Further information about Brookwood cemetery”, http://www.brookwoodcemetery.com/about_the_cemetery.htm Accessed, 6/8/2012.

⁵⁹ *Woking News*, 30/10/1896.

⁶⁰ Population statistics for Byfleet: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/data_cube_page.jsp?data_theme=T_POP&data_cube=N_TOT_POP&u_id=10094940&c_id=10001043&add=N Accessed, 6/8/2012.

Despite the population of east and west Surrey remaining comparatively static in relation to London and the industrial districts of the Midlands and the North of England, some middle-class institutions were relocated in Surrey. One of the most significant of these, in class and cricketing terms, was the relocation of Charterhouse School which moved from London to its current 250 acre site in Godalming in 1872.⁶¹ Although Rosemary Sweet cites the decade between 1821 and 1831 as the peak of urban growth in England,⁶² so slow had urban/population growth been in Surrey, that John Marius Wilson's, *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales* (1870-72), reported that only twelve towns in the county had populations above 2,000 by 1870.⁶³

Map One: Surrey in 1886⁶⁴



⁶¹ "Charterhouse", <http://www.charterhouse.org.uk/charterhouseintroduction> Accessed, 2/4/2013.

⁶² Sweet, *The English Town, 1680-1840*, 227.

⁶³ John Marius Wilson's, *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales* (1870-72), http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/descriptions/entry_page.jsp?text_id=917740&word=NULL Accessed, 21/5/2012.

⁶⁴ "1886 Surrey Parliamentary Divisions Map".

http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~genmaps/genfiles/COU_files/ENG/SRY/phillips_sry_1886.jpg Accessed, 9/8/2012.

Although the urban image of Surrey suggested by Mackinder was becoming increasingly viable by the late 1880s, the vast majority of the county's industry and urban districts still lay in the Kingston and Wimbledon constituencies of north (Map One).⁶⁵ The slow pace of residential and demographic change elsewhere in Surrey, in the form of increased (sub) urbanisation and the development of a dominant middle-class, was to be exacerbated by political decisions that removed a significant proportion of urban industrial Surrey. The Local Government Act of 1888, which led to the creation of the County of London in 1889, witnessed the removal of the densely populated areas of Lambeth, Southwark, Wandsworth and what became the new County Borough of Croydon. Although the county lost less than 5 per cent of its geographical area, the population was cut by almost two-thirds (63.7 per cent) (Table One on p. 103).⁶⁶ The effect of the boundary change would not necessarily have been financially detrimental as trade and transport links were to continue expanding, but it was highly significant regarding the county's identity in two ways: firstly, losing the majority of its industry (albeit small-scale manufacture), and the urban working-classes associated with them, was crucial in temporarily re-establishing the county's rural identity. Secondly, the boundary changes resulted in a sharp drop in the number of middle-class professionals resident in the county.

From a post-1851 high of just under 6% of all workers in 1861, agricultural workers had dropped to less than 1.5% of the workforce by 1881. Following the boundary changes of 1889 this rose again to over 3.5%, but the 'professions' (only physicians/surgeons, police and teachers are listed) fell from 5.75% in 1881 to 1.5% of all workers in 1891.⁶⁷ Although such statistics are merely suggestive, they not only imply that a significant demographic

⁶⁵ The boundaries of Surrey prior to the Local Government Act of 1888 included much of what is now south London, reaching all the way up to the Thames at Kew in the north-west and Rotherhithe in the north-east.

⁶⁶ This figure was almost certainly much larger as the boundary changes occurred towards the end of the census cycle.

⁶⁷ The Surrey History Centre does not have detailed occupational breakdown for the census years 1881 and 1891. The limitations of the data as presented are apparent, but they remain indicative of the significant and sudden change in the demography of Surrey between 1888 and 1889/90.

change had taken place, but that it was in a direction counter to the national trend suggested by the historiography. Although vastly reduced, the vast majority of the county's middle-classes still lived within the urban / suburban north rather than the rural west and east of Surrey at the end of the nineteenth-century. These figures, and the slow development of the railway system, meant that the 'single urban community' suggested by MacKinder in 1902, and the numerical and cultural dominance of the metropolitan led middle-classes suggested by Malcolmson and others, would take a number of subsequent generations to mature.

These boundary changes only served to highlight the peculiar relationship between Surrey and London and the significant and unexpected shifts in the county's demography and identity. Whereas the middle-classes resident in the urban north of Surrey had proved influential as early as the 1840s, the very few who had ventured into rural east and west Surrey appear to have chosen to eschew any attempts to control or influence their social inferiors. The arrival of the railways by mid-century had led to discrete middle-class communities, but as Gavin Morgan notes; towns such as 'Guildford remained ... a rural market town inhabited mainly by shopkeepers, craftsmen and labourers and visited by farm workers'.⁶⁸ Although the *Surrey Gazette* had noted that the construction of villas in Dorking had boosted the local economy, their inhabitants had failed to make a similar impression in numerical, political, social or cultural terms.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Gavin Morgan, *The Guildford Guy Riots: Being an Exact Description of the Terrible Disturbances in the County Town of Surrey* (London: Northside Books, 1992), 14.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 30.

Table One: Area Size and Population of Surrey⁷⁰

Year (Acres)	Area / Size	Total Population	Males	Females
1801	na	269,043	127,138	141,905
1811	na	323,851	151,811	172,040
1821	na	398,658	189,871	208,787
1831	474,480	486,334	230,860	255,474
1841	474,480	582,678	278,203	304,475
1851	478,792	683,082	325,041	358,041
1861	478,792	831,093	393,647	437,446
1871	483,178	1,091,635	517,111	574,524
1881	485,129	1,436,899	683,228	753,671
1891	461,230	521,551	242,066	279,485
1901	461,807	653,549	303,263	350,286
1911	461,829	845,578	390,395	455,183
1921	461,833	930,086	425,023	505,063
1931	461,833	1,180,878	544,054	636,824
1951	461,833	1,602,509	742,583	859,926

na = not available.

The continued absence of significant numbers of middle-class residents meant that traditions, such as Guy Fawkes celebrations, persisted in towns such as Dorking, Farnham and Guildford into the 1860s. However, this was the decade, which witnessed the first signs of rural Surrey falling into line with developments in the urban north. A concerted and on-going challenge to ban ‘disreputable’ activities was begun by what appears to be an

⁷⁰ 200 years of the Census in... SURREY, www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide.../surrey/surrey-area-monitor.pdf
Accessed, 21/5/2012.

organised and increasingly 'urbane' middle-class. While intermittent violence was known at Godalming, Dorking and Farnham,⁷¹ it was Guildford which became synonymous with annual Guy festivities in Surrey from the 1820s. The 'Guy riots', as they have become known, were, for the majority, an annual entertainment. As Morgan notes: 'rich and poor, old and young would come from miles around to see the spectacle',⁷² but the arrival of more members of the respectable middle-classes in Guildford, challenged the validity of the celebrations. In what was an increasingly prosperous town, the violent, and property threatening, nature of the Guy festivities began to be decried as 'disgraceful' by residents who had little sympathy with those *The Times* called 'the savages concerned'.⁷³ Such a point-of-view was not shared by a local carpenter, John Mason, who saw the festivities in a different light:

Guildford boys ... were born with the uncontrollable habit of celebrating bonfire night the way their fathers had done. To non-Guildfordians this savoured of insubordination, the papers in some cases even calling the proceedings riotous! That was not intended when I took part in it – it simply meant keeping up an old custom handed down for generations.⁷⁴

In 1863, the middle-classes, who may well have been regarded as 'non-Guildfordians' by Mason and his fellow 'rioters', elected (as only the well-off were able to) a new Mayor, Philip W. Jacob, who brought in more police to confront the rioters.⁷⁵ This led to an escalation in the violence, with a Constable Stent being paid twenty pounds in compensation for the 'severe injuries' he received in 1865.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Recalling Farnham in the 1860s, the diarist George Sturt recalled: 'Lewes was, if possible, the wildest in its Guy Fawkes celebrations, but otherwise, in all of Southern England, there was no other town ran riot so wantonly, so recklessly as Farnham did. At least, we were proud to think so. A true mediaeval day, or night rather, survived in that pandemonium'. George Sturt, *A Small Boy in the Sixties* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1977), 54.

⁷² Morgan, *The Guildford Guy Riots.*, and "Who were the Guildford Guys?" <http://www.caltropica.co.uk/content.php?pageid=19&wbpage=webpage> Accessed, 24/6/2012.

⁷³ *The Times*, 3/10/1863.

⁷⁴ Morgan, *The Guildford Guy Riots*, 5.

⁷⁵ Philip Whittington Jacob MRCS was a surgeon and an eminent linguist in Eastern and European languages. The son of Reverend Stephen Long Jacob MA, he was to be mayor of Guildford four times. <http://myjacobfamily.com/favershamjacobs/philipwhittingtonjacob.htm> Accessed, 1/5/2013.

⁷⁶ Pamela Johnson, "The Guildford Guy Riots," *The Lady*, 1/11/1979, 740-741.

Even though the Guy riots – following increasingly stringent policing – had died out by 1866, this appears to have been an early, but isolated, victory for the respectable classes in rural Surrey. It is clear that social relations were in a state of flux in the latter decades of the nineteenth-century, as the indigenous middle-classes adopted the values of those migrating to the countryside from urban areas where such activities had been quashed decades earlier. However, while it would have been relatively easy to join-forces and eradicate violent events such as the Guy ‘riots’, the strong community support of other pastimes suggests that the consistent emphasis placed upon the ‘fact’ that all classes played cricket together in late-Victorian Surrey might have some validity. How much this image relied upon poor or romantic memory, however, is hard to quantify.⁷⁷ Attitudes to popular leisure and culture, and the particular coalition of local forces for or against, shifted across time and between towns. The efforts of a vocal minority of residents to sweep away traditional customs and introduce new bourgeois values to social and sporting life met with varying success. The long-standing cross-class relationships that informed these important facets of community life proved very resilient in west and east Surrey, even in those towns, such as Dorking, where middle-class migrants had arrived first.

The suppression or decline of riotous ‘protests’, blood sports, or football matches in north Surrey notwithstanding, similar events in Dorking, despite serious riots during the Swing uprising a generation before, survived.⁷⁸ The annual football match between the east and west ‘ends’ of the town had been neutrally described in *The Times* as a ‘curious custom’ in 1862,⁷⁹ a description which hints at the exotic, yet acceptable, nature of such contests by this time. By the 1890s however, increasing numbers of residents thought the custom out-

⁷⁷ At the Chobham CC ‘annual dinner’, the Chairman stated that: ‘In the past, one of the reasons that cricket was a success was because all classes took part in it’. *Woking News* 4/10/1895. The evidence from the 1870s does suggest that such recollections, whether accurate or not, were consistent.

⁷⁸ H. E. Malden, *The Victoria History of the County of Surrey*. Vol. 3 (London: Constable, 1911), 429.

⁷⁹ *The Times*, 7/3/1862.

dated and 'detrimental to the town'.⁸⁰ Contrary to Malcolmson's suggestion that the game, subject to middle-class pressure, had died out by 1850, not only was this custom being protected by the social and political elites of Dorking, it was being 'played' by them at the end of the century.⁸¹

A report of the match of 1897 proves illuminating with regard to the attempted intervention of certain residents, who had signed a petition against the match.⁸² In their endeavour to eradicate the annual contest, the petitioners were aided by the Surrey County Council, which had been based in metropolitan Kingston upon Thames since 1893. On receipt of the petition, the Surrey County Council made what *The Times* called 'a determined attempt to put an end to the custom' by drafting in 'a force of 100 members of the Surrey County Constabulary' into the town. Despite *The Times*' claims that the policemen were 'very roughly treated',⁸³ the Dorking Urban District Council's (DUDC) chairman Mr J. H. Chaldecott wrote to the paper to put the record straight regarding the events on the day:

The whole proceedings were conducted with good temper and enjoyed by all, not least by the police themselves. The afternoon closed with hearty cheers for the police, and the people went home without disorder of any kind. In support of this testimony I send you a copy of a resolution passed by this urban district council on Thursday. ... "That this council desires to confirm and emphasise its objection to any interference with the Shrove Tuesday football, as played in Dorking from time immemorial".⁸⁴

The Council's support is not surprising, considering a senior member of the DUDC, Mr. J. T. Maybank, had kicked the match off. Thus, contrary to the historiography of football, and urban studies more generally, this episode suggests that the new migrant middle-classes had little or no influence over such matters and popular habits in the nineteenth-century. Although large numbers of police had attempted to break up the game in 1897, Shrove

⁸⁰ Ibid., 3/3/1897.

⁸¹ It is possible that popular, or locally important figures such as the Dorking town crier John Sandford, who kicked-off the annual match from the 1860s until his death in 1895, ensured the longevity of Dorking football. "Dorking Shrove Tuesday Football", http://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/themes/subjects/sports/shrove_tuesday/ Accessed, 18/3/2013.

⁸² *The Times*, 8/3/1897.

⁸³ Ibid., 3/3/1897.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Tuesday football persisted in Dorking into the twentieth-century.⁸⁵ In a similar vein, traditional popular values would also continue to shape cricket in Surrey until the outbreak of War in 1914.⁸⁶ The longevity of folk football in Dorking highlights the indigenous townspeople's resistance to metropolitan influence (i.e. the organised petition and use of police from Kingston) and values, even in what was regarded as an 'urban' town. A genuine cultural conflict between the indigenous supporters of traditional values and those who favoured 'respectability' was clearly underway in this case.⁸⁷

Despite the mixed success of middle-class intervention, it is broadly assumed (though rarely proved) that the middle-classes, if not firmly established, were, at the very least, 'making their presence felt among the villages of Surrey' by the 1890s.⁸⁸ If so, it would be a fair assumption that the traditional sports enjoyed by the common folk in previous decades would have died out, but, as the survival of traditional customs would suggest, this was not the case. This thesis is further supported by the population statistics cited above. The middle-classes, having been well on the way to social and cultural supremacy, failed to become the dominant class at this time, due in no small part, to the boundary changes of 1889. Thus, social relations, despite the odd 'riot' and the decades' long influx of the middle-class 'gentlemen' who provoked Cobbett's ire, appear to remain stable and retain significant elements of traditional social relations associated with the moral economy: evidence that challenges Malcolmson's assertion that plebeian and genteel culture had become polarised by the early nineteenth-century.⁸⁹ Paradoxically, because the urbanisation of west and east Surrey remained incomplete and social relations

⁸⁵ In a letter to the *Surrey Advertiser*, the widow of an ex-Dorking policeman claimed he had policed football in Dorking as late as 1904 or 1905. *Surrey Advertiser*, 11/2/1967.

⁸⁶ H. E. Malden (ed), *The Victoria History of the County of Surrey. Vol. 1* (London: Constable, 1902), 429.

⁸⁷ It was the rich who were at 'the vanguard of suburbanisation'. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*, 49.

⁸⁸ Connell, *The End of Tradition*, 3.

⁸⁹ Catriona M Parratt, "Robert W. Malcolmson's Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850: An Appreciation.," *Journal of Sport History* 29, no. 2 (2002): 312-323; Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850*, 163-164.

remained traditionally hierarchical, the classes were still able to mix freely on the cricket field at the end of the nineteenth-century.

Initially there would appear to be a distinct split between the urban and the rural parts of Surrey in relation to middle-class influence and the prohibition or promotion of folk football. The picture is less clear when the values associated with cricket are examined in urban and rural Surrey, for competition was promoted throughout the entire county. At the highest level of Surrey's cricket hierarchy, the SCCC encouraged competition. Following the success of his own FA Cup, SCCC secretary Alcock, who had strangely rejected the MCC's attempt to institute a similar competition in 1873,⁹⁰ established the Surrey Cricket Challenge Cup in 1881.⁹¹ This venture, for which the SCCC insisted only Surrey teams with Surrey men were eligible, proved to be short-lived as Esher and Mitcham CCs quickly monopolised the trophy and the cup was thought to have ceased to have any value in stimulating interest in cricket within the county.⁹² Alcock's cup competition is significant for three reasons: first, it may represent the very first open, unambiguously meritocratic, competition in English cricket.⁹³ Second, it suggests that many within the metropolitan middle-class had not completely abandoned traditional competitive values. Third, it demonstrates that the elites running the sport at this time would not only accept competition at lower levels of the game, they were prepared to promote it among all classes for the good of the game. Thus, despite this early setback, it becomes clear upon further examination that competition at lower levels of the game was regarded by some elite figures as important for the improvement of standards and the production of suitably talented players for the first-class game (be they professional or amateur).

⁹⁰ All the other counties, bar Sussex and Kent, also rejected the proposal.

⁹¹ *Bells Life in London*, 15/1/1881.

⁹² Webster and Alcock, *Surrey Cricket*, 334.

⁹³ Alcock organised what some regard as the first official 'Ashes' Test match the following year in 1882. The Heavy Woollen Cup, established in Huddersfield in 1883, is the oldest competition still in operation today. The ECC was too poorly organised to produce definitive winners until after 1890, but even then the system was far from satisfactory.

Club cricket: organisation, hierarchy and competition

The structure of town and village cricket, which had increasingly relied upon the social elites or 'local magnate' for spatial and financial support during the nineteenth-century, had remained intact in Surrey.⁹⁴ Whereas the county clubs were often formed by members of metropolitan gentlemen's clubs, town or village clubs, like Hambledon, very often emerged from long established local fixtures or the merging of two or more clubs in a district or parish. In pre-Victorian times, Surrey had more cricket clubs per head of population than anywhere else in the country,⁹⁵ and concomitant with the increasing popularity of the game from the early 1700s, ever more town and village clubs had been formed. However, this was not a definitive process and the establishment of many clubs is hard – if not impossible – to trace; for instance, the Thames Ditton CC (TDCC), was officially established in 1879 but this followed the merger of two older clubs: the Thames Ditton United CC (Established 1844), and a 'Working Men's CC'.⁹⁶ Quite what the origins of the two formative clubs were – even the date the Working Men's CC was established is unknown – and where they played is unclear. In the days prior to municipal grounds, almost every club formed before 1914 would have relied upon local landowners as diverse as the Earl of Onslow,⁹⁷ the Crown Prince of Siam,⁹⁸ and Mrs Jennings of Chobham,⁹⁹ to donate or allow clubs to use their land for cricket.¹⁰⁰ Even following the establishment of

⁹⁴ Brookes, *English Cricket*, 7–8.

⁹⁵ John Bale, *Sport and Place: a Geography of Sport in England, Scotland and Wales* (London: C. Hurst, 1982), 70–71.

⁹⁶ Initially after the merger TDCC was known as Thames Ditton Village CC. TDCC Minute Book: 28/2/1877 to 2/6/113/2/1882. SHC Ref: 8767/1

⁹⁷ Onslow assisted a number of clubs in this regard. See *Surrey Times*, 30/6/1894 and *Woking News*, 25/9/1896.

⁹⁸ *Aldershot News*, 5/11/1898.

⁹⁹ *Woking News*, 31/1/1896.

¹⁰⁰ Dennis O'Keefe, "Grounds: The Cathedrals of Church Cricket" in *Church Cricket and Community in Halifax and the Calder Valley, 1860-c. 1920*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Huddersfield, January 2013.

Rural and Urban District Councils and public sports fields, this would remain common well into the twentieth-century.¹⁰¹

Access to land and the facilities to play were crucial to a club's existence. As Neil McMaster and Denise McHugh have demonstrated, where the middle-class had reached a critical mass, there was a tendency for urban authorities to step in and provide leisure facilities ('people's parks') after 1870.¹⁰² The method in which such facilities were developed in parts of Surrey suggests that urbanisation, and the establishment of local rural or urban Councils', was yet to affect traditional methods of facility provision, even at the very end of the nineteenth-century. Senior clubs such as Guildford CC (and other sporting organisations/events) appear to have relied upon 'friends in high places', rather than provision by a local authority, to survive. *The Surrey Times* of 30 June 1894, reporting on the opening of the Guildford (Woodbridge Road) Sport Ground, noted the:

... successful inauguration of a ground which promises to keep alive sport in our midst and do much for the encouragement of outdoor games. Fortunate the town is in having public-spirited gentlemen to come forward so opportunely, when the Guildford Cricket Club ground has changed hands to be utilised for other purposes, and secure the field, some ten acres in extent, just below Dapdune Crescent as a new sports ground...[The Earl of Onslow granted a long lease ... while Major Mathison provided the money for the] laying down of a first-class cricket pitch, so that cricket will not suffer by the change of venue.¹⁰³

Although new cricket clubs were sprouting up all over the county, local 'magnates', such as Onslow and Mathison, remained at the vanguard of many of these clubs' establishment and especially the provision of playing facilities. Moreover, while the FA affiliated Surrey County Football Association (SCFA),¹⁰⁴ had established a Challenge Cup at its first general meeting in 1882, it was left to pro-active individuals – almost exclusively

¹⁰¹ Abinger CC, having lost its ground of 90 years, was able to carry on due to the gift of 1.5 acres of land from a local farmer, Mr. Robert Newman of Paddington Farm. *Surrey Advertiser*, 30/9/1961.

¹⁰² Neil McMaster, "The Battle for Mousehold Heath 1857-1884: 'Popular Politics' and the Victorian Public Park," *Past & Present* no. 127 (1990): 117–154. Denise McHugh, in her study of Bedford, suggests that the environmental development of facilities for middle-class male leisure was exclusively provided by the local authority. *Remaking the Victorian County Town 1860-1910* Unpublished PhD thesis (Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, 2002), 131.

¹⁰³ *The Surrey Times*, 30/6/1894.

¹⁰⁴ The SCFA was originally named the West Surrey Football Association.

gentlemen – to establish similar competitions for cricket in Surrey.¹⁰⁵ In the absence of any organisational structure it would appear that some of the social elites did more than assume the honorary roles described by Morris, in local cricket clubs.¹⁰⁶ Although these men ensured the continued survival of clubs like Guildford by being generous and active presidents, they were aided by others of lower ‘middling’ status who acted as secretaries, treasurers and vice-presidents. Despite the increasing presence of the various grades of the middle-class, the traditional position and roles of the local elites were still evident at the very end of the nineteenth-century.

Although a clear social hierarchy is apparent, cricket was either socially mixed or the middle-classes involved (be they indigenous or migrant) were not only happy to provide facilities and money towards working-class cricketers, but competition also. One of these men was the Attorney General for England, and SCCC president, Richard Webster (later Viscount Alverstone) who established the West Surrey Village Cup in 1896. Indicative of the large number of clubs in a relatively small and sparsely populated rural area, 17 village clubs were eligible for the competition. Only eight of these: Abinger, Albury, Bramley, Cranleigh, Holmbury St Mary, Shalford, Shamley Green and Shere, entered the inaugural competition however. The competition’s secretary, the Rev. A. W. Leach of Shamley Green, noted that ‘the competition had done a great deal to excite interest in cricket and he was told by those who knew that it had done so, and had made the village teams much more anxious to win’.¹⁰⁷ The winners that first year were Alverstone’s club Cranleigh, and at the club dinner he stated that ‘he was quite satisfied that it would promote wholesome healthy rivalry and would tend to lift and raise the standard of cricket in the villages’. The

¹⁰⁵ West Surrey Football Association Minute Book, 20/3/1882. SHC Ref: 7446/1/2.

¹⁰⁶ Morris, “Clubs, societies and associations”.

¹⁰⁷ *The Woking Mail*, 25/9/1897.

Woking Mail then reported how 'the newly won village cup... was brought in to great ovation'.¹⁰⁸

Contrary to the historiography and the middle-class values suggested in the previous chapter, a swathe of competitions, and no doubt similar celebrations, were soon manifest throughout the rural and urban South of England. Some of the most noteworthy of these competitions were the Oxfordshire Cup in 1890, which still operates today as the Airey Cup; the City of London Championship in 1892; a London Daily Newspaper League founded in 1895, in which *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Mail* participated; the Postal Cricket League of 1897; the Reading and District, Hastings and District, and the East Grinstead Leagues of 1899, and, in 1901, the l'Anson Cricket League, which operates in and around Farnham and claims to be the oldest village league in the world.¹⁰⁹ By the outbreak of World War One competitions, such as the South London Cricket League, which operated four divisions,¹¹⁰ and competition itself, had become the staple diet of many cricketers and the game's followers. It is likely that friendly matches remained a more common phenomena – certainly *The Cricketer* rarely reported league fixtures outside of the North of England prior to 1914 – and yet league and cup competition was not only widespread, but very popular. The significant point is that many of the social and sporting elite, such as Edwin Ash,¹¹¹ founder of the RFU and a Cricket Challenge Shield for the elementary schools of Richmond in 1892,¹¹² had no obvious problem with competition *per-se*.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 2/10/1897.

¹⁰⁹ Stone, "It's All Friendly Down There".

¹¹⁰ *Daily Express*, 30/4/1913.

¹¹¹ Conversely, Ash was co-founder of the RFU, which was to develop a strictly anti-cup and league attitude.

¹¹² *Cricket*, 22/9/1892, 454.

Club cricket: social relations

By 1914 the social origins of clubs ranged from the already historic clubs such as Richmond, Chertsey, Dorking and Moseley Hurst, and more recent clubs such as Hampstead and Wimbledon at one end of the social spectrum, to Guildford Working Men's Cricket Club (GWMCC), Chilworth Gunpowder CC, Haslemere Working Men and village sides such as Puttenham at the other. Whereas the Hambledon (Hampshire) club had previously been operated for the benefit of the aristocratic patrons, cricket clubs in Surrey, certainly from the 1870s, appear to have been a more egalitarian enterprise. Whether remaining in their original format, or merging with other village,¹¹³ or working men's clubs,¹¹⁴ these clubs had patrons of high local standing, to whom the broadly 'independent' leisure of the working man was most important. Indeed, in moves that suggest the longevity of traditional values and social relationships, the survival of these clubs was paramount and few restrictions (compared to the North of England)¹¹⁵ were placed upon the cricketers in receipt of this patronage.¹¹⁶

An early indication of this 'arm's length' approach is captured in a letter from Charles Dickens (then residing in Baltimore in the United States) to his son Henry in 1868. Answering an enquiry regarding the faltering village cricket team (Gad's Hill in Kent), Dickens suggested:

The first thing to be avoided, is, the slightest appearance of Patronage (one of the curses of England). The second thing to be avoided, is, the deprival of the men of their just right to

¹¹³ The Burg Heath and Banstead CCs' merged in 1892. Banstead CC Minute Book 1892 to 1923, 24/10/1892.

¹¹⁴ The Thames Ditton Working Men's CC and TDCC merged in 1882 to become the Thames Ditton 'village' CC. Thames Ditton Cricket Club Minute Book, 13/2/1882.

¹¹⁵ Dennis O'Keefe highlights the very strict rules (including fines) of working-class church and works teams. *Church Cricket and Community in Halifax and the Calder Valley, 1860-c.1920*.

¹¹⁶ Gambling appears to have been the only vice actively prohibited: Opening the Guildford (Woodbridge Road) Sport Ground, which was commemorated by sporting events, the Guildford Temperance Band and a parachute jump from a balloon by a Professor Baldwin, Robert Salisbury JP (the Mayor), was pleased to note that a 'no betting' warning was in place, as betting 'had a certain danger about it', and those who were wise would avoid it'. *The Surrey Times*, 30/6/1894.

manage their own affairs. I would rather have no club at all, than have either of these great mistakes made.¹¹⁷

Rational recreation and other forms of 'social control' of working-class leisure suggested by Bailey and the Yeos do not appear to have been attempted in Surrey.¹¹⁸ Evidence of any 'fear' of the working-man is absent. Indeed, members of the middle-classes appear more than happy to ally themselves with this 'class', as the case of the GWMCC suggests.

Despite numerous gentlemen backers, which included the Mayor of Guildford, Mr. H. Neville as club President, the GWMCC (founded in 1888) was floundering financially by 1904. Presiding over the 1904 meeting, a letter was read by Neville from one of the Hon-members, Mr. J. Mason. It stated:

With the present energetic Mayor at your head, I am quite sure ... [it is] possible to prevent the Club from being "stumped out", you have the right man in the place to do it. I do regret it [the current situation] very much, for what can be more desirable than to be associated with a body of men who reckon amongst their number the King, the Prime Minister and the Mayor of Guildford – working men assuredly. It is the men who toil at monotonous work with hand and head in the workshops or office who should sometimes have short respite for relaxation; and what better in our all too short summer, when the days are longest and most pleasant and the most enjoyable, than a game or two of cricket in the good old rough and ready way?¹¹⁹

Such sentiments had been expressed earlier, and in more radical terms, at the Horsell CC dinner of 1896 by the Chairman Mr. W. Drowley. Drowley, a Master Builder who constructed many houses for commuting gentlemen locally, stated:

He was pleased to recognise the fact that the times are not far distant when everyone will realise that working men require recreation, and he should be delighted when they got the majority of employers to see it is necessary for the health of the workmen and the behoof of their employers to have more leisure for recreation. The competition of to-day makes business uphill work, and this rendered it all the more necessary they should engage in sport such as the manly game of cricket in respect to which he believed there were better days in store. He did not know much about the science of cricket, but he was a good looker-on (cheers and laughter). They could not disguise the fact that workmen have to shift about as fast as possible, and therefore it is one of the necessities of the age that they must, as a consequence, infuse into their lives holidays and recreation. He was a believer in the old phrase "all work and no play make Jack a dull boy." He was looking forward to the time when workmen will not have to work

¹¹⁷ Letter to Henry Dickens, 11/2/1868 cited in Charles Dickens *The British Academy/The Pilgrim Edition of the Letters of Charles Dickens: Volume 12: 1868-1870*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 46-47.

¹¹⁸ Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*; Eileen Yeo and Stephen Yeo, *Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590-1914: Explorations in the History of Labour and Leisure* (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1981).

¹¹⁹ Unknown newspaper dated 29/2/1904 in Guildford Institute Scrapbook, Album R, 164-165. It is very possible this is the same J. Mason who recalled the Guy Riots of the 1860s.

so many hours. He hoped to see workmen become more and more independent as men who rejoiced in being alive (hear, hear).¹²⁰

Egalitarian rhetoric was in abundance at cricket dinners and their reporting in local newspapers throughout the late-Victorian and Edwardian period, but this was not simply paying lip-service. Even where distinct middle-class and work-based clubs existed, the middle-classes were happy to make representations on behalf of working men's teams. One such instance was a Cllr. Bright, who wrote to the TDCC on behalf of the Ferry Worker's CC requesting the use of the ground.¹²¹ Such representations aside, matches that involved members of all classes were common outside of village cricket.¹²² Although a rather poor piece of prose, two verses of a poem describing a match between New Officers Mess Workers v Inkerman Barracks in Woking illuminates the point:

Now to a cricket match I went,
And found things there par excellent-
Full of vigour and merry glee,
All the teams appeared to be.

Brick'ys, plasterers and carpenters too,
Painters, plumbers and glaziers, who,
With nimble tread did play the game,
As if they all were men of fame.¹²³

Club cricket: culture

Despite the prevalence of such positive evidence, almost inevitably, some were bemoaning the apparent loss of free social interchange and noting how things were not like the 'old days'. The Liberal Sir Henry Denis Le Marchant, Chairman of the Chobham CC, said at the club's annual dinner that 'in the past, one of the reasons that cricket was a

¹²⁰ *Woking News*, 6/11/1896.

¹²¹ Thames Ditton CC minute book, 25/4/1900.

¹²² At the opening of the Hale (near Farnham) Institute, speeches were made extolling the virtues and need for philanthropic help to the working-classes, 'who is engaged in manual labour, the professional man who is toiling at his profession, the hard-workers that most of us are, cannot, of course, be scientific philosophers, but we can and we ought to be able to look at and to understand the general course of events'. *Surrey and Hants News and Guildford Times*, 30/12/1899.

¹²³ *Woking News and Mail*, 6/9/1895.

success was because all classes took part in it'.¹²⁴ It is unclear whether Le Marchant is referring to mixed clubs or specific 'class' clubs, but it is clear that many, at the time of his speech, were trying to bring the classes closer together. Le Marchant was correct in one regard, for despite an apparent lack of 'rational recreation', and what appeared to be relatively easy social mixing,¹²⁵ some were beginning to take exception to certain types of behaviour. Mason's call for a return to 'cricket in the good old rough and ready way' may well have been an isolated example, but what it was like is recalled in a letter, of 1924, to E. A. C. Thompson from a Mr. H. C. Preece of the Greater London Fund for the Blind. Preece, who had played for Essex in 1895 before going blind himself, recalled a mutual acquaintance and 'country [rural] cricket':

I shall always remember Barham for one particular characteristic that our younger generation of cricketers could not understand. Forty or fifty years ago in country cricket matches it was the custom when a man was out for one of the fielding side to throw the ball in the air as high as he could. The practice died out in London some thirty years ago and I remember our amazement and humour when Barham, who had just come from the country, picked up the ball and threw it skywards. The other men thought he had gone crazy, but I had seen the old country practice and remembered it.¹²⁶

Preece noted that a qualitative difference between urban and rural cricket had emerged by the 1890s. Such wild and carefree play, in line with F. M. L. Thompson's ideas regarding the 'censorious interference' by the Victorian middle-classes upon the leisure of others, was increasingly deemed inappropriate and openly criticised.¹²⁷ And yet the masses continued to enjoy cricket without considering the sensibilities of their social superiors. 'The annual cricket match at Reigate between teams captained by Mr. W. W. Read and Dr. W. G. Grace' had, the *Surrey Advertiser* reported, 'attracted large crowds to the Priory ground' in 1895. But, 'owing to some of the crowd shouting for [Tom] Richardson to be put on to bowl the players left the field [early], the game being left drawn – a result which was

¹²⁴ *Woking News*, 4/10/1895.

¹²⁵ The Chobham v Bagshot cricket match was followed by 'dancing on the green' to the Chobham Pipe and Drum Band. *Woking News and Mail*, 12/7/1895.

¹²⁶ Letter inserted to London and Southern Counties Club Cricket Conference Minute Book, March 1916 to December 1926.

¹²⁷ Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, 250.

inevitable at that stage'.¹²⁸ Boisterous 'cockney' crowds were also known at the Oval,¹²⁹ but in the rural west of Surrey Mr. Justice Bray, Chairman of the Shere CC,¹³⁰ felt the need to express his concerns regarding a lack of respectable behavior at the recreation ground: 'There was a little bit too much shouting. Shrieking and shouting was not pleasant to the ears, and he thought the committee should exercise their rights by turning persons off who did not obey them'.¹³¹ Bray's sensitivity only serves as evidence of this change and Preece's recollection of 'country practices' also suggests that such changes in behaviour were influenced from respectable metropolitan quarters.

As the Archdeacon of Surrey had noted as early as 1842, it was the urban middle-classes who had erected artificial barriers between themselves and the working-classes. Although calls for more respectable behaviour were becoming more frequent in rural areas of Surrey, all classes appear to have maintained social contact and the traditional cricketing norms of local identity and customary fixtures within new competitive structures such as cups and leagues. Despite the gradual changes that the new middle-classes brought to towns such as Farnham, Dorking and Guildford, no conscious separation of the classes occurred. Indeed, many Surrey gentlemen were now keen to rectify or re-form relations with working-class cricketers.¹³² Although social respect to those in authority remained very important to the likes of Alverstone, in opposition to Lowerson's assertion of pre-war 'deference', any such esteem related to the role of captain rather than any social authority.¹³³ A captain was always to be obeyed,¹³⁴ but in the case of Banstead CC, it was

¹²⁸ *Surrey Advertiser*, 20/9/1895.

¹²⁹ *Woking News*, 13/9/1895.

¹³⁰ Shere was the Bray family's seat, and Justice Bray had been a co-founder of Peaslake School in 1870. "Parishes: Shere", *A History of the County of Surrey: Volume 3* (1911), 111-121. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42941> Date accessed: 27/4/2013.

¹³¹ *Woking News*, 28/8/1898.

¹³² Alverstone, thought 'the one thing that made good cricketers and made cricket so good for men was loyalty to their captain and obedience at all times to the words of the captain'. *Woking Mail*, 2/10/1897.

¹³³ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes 1870-1914*, 4.

¹³⁴ Richard Webster thought 'the one thing that made good cricketers and made cricket so good for men was loyalty to their captain and obedience at all times to the words of the captain'. *Woking Mail*, 2/10/1897.

their groundsman ‘professional’, Eddie Gilbert, who captained the first XI in 1895.¹³⁵ The often duplicitous egalitarianism espoused at elite cricket dinners, was no mere lip service in pre-war Surrey.¹³⁶

Unlike the middle-class truncheon used previously to quell the riotous behaviour of the working-classes, a condition-free carrot was offered in order that good character was developed. Alverstone said ‘it gave him the greatest pleasure to know that in some small way he could assist games and sports, because he knew how good they were for the character, and how much happiness they brought to men’.¹³⁷ This was in direct contrast to the class-based prejudices evident nationally, for any difference in social status appears to have been temporarily overlooked during matches in local contexts. Furthermore, it would appear that a spirit of increased social and political consensus was developing locally in the years leading up to the First World War.¹³⁸ The widening of the franchise, successful actions by Trade Unions and progressive social policies may well have struck fear among the urban elites, but, in what were still rural areas, they had possibly led some of the ‘middle-class’ clubs to begin to question their less than ‘open’ social structure and playing methods. It is however, most likely that the questioning of restrictive practices by certain clubs, stemmed from a need for strong representative teams, consisting of local men, and more pragmatic concerns over self-preservation.

¹³⁵ Banstead Minute Book, 3/10/1895.

¹³⁶ Arch amateur Lord Harris, who Derek Birley describes as the ‘most powerful and dictatorial [leader of the MCC] ... in his pursuit of illiberal causes’, informed the CCC’s AGM that: ‘Cricket is a people’s game. There is no favouritism in cricket. Everybody by his own prowess can rise to the very top of the tree. And not only is cricket the most enjoyable game, but it is a great moral education’. Birley, *The Willow Wand*, 94 and *The Manchester Guardian*, 4/2/1928.

¹³⁷ *The Woking Mail*, 2/10/1897.

¹³⁸ Martin Pugh, *State and Society: a Social and Political History of Britain Since 1870* (London: Hodder Education, 2010), 147–161. See: Womersley Liberals CC v Godalming Working Men’s CC. *Woking News and Mail*, 30/6/1899.

Club cricket: continuity or cultural change?

It was often claimed that the competitive nature of business in the modern world had placed increasing pressure upon the middle-class cricketer. While elite metropolitan clubs, such as Hampstead CC, could boast a very extensive (and exclusive) fixture list, clubs of lower status in the outer suburbs and rural districts had to curtail their fixtures and the length of matches as players became harder to come by.¹³⁹ The lower ranking middle-class men of the late nineteenth-century now had much less time to spare than their predecessors, not simply due to being wage earners or working longer hours, but the act of commuting itself. Chiddingfold CC was in abeyance due to what the *Farnham Herald* described as 'no representative team' being available. However, it was reported, somewhat obliquely, that the 'working men', who did not have to spend hours commuting to work, 'will probably be able to put an eleven into the field against neighbouring clubs'.¹⁴⁰ At the Crondall CC it was acknowledged that 'in this age of business competition and exertion', cricket in the village was 'not as popular as it once was'.¹⁴¹ Mr. J. Hoare thought this was due to the lack of a ground near the village and new distractions such as cycling.¹⁴² Alternative sports would prove to be a consistent excuse for falling spectator and participation rates, but a Dr. Lowne's observation that the 'success of these clubs always depended on harmony' does hint at underlying issues of integration, which could be solved by being more socially open.¹⁴³ One club that took this route was the Hale Institute CC (Est. 1898), which, despite numerous gentlemen being instrumental in its formation, was established to be open to all. In opposition to the exclusive subscription

¹³⁹ At least one team (sometimes two) from Hampstead CC played cricket on 24 days out of 31 in July 1892. This included a six day tour and one two day match versus Eastbourne. *Cricket*, 21/4/1892, 70.

¹⁴⁰ *Farnham Herald*, 4/6/1898.

¹⁴¹ *Surrey and Hants News and Guildford Times*, 19/11/1898.

¹⁴² Andrew Ritchie has demonstrated how popular cycling had become among the middle-classes in England by the late-1870s. Andrew Ritchie, *Quest for Speed: a History of Early Bicycle Racing 1868-1903* (Santa Clarita, Calif.: A. Ritchie, 2011), 105. Surrey was a particularly popular region, and in an article titled 'Famous Cycling Resorts', *The Hub* profiled Guildford. *The Hub*, 20/3/1897.

¹⁴³ *Surrey and Hants News and Guildford Times*, 19/11/1898.

rates (10s 6d) of the Farnham CC (FCC), Hale CC's subscriptions were set at a more affordable 2s 6d a season.¹⁴⁴

Like many clubs, the FCC's problems in finding players were most likely due to demands upon the time of potential players, rather than financial. And yet the club's captain, the Rev. Ernest D. Finch Smith, appealed for playing members, greater local interest and a club secretary. His greatest question was just 'who are to form the (say) 20 *playing members*?'¹⁴⁵ After protracted negotiation, in which it was agreed that subscriptions had been too high,¹⁴⁶ the FCC, in order to continue operations, was forced to merge with the town's other clubs, Ramblers and the Grammar School, in 1898.¹⁴⁷ Despite this merger appearing to represent a form of middle-class union, by 1914 the FCC appeared keen to create a more representative club for the town. In a move that reflected more traditional values, the FCC stated publicly that they were: 'perfectly willing to play [suitably talented] members of any local club without payment of subscription'.¹⁴⁸ At the other end of the Hog's Back,¹⁴⁹ despite receiving a great deal of support from the local business community, the Guildford CC also found itself with a dilemma. Guildford CC appears to have been in a constant struggle to survive since its formation in 1866, and yet 'more support' was being called for in 1912.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁴ Gentleman involved included: Col. FitzRoy JP CC (meeting chairman and chair of rural district council); Mr. Wing (president) and Col. J. S. Windham (rural district council), Major Hillkirk, Capt. Bacon, Capt. Langrish, Capt. Murray, and Messrs. Baxendell, Rodgers, Swansborough, Woodhams, Coutney Walsh and Nutting as vice-presidents. *Surrey and Hants News and Guildford Times*, 9/4/98.

¹⁴⁵ *Surrey and Hants News and Guildford Times*, 26/2/1898.

¹⁴⁶ *Farnham Haselemere and Hindhead Herald*, 5/3/1898.

¹⁴⁷ *Surrey and Hants News and Guildford Times*, 19/3/1898.

¹⁴⁸ *Surrey Advertiser*, 2/3/1914.

¹⁴⁹ Guildford and Farnham lie at opposite ends of a narrow elongated (approximately 5 miles) ridge known locally as the Hog's Back.

¹⁵⁰ *Surrey Advertiser*, 8/1/1912.

As the club emulated many clubs in the reputedly 'commercialised' North of England and charged spectators to watch matches,¹⁵¹ the club's struggle was not a question of finance, but personnel.¹⁵² Suffering from a 'deplorable lack of playing members', an Extraordinary General Meeting was held in order to decide whether the 'club should be continued for another season, or be disbanded forthwith'. The club decided to continue, but, indicative of the increasing time constraints suffered by the middle-classes previously discussed, the committee was forced to decide to play mostly half-day matches. This may suggest the club's membership, and the middle-classes throughout the town, had remained more trade (commercial and clerical) than professional, but it was clear, as the Chairman stated that: 'there were many debarred from taking part in whole-day cricket'. In sharing this opinion, a Mr. Hiscock suggested that the GCC were one of the last clubs locally to succumb to this measure: 'There is no chance of getting whole-day cricket, and I think the club could very well continue on half-day cricket, 90 per cent of the cricket played in the neighbourhood is half-day cricket, and, surely, if they get sport out of it we can'.¹⁵³

Being unable to maintain whole-day cricket suggests that the majority of club members were employees, rather than employers. It is unlikely that the majority of these men would have received a public school education, nor shared the same attitudes demonstrated by their more illustrious cousins at the MCC, the counties and the RFU. It would appear, however, that the GCC had been more reluctant than others to embrace the pragmatic moves proposed by Hiscock, and the social openness being introduced at FCC. Similar moves had been ongoing for some years elsewhere, and following a significant operating

¹⁵¹ Many football and cricket clubs in Surrey were charging admission fees. See: West Surrey Football Association minute book, 11/4/1887. SHC Ref: 7446/1/2.

¹⁵² The GCC committee had reported in 1897 'that on the whole the financial position of the club was very satisfactory. That was no doubt owing to the increase in the number of members and gate receipts, which though not a large item had been more than doubled. ... Gate receipts from matches from 1895 was £6 12s. 8d., and in 1896 £13 12s. This amount being a surplus to the £64 10s. received from the club's 121 members'. *Woking Mail*, 17/4/1897.

¹⁵³ *Surrey Advertiser*, 8/1/1912. The 'difficulty of having a whole-day match' had been expressed as early as 1896 by Dr. H. Phipps of the Woking Village and Westfield Cricket Club. *Woking News*, 9/10/1896.

loss in 1886 by what was to become a very exclusive high status club after the First World War; Banstead CC (BCC), the Hon. Francis Baring, a partner in Barings Bank, proposed:

That in view of the constant deficits in the accounts of the Club it is necessary in arranging for 1887 to restrict ourselves to Half-Day Matches – except on Bank-Holidays – and that residents of the parish should be selected to play in preference to non-residents.¹⁵⁴

It is uncertain whether a form of professionalism or the subsidisation of working-men was ongoing at the BCC, but the club's expenses included the payment of a number of players expenses and the umpires and scorers at this time.¹⁵⁵ The BCC clearly recognised the importance of being representative and the subsidisation of working-class cricketers may well have been a method to address this issue. Significantly, it was a lack of working-class players within the Guildford CC that led to the view that the GCC was neither representative nor very popular in the town. G. A. Franks stated that the Guildford club 'was not so popular as it might be with subsidiary clubs'. A Mr. Hart, in suggesting that the GCC's ambition was not compatible with social exclusivity or the traditional representative values still important and popular within local cricket, appeared to have the answer:

He would like to see the Guildford Cricket Club recognised as the premier club of the town and district, with the other clubs looking up to it on the understanding that if they had a really capable player there would always be an opening for him to play for Guildford. That sort of thing had not been encouraged in the past, and he thought the club would find it advantageous if it went out of its way to do so in the future.¹⁵⁶

Another reason for the GCC's unpopularity may well have been the favouritism that the club was afforded. Only three years after the Guildford Sports ground had opened, the GWMCC was complaining that the Sports Ground Committee were making them wait until after the GCC had confirmed its fixtures before it would confirm any dates with them.¹⁵⁷ Although a 'pecking order' based upon status appears to have existed, the social changes marking the late nineteenth-century period appear to have affected the middle-classes the most. Increasingly restricted free-time meant that middle-class cricketers and their clubs

¹⁵⁴ Banstead CC Minute Book, 7/5/1886.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 5/11/1886.

¹⁵⁶ Guildford Institute Scrapbook F, 189.

¹⁵⁷ *Woking Mail*, 3/4/1897.

were not only forced to replicate the half-day format common among less esteemed clubs, but they were compelled to seek their better players.

Conclusion

In his letter to the GWMCC meeting of 1904, Mr. Mason had suggested – quite in opposition to the increasingly strict amateur qualifications and social distinctions of the ECC and Test matches –¹⁵⁸that a return to cricket where the different classes mixed freely would see that: ‘many prejudices would vanish, [and] many misunderstandings would not arise if we met more often together socially and on equal terms in the cricket field’.¹⁵⁹ Evidence of such a ‘decline’ is all but impossible to find across the county, as published fixtures other than those involving the most elite of metropolitan clubs, indicate the socially mixed nature of cricket contests at this time. The fixtures suggest that village, military, works and town sides played each other regularly in a variety of traditional challenge matches, and more recent innovations such as cups and leagues. But, if a problem of social integration existed, the First World War intervened just as a number of clubs were about to resolve the issue.

The period leading up to 1914, despite significant social and structural changes throughout Surrey, had witnessed the continuation of a sporting culture that pre-dated the industrial revolution. Teams largely representative of their communities were central to the early popularity and meaning of cricket, and this was but one aspect of the game’s traditional

¹⁵⁸ Rugby union, athletics, rowing and swimming, amongst others, maintained ‘gentlemanly’ amateurism via ever more restrictive rules. These rules often led to a reduction of national competitiveness in international competition. See: The AAA’s amateur definition in the *Woking News*, 3/4/1895. Tony Collins, “The Ambiguities of Amateurism: English Rugby Union in the Edwardian Era,” *Sport in History* 26, no. 3 (2006): 386–405; Richard Holt and Tony Mason, *Sport in Britain, 1945-2000* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 58; David Day, “Walter Brickett - A Respectable Professor”, in Snape and Pusard, *Recording Leisure Lives*, (LSA, 2010), 194.

¹⁵⁹ Unknown newspaper dated 29/2/1904 in Guildford Institute Scrapbook, Album R, 164-165.

culture that proved very resilient in Surrey. Although gambling was one aspect of this traditional culture that was increasingly criticised,¹⁶⁰ social mixing on the field of play, the importance of competition – increasingly in the form of leagues and cups – limited commercialisation, and cricket as a local ‘entertainment’ were all present. Consequently, cricket in Surrey, outside of the SCCC or the realms occupied by the social elites, did not replicate the new middle-class culture discussed in Chapter One. These values, which not only came to dominate the majority of British sport nationally, including cricket, also shaped the historiography of the game in both national, and, in the case of Surrey, regional terms.

The evidence presented in this chapter clearly refutes the claims of numerous historians that competitive cricket, and league competitions in particular, were absent from the South of England until 1968. Why this was the case may be attributed to the level of the sport in question, particularly as many of the same men who promoted competitive cricket in Surrey, had openly rejected competitions and strictly controlled or outlawed professionalism in cricket, rugby and athletics nationally. However, all recognised the value of competition at lower levels of sport.¹⁶¹ Significant as this is, the fact that Surrey remained essentially rural in character (especially after the boundary changes of 1889) beyond the far north of the county is equally important. Although social change had occurred after railway and housing development brought the residents of Surrey closer to London, and vice-versa, the new cultural values associated with sport – including those that had begun to question the rise in status of the working-class professional at the expense of the gentleman amateur – remained absent. For the most part, this was

¹⁶⁰ *The Surrey Times*, 30/6/1894.

¹⁶¹ As well as Alcock’s inter-sporting administrative roles, Alverstone was also president of Cambridge University Athletic Club and a founder of the British Amateur Athletic Association. He was the AAA’s president until 1910. John Grant, *Surrey: History, Biographical and Pictorial*, (London: London and Provincial Publishing Co., circa 1910). <http://www.cuac.org.uk/site/the-club/information/cuac-standards>. Accessed 21/11/2011.

because the middle-classes who advocated them were similarly lacking. The absence of 'suburbia' in areas of Surrey outside of the metropolitan north, and its urbane metropolitan-minded middle-class residents, was to change after 1918 however, for it is clear from the events in club cricket following the First World War, that metropolitan attitudes increasingly took hold in Surrey.

The next chapter will thus re-visit the anti-competitive attitudes that were developing among the metropolitan middle-classes prior to 1914, and how a small number of metropolitan 'gentlemen amateurs' were able to influence the form and cultural meaning of cricket in Surrey and the South of England for over 60 years. Beginning in London, they were to progressively replace the traditional open and competitive culture in club cricket with an extreme and inflexible version of amateurism, which essentially 'criminalised' league cricket. This went beyond what had only been witnessed previously in sport in a national or international context – even Olympians competed for medals – and the following chapter will demonstrate how these metropolitan 'gentlemen' were assisted in this endeavour by the increasingly like-minded men who infiltrated cricket clubs in 'suburbanised' rural towns and villages throughout Surrey.

Chapter Three

Club Cricket and the Club Cricket Conference between the wars

Introduction

Structured competition was regarded as a natural development of the industrial age. Competition was evident throughout society, and knock-out cups and leagues had transformed the nature of sport in Britain. These formats, most notably in football, had received enormous support throughout the country between 1870 and 1914, but contrary to the historiography, this was especially evident in Surrey where cups and leagues were employed to enhance interest in cricket within what remained a traditional cricket culture. However, following the professionalisation of football in 1885, sections of the middle-classes began to express disquiet with cup and league competitions and their association with professionalism, gambling and commercialism. Strangely, bearing in mind the introduction of localised leagues throughout the UK, such concerns were especially prevalent within cricket.

As the previous chapter demonstrated the rural/provincial middle-classes in Surrey were broadly unwilling, or, even if they so desired, unable to implement a qualitative change in the club cricket of west and east Surrey. Due to the small numbers of middle-class migrants to rural Surrey, traditional popular values, social relationships and competitive values had persisted right up to the outbreak of war in 1914. This socially open, traditional culture was to remain in place until the establishment of what became the Club Cricket Conference (CCC) and the growing migration of the metropolitan middle-classes into these rural areas in the decades following the First World War. What followed was an

increasingly fractious relationship between the classes both on and off cricket fields. The inter-war period was, of course, marked by an economic depression and high levels of unemployment nationally. This led to an extended period of social unrest, which included six national hunger marches, the General Strike and the famous Jarrow Crusade, not witnessed prior to 1914.¹ Although the greatest hardships were felt by the working-classes of the industrial North where the heavy industries of mining, steel and shipbuilding dominated, the towns and villages of Surrey were also affected. In Dorking, the first six matches of the 1926 season were cancelled due to the General Strike, and six years later the local economy was still perilous as 'five applicants turned up for the post of groundsman – not exactly a lucrative position in those days'.² Allied to this increased insecurity, the previously cordial relations between the working-classes and their wealthier neighbours also suffered.

These relationships also deteriorated on Surrey's cricket fields where the pre-war cross-class culture, discussed in the last chapter began to slowly disappear. The separation of the classes was driven by the middle-class population within Surrey's 'rural' east and west reaching a numerical critical mass and their decision to reject competitive cricket in the form of leagues. This chapter, thus, re-joins with chapter one where the origin and nature of the concerns regarding competitive cricket were first discussed. It will begin by suggesting that it was individual members of the metropolitan middle-classes, or their representatives within the media, who first advocated anti-competition views. However, it was not until the establishment of the Club Cricketers' Charity Fund (CCCF) in 1910 and, most significantly, its offspring the London Club Cricket Conference (LCCC) in 1915, that

¹ Martin Pugh, *"We Danced All Night": a Social History of Britain Between the Wars*, (London: The Bodley Head, 2008), 76–82.

² K. J. Cole, *Two Hundred Years of Dorking Cricket, 1766-1968*. ([The author], 1969), 58–59.

these opinions were given any formal administrative weight.³ The Conference, it will be shown, was established by a select group of upper and middle-class gentlemen who not only feared the meritocratic developments engendered by structured competition but represented the archetypal public school elites who developed and promoted amateurism. The strictly non-competitive rules they developed were to ensure that elite metropolitan club cricket would be insulated from the undesirable developments witnessed in football and rugby in the North. The expansion of the CCC, and the increasing range of the Conference's influence after 1918, was to ensure that other elements of club cricket in London would adopt this non-competitive ethos. In Surrey, this adoption was facilitated by the exodus of the metropolitan middle-classes to the Surrey countryside, ultimately ensuring that this cultural approach towards competitive leagues spread beyond greater London.

Competition and professionalism is criticised

If the increasing rejection of structured league competition within certain sections of British sport achieved nothing else, it had transformed the hierarchy of British sport.⁴ Football, which had developed cup and league competitions, was now well on the way to usurping cricket as the national sport. Indeed, G.H. Shepherd's article in *Cricket*: 'Is Football Dwarfing Cricket?' suggested that football attracted more interest because it was more exciting than cricket and results were more quickly decided.⁵ The increasing importance placed upon winning – be that for local pride, financial gain, or social capital – had ensured one thing; the professional sportsman as one of the first embodiments of the 'working-

³ The LCCC was later re-named the London and Southern Counties Club Cricket Conference (LaSCCCC), before becoming the Club Cricket Conference in 1926. CCC Minute Book, 1/10/1926.

⁴ As Tony Collins notes, the rugby version of football was by far the most popular throughout the country prior to the RFU's break-away from the FA. Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, 9.

⁵ *Cricket*, 20/4/1893, 71.

class hero'.⁶ Such a move had not completely inverted the social structure of society and sport, but it had certainly made a strong challenge. As argued by H. F. Moorhouse regarding Scottish footballers; these new 'heroes' were certainly 'emblematic figures' who represented wider values and experiences to the working-classes.⁷ However, as highlighted in Chapter One, they also proved emblematic of the middle-classes' increasingly precarious position in sport. Consequently, many amateurs, or individuals sympathetic to their plight, began to cry foul and ever more rigid rules designed to eradicate the presence of working-class professionals were invented across a variety of sports.

Cricket, however, had a problem. The long association of amateurs – the gentlemen – and professionals – the players – at every level of the game meant that the exclusion of artisans, coaches and labourers, witnessed in some other sports, was virtually impossible. Indeed, so entrenched was the professional in cricket that the Amateur Athletic Association's (AAA) rules had to make an exception for athletes, such as C.B. Fry, who had played with or against a professional.

An amateur is one who never competed for a money prize or monetary considerations, or for any declared wager or staked bet; who has never engaged in, assisted in, or taught any athletic exercise as a means of pecuniary gain; and who has never taken part in any competition with anyone not an amateur... Exceptions: (a) That amateur athletes should not lose their amateur status by competing with or against professionals in cricket matches...⁸

In accordance with late-Victorian notions of middle-class respectability, this definition also included any athlete who had ever 'competed for any declared wager or staked bet'.

⁶ Although this suggests a development akin to what Stedman Jones called 'the culture of compensation', the reactionary rejection of the league format by many elites, suggests that this reformed popular culture was not manufactured for the working-classes, nor 'returned to the people in a commercialised form'. Clearly the working-classes recognised league and cup competition as an opportunity to retain elements of pre-industrial sporting culture. Rohan McWilliam, review of *The Beginnings of a Commercial Sporting Culture in Britain, 1793–1850*, (review no. 438) URL: <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/438> Accessed: 2/5/2013.

⁷ H. F. Moorhouse, "Shooting stars: footballers and working-class culture in twentieth-century Scotland", in Richard Holt, *Sport and the Working Class in Modern Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 178–179.

⁸ *Woking News*, 3/4/1896. This was one of many exceptions made.

Gambling, along with commercialism (which encouraged working-class spectators to attend), and the professional, represented an unholy trinity, completely at odds with the solidly middle-class values associated with amateurism. F.M.L. Thompson notes that commentators by the 1890s were 'freely denouncing professional soccer for its commercialism, rowdiness, and general barbarity: the players were mercenary and unsporting, fouling when they could get away with it and abusing the referee when caught out, and the crowds were rough and blindly partisan'.⁹ And yet, he fails to recognise similar patterns in cricket, suggesting that the sport 'preserved its continuity, and expansion, with only relatively minor concessions to Victorian morality and propriety'.¹⁰

One of the earliest criticisms to reflect such concerns of respectability emanated from the Rev. R.S. Holmes in 1894. Holmes, a regular columnist in *Cricket*, identified how league competition in his native Yorkshire had stirred a good deal of local interest and passion. Essentially repeating the charges laid at the foot of northern football supporters the previous year by Shepherd, he wrote that 'rowdiness ... and [the] outcry about umpires ... all arises from this excessive competition; and you may rest assured this is fed by gambling'.¹¹ Indicative of where his sympathies lay, Holmes chose to overlook the role of traditional values and the various leagues within Yorkshire in his *History of Yorkshire County Cricket 1833-1903* (1904),¹² in favour of the 'gentleman amateur' conception of the game.¹³ Despite the presence of gate-taking clubs, numerous leagues and large boisterous crowds throughout the South of England, Holmes' association between

⁹ Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, 297.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 299.

¹¹ *Cricket*, 30/8/1894, 354. Holmes, in a precursor of what Neville Cardus would also claim, suggested further that 'the ring' was a source of ignorance, with the massed spectators appreciating 'big hitting only, and not skilful batting'. *Cricket*, 30/8/1894, 353.

¹² Robert Stratten Holmes, *The History of Yorkshire County Cricket, 1833-1903*, (Westminster: A. Constable, 1904).

¹³ Rob Light, *The Other Side of English Cricket: The origins of league cricket in the west riding of Yorkshire*, Unpublished Masters thesis, De Montfort University, 17. See:

<http://www.ckcricketheritage.org.uk/docs/032108HEADLINES537RobBook.pdf>.

commercialised league cricket, the working-classes and the North was sized upon by many of his southern readers.¹⁴

Such a direct association between the northern working-classes and gambling was clearly prejudiced. While McKibbin suggested that mass betting was not only restricted to the turf prior to 1914, and that betting until the 1890s had been the exclusive preserve of the wealthy,¹⁵ cricket, like other pre-industrial sports, had very long associations with gambling by all classes. Regardless of the extent to which the working-classes gambled prior to 1913, many politicians and social reformers feared that the workers lacked the self-control required to regulate their own gambling, and promoted the ‘unsubstantiated view that gambling was a royal road to self-inflicted destitution’.¹⁶ Although gambling could be problematic among all classes,¹⁷ the regionalised and class-based stereotypes suggested lived long in the middle-class memory, for, regardless of the validity of his claims, Holmes’ accusations and regional associations would remain a staple defence by anti-league lobbyists in the South for another sixty years. Typical of the longevity of Holmes’ prejudicial portrayal of the northern cricket supporter, were the opinions expressed by the Conference’s captain A. C. L. Bennett, who stated in 1951 that:

League cricket, in my view, is ideally suited to the northerner. His character, outlook on life, and temperament differ widely from those of his southern counterpart; he loves a gamble; he likes a game to be invested with a keen, competitive atmosphere; he wants the result to be a practical kind of triumph — something, for instance, that may make his favourite team League champions.¹⁸

Bennett and the attitudes he shared with others at the Conference will be returned to in Chapter Four. However, Holmes, one of the earliest advocates of this image, also directed

¹⁴ *Cricket* appears to report large crowds in the South in very different terms, with one match between Battersea and Brixton in 1912 being played ‘before a crowd numbering from six to seven thousand cricketing enthusiasts’ at Battersea Park. *Cricket*, 25/5/1912, 444.

¹⁵ Ross McKibbin, “Working-Class Gambling in Britain 1880-1939,” *Past & Present* no. 82 (1979): 147–178.

¹⁶ Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, 333.

¹⁷ A *Sporting Times* report in 1898 mentioned the ‘grave scandal’ relating to ‘betting amongst ladies of position’. *Farnham Haselemere and Hindhead Herald*, 29/1/1898.

¹⁸ Alfred Charles Leopold Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*. (Hutchinson, 1951), 233.

his ire towards the recently reformed ECC. Holmes 'had no sympathy for the County Championship', and argued that cricket was 'a far healthier game when played for love'.¹⁹ While some of the more progressive elite figures such as Alverstone and Alcock thought competitions could only be good for the game, Holmes, and many within the sport's administration, thought leagues the antithesis of 'good' sport. Certainly the media representation of northern leagues contributed towards such an image. Ironically, however, in light of the middle-classes' desire to reform traditional sport and leisure habits elsewhere, the ECC was seen as a threat to the preservation of what were more traditional, class-based, fixtures such as the annual Gentlemen versus Players matches.²⁰ The preservation of what had quickly become staple fixtures in football and club cricket in Surrey was regularly used as a defence against the introduction of leagues. As will be demonstrated in Chapter Four and Five, this was a defence repeatedly used by the CCC and senior cricket clubs after 1945.

Metropolitan club cricket did not escape criticism in the late nineteenth-century either. As leagues were less common in London, such criticisms did not directly relate to excessive competition or gambling, but rather, in a more familiar tone, excessive levels of professionalism.²¹ By 1913, *Cricket* correspondent 'The Chiel' (The Fellow) was expressing the 'regrettable fact that a number of London clubs should pay several of their players'.²² The presence of professionals was well established by this time, although their traditional role as stock bowlers available to club members had changed.²³ A desire to win, and maintain playing standards competitive enough to retain plum fixtures against the more exclusive clubs, had led many clubs to hire professionals simply for 'friendly'

¹⁹ *Cricket*, 30/8/1894, 354.

²⁰ *Cricket*, 25/10/1894, 418.

²¹ Heated debates in amateur football in Surrey (*Woking News*, 11/3/1898) and Hampshire (*Aldershot News*, 18/3/1899) as to whether soldiers were semi-professionals, also affected cricket. *Aldershot News*, 12/2/1898 and 5/3/1898.

²² *Cricket*, 26/7/1913, 439.

²³ Kensington Park CC employed three professional bowlers who were 'at the disposal of members'. *Cricket*, 24/3/1892, 42.

matches.²⁴ These ‘subsidised men’, The Chiel argued, not only falsified the standard of many clubs, but they put off the amateur and threatened such clubs’ existence by ‘bringing the money element in in the worst possible way’.²⁵

Although these opinions were expressed strongly, it would appear that Holmes’ apprehensions regarding gambling and The Chiel’s concerns over professionalism were the minority view. For even in a period where competition was regarded as important, and thousands attended club matches in London,²⁶ it was the *laissez faire* attitudes towards timekeeping within club cricket which were debated most widely. The Chiel’s call for club captains and ‘cricketers generally [to] BUCK UP!’ was reproduced in the *Daily Express* two days later under the heading “‘Time” Gentlemen Please’.²⁷ Such was the problem with timekeeping that *Cricket* resorted to satirising the issue. A letter from ‘A Club Cricketer’, who had been ‘only an hour and a quarter late’, thought his captain’s ‘impertinence in playing another man in my place’ was ‘a scandalous state of affairs’. This imaginary club cricketer then threatened to ‘take to croquet’ if such decisions were made in the future.²⁸ Poor timekeeping was far more detrimental to the game’s attractiveness than an absence of leagues, and, as a symptom of sociability, it would remain an issue right up to the re-introduction of league cricket. But the frustrations felt by those wishing to take the game in any way seriously fell on deaf ears – mainly due to the fact that it was their fellow club members who were holding up the proceedings.

The various issues reputedly affecting the game’s amateur purity, moral standing or attractiveness to players and spectators notwithstanding, it is certain that cricket, be it

²⁴ Holmes had referred to ‘bowlers being searched for, and bribed in every direction’, and that they were engaged ‘simply for the matches, not for practice in the nets’. *Cricket*, 30/8/1894, 354. Both I Zingari and Wanderers employed professionals, despite their lack of home grounds and the social exclusivity of their membership. *Cricket*, 22/9/1898, 434.

²⁵ *Cricket*, 26/7/1913, 439.

²⁶ *Cricket*, 25/5/1912, 444.

²⁷ *Cricket*, 5/7/1913, 439; *Daily Express*, 7/7/1913; *Cricketer Spring Annual* 1928, 53.

²⁸ *Cricket*, 22/9/1898, 430.

‘club’ or ‘league’ was popular in both the North and South of England prior to 1914. Unfortunately, this popularity gave the likes of Holmes and The Chiel another reason to criticise those with more progressive or modernising agendas, for much of the press, both popular and establishment, had taken to reporting club cricket. The popular and sporting press appear to have taken a different editorial line to the establishment and specialised cricket media such as *Cricket*. *The Observer* chose to highlight ‘the absence of anything more strenuous than “friendly” games’, and lamented that these were unlikely to produce ‘players fitted by experience for [the] strenuous cricket of the county championship’.²⁹ The issue of whether club cricket should endeavour to produce players suitable for higher levels of the game would divide the media, the cricket authorities and the public for decades to come, especially in the aftermath of the Second World War (Chapter Four). The coverage of club cricket, and the expression of such opinions by those many within the establishment regarded as outsiders, resulted in *Cricket* accusing (somewhat hypocritically) other elements of the sporting press of exploiting the boom in club cricket for profit. However, the elite metropolitan clubs’ decision to maintain ‘friendly’ fixtures, and wilfully refuse to nurture players capable of playing in the ECC, was to undermine the standard of club cricket and confuse the Conference for decades to come. Indeed, the gentlemen who played for what The Chiel thought were ‘very conservative’ London clubs appeared reluctant to embrace leagues or address poor timekeeping.³⁰

According to *The Observer* ‘Clubmen’ in London had somewhat organically ‘set themselves against the league system’. But as will be demonstrated below for many this rejection was deliberate and organised, despite several commentators acknowledging how leagues had been beneficial ‘in the best ranks of amateur football’.³¹ This mixed position was broadly acceptable up to 1914 as those who wanted to play in cups and leagues were

²⁹ *The Observer*, 7/5/1911.

³⁰ *Cricket*, 23/8/1913, 536.

³¹ *The Observer*, 30/7/1911.

able to do so in the South of England. Yet, as we will see, especially following the establishment of the Conference in 1915, such decisions were based upon a fear of the unholy trinity of league competition: with its strict rules governing start times and the length of tea intervals; professionalism, which allegedly denied amateurs opportunities to play; and the commercially driven presence of large 'working-class' crowds. Prior to this however, it was to be the establishment of the CCCF in 1910 which gave the anti-league concerns of a relatively small group of gentlemen not only a voice, but an organisation with which to represent and, in-time, enforce them.

The Club Cricketers' Charity Fund: 1910-1915

The journalist E. A. C. Thompson, at the request of a number of clubs, was the driving force behind the formation of the CCCF, and he was its secretary throughout its existence. The CCCF was a loosely tied association of elite cricket clubs. Documentation relating to this organisation is very scarce, but it would appear that the CCCF aimed to provide financial support or annual grants to hospitals, The London Playing Fields Association, injured or disabled cricketers' (from member clubs only) and other charities in the London area. The CCCF's membership was open to all 'clubs playing in and around London' who could assist.³² However, following an abortive attempt to involve 'junior' clubs,³³ it is clear, from the esteemed names of the individuals and clubs involved, that the CCCF would be highly exclusive in its social make-up. This social composition would ensure that the Fund held very strong opinions regarding how cricket should be played.

Clubs represented at an early Informal General Meeting included: Dulwich, Cane Hill, Brixton, Townley Point, Forest Hill, Old Charlton, Ibis, Westcombe Wanderers,

³² E. A. C. Thomson and W. H. Long, *The Club Cricketers' Charity Fund's Official Handbook for 1911* (1911), 30.

³³ CCCF Minute Book, 28/7/1910.

Addiscombe, Roehampton, Wimbledon Town, Clapham Ramblers, Melville, Epsom, Catford, while letters of support were received from Stanley, Banstead and London and County.³⁴ According to *Cricket*, these, and other clubs associated with the Fund, represented 'the cream of London club cricket'.³⁵ Such a distinguished membership was enhanced further at the first Executive Council Meeting, where it was decided, by Thompson, H. D. G. Leveson Gower,³⁶ the CCCF's interim President,³⁷ and representatives from clubs that 'some suitable gentlemen of good social standing and influence',³⁸ be approached to become Vice-Presidents (Table Two). By 1912, the CCCF's Vice-Presidents included Leveson-Gower, P. F. 'Plum' Warner,³⁹ Lords' Harris⁴⁰ and Hawke,⁴¹ A. E. Stoddart,⁴² G. L. Jessop,⁴³ the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton M.P.⁴⁴ and W. G. Grace.⁴⁵ This veritable 'who's who' of the cricket establishment personified the late-Victorian/Edwardian gentleman. These men also represented the archetypal honorific Edwardian president or vice-president, but for a non-national Association to have such a long and illustrious list may be regarded as unusual. Furthermore, having all received a

³⁴ Ibid., 19/6/1910.

³⁵ *Cricket*, 3/5/1913, 159.

³⁶ Leveson-Gower was Surrey captain between 1908 and 1910, President of the club between 1929 and 1939 and received a Knighthood for his services to cricket in 1953.

³⁷ Lord Alverstone was CCCF president at the first AGM in November 1910, where he typically called for the Fund to form closer ties with 'the four great counties [of] Surrey, Sussex, Kent and Middlesex'. CCCF Minute Book, 22/11/1910.

³⁸ CCCF Minute Book, 28/7/1910.

³⁹ Warner captained England ten times, and received a knighthood for services to cricket. He was elected *Wisden* cricketer of the year twice in 1904 and 1921.

⁴⁰ Harris was England Captain, and chaired the meeting that formed the Imperial Cricket Conference in 1909.

⁴¹ Hawke controlled Yorkshire County Cricket Club for over fifty years, and was elected *Wisden* cricketer of the year in 1909.

⁴² Stoddart 'epitomised the late amateur Victorian sporting ethos', and came to first-class cricket late at the age of 22. Never-the-less he was a free scoring batsman for Middlesex and England, and was elected *Wisden* cricketer of the year in 1893. He also represented England at Rugby Union, and founded the Barbarians. "Andrew Stoddart", <http://www.cricinfo.com/england/content/player/20381.html> Accessed, 15/3/2010.

⁴³ Jessop was another cricketer who was the epitome of the amateur all-rounder. Regarded as the fastest scorer the game has known, he played for Cambridge University, Gloucestershire and England. Named *Wisden* cricketer of the year in 1898, he also played football for Cheltenham Town FC.

⁴⁴ Lyttelton was regarded as the pre-eminent all-rounder of his age. He played first-class cricket for Cambridge University, Middlesex and England. He was the first man to represent England at both cricket and football, but in true amateur spirit, he retired from sport aged 28 to pursue a political career.

⁴⁵ Grace, the most famous cricketer of all-time played for Gloucestershire and England. Notoriously competitive, he personifies the 'shamateur' cricketer, and yet he as much as any other genuine amateur espoused the values of amateurism throughout his career.

public school education, these men ensured that the cultural attitudes set out in Chapter One, were adopted by the CCCF.

Although individual clubs throughout the country made collections for local charities at special matches or during their 'cricket week', it is significant that the first cricket competition to last any significant time, The Heavy Wollen Cup, was established for the sole benefit of the (Huddersfield) District Infirmary in 1883.⁴⁶ Typical of the period, the CCCF was an attempt to organise charitable fundraising in London⁴⁷ by arranging special fundraising matches, collections at ordinary club matches, and, significantly, an inter-district competition with Lord's final.⁴⁸ This competition was thought by some to be a suitable springboard for more competitive club cricket in London.⁴⁹ However, within three years, senior members of the Fund were not only expressing unambiguous hostility towards the role of competition and the professional in cricket, they sought to eradicate both from the club game.

'Amateur' opinions harden

As suggested in the introduction, cricket's image has been developed by numerous 'insiders' who wrote about the game. In this concern, many of the CCCF's vice-presidents were well-known for producing articles and books espousing their opinions on first-class and public school cricket, the game's social distinctions and what ultimately became the

⁴⁶ Kenneth H. Windmill, *Only the Ashes are Older: 100 Years of the Heavy Woollen District Cricket Challenge Cup 1883-1983*, Heavy Woollen District Cricket Challenge Cup Committee, (Dewsbury, 1982).

⁴⁷ For instance a number of matches were arranged for the Weybridge Cottage Hospital in 1912. One between a J. B. Hobbs XI and XVIII of Wimbledon was filmed. *Surrey Comet*, 28/9/1912; 21/9/1912. Also see Banstead Cricket Club Minute Book: 14/7/1910; 10/2/1913; 24/2/1913; and 1/5/1913.

⁴⁸ CCCF Minute Book, 15/8/1913.

⁴⁹ *Observer*, 30/7/1911.

basis of cricket's orthodox history.⁵⁰ Although, ostensibly, a philanthropic organisation, the Fund's first *Official Handbook* of 1911 clearly spelt out the ideological parameters that shaped cricket in the South of England from the end of the First World War 'right down until almost our own time'.⁵¹

Table Two: Selected CCCF Vice-Presidents in 1912.⁵²

H. D. G. Leveson Gower	Winchester College	Oxford University
P. F. 'Plum' Warner	Rugby School	Oxford University
Lord Harris	Eton College	Oxford University
Lord Hawke	Eton College	Cambridge University
Hon. Alfred Lyttleton M.P.	Eton College	Cambridge University
G. L. Jessop	Cheltenham Grammar	Cambridge University
E.W. Dillon	Rugby School	Oxford University
C.E. Green	Uppingham School	Cambridge University

Essays were contributed by W. G. Grace, and Lords' Harris and Hawke. While Grace, ironically, bemoaned, yet again, that county cricket was becoming 'too much of a business',⁵³ Hawke stated that those who conducted their 'business' outside of cricket – the amateurs – were 'better men and generally better players than the unhappy folk who, at the end of every cricket season know not which way to turn directly their savings are

⁵⁰ Perhaps the most significant of these books is Lord Hawke's *Recollections and Reminiscences*, (London: Williams & Norgate, Ltd., 1924), his publishers being owned by another 'cricketing gentleman', Sir Home Gordon. Other books included: *On and Off the Field*, (London: Stanley Paul, 1953) by Leveson-Gower; *Gentlemen v. Players 1806-1949* (London: George Harrap, 1950) by Warner and numerous articles in journals, the *Cricketer* and *Wisden* by Leveson-Gower, Hawke and Harris.

⁵¹ Bowen, *Cricket*, 179.

⁵² Other highly notable vice-presidents included Lord Southwark, Andrew Stoddart and W. G. Grace.

⁵³ Thompson and Long, *The Club Cricketers' Charity Fund's Official Handbook for 1911*, 37. Grace had been stating this in interviews from at least 1895. See: *Woking News*, 23/8/1895.

gone'.⁵⁴ Although expressing some sympathy for the professional's plight, the underlying message was to not make what should be a pleasure your business. It was, however, a common, yet socially-selective, refrain. As suggested by Kingston Councillor W. W. Scott JP, 'good sportsmen were almost invariably good businessmen'.⁵⁵ However, Victorian and Edwardian gentleman thought it beyond the pale to mix the two and cricket too noble a sport to be exploited for financial gain. Lord Harris, thus, chose to rubber stamp both the values and 'value' of amateurism in his essay by stating that to play cricket, or other amateur sport, 'keenly, honourably, generously [and] self-sacrificingly is a moral lesson in itself'.⁵⁶

This dialogue reached its zenith in a pseudo-editorial by the cricket author H. V. Dorey in the Fund's *Official Handbook* of 1913.⁵⁷ Entitled 'Curse of the Championship'. Dorey let loose a tirade against competitive cricket, and the 'blighting and killing effect of the tournament, league, or championship system'. He bemoaned the fact that although county cricket was no longer the 'game of the village green' cricket remained, despite this, 'the sport for the amateur, or the man who played for the love of the most glorious game the world has ever seen'.⁵⁸ But there was a dark cloud obscuring this romantic view: professionalism. Dorey continued: 'in these days we have the spectacle of Notts, Yorkshire and Surrey ... sending an eleven into the field wholly composed of professionals. This is a result entirely due to the championship system'.⁵⁹ Dorey regarded the rise of commercialised competition, and its bedfellows, the professional and the paying customer, as the death knell of cricket. The future, he argued, if the county game remained

⁵⁴ Ibid., 56.

⁵⁵ *Surrey Comet*, 30/11/1912.

⁵⁶ Thompson and Long, *The Club Cricketers' Charity Fund's Official Handbook for 1911*, 51.

⁵⁷ Dorey was the owner of the Morland Press in London and editor of the weekly magazine *Lawn Tennis and Badminton*. He also produced *Who's who in Cricket: The Blue Book of Cricket*, (Cricket and Sports Publishers, 1911).

⁵⁸ E. A. C Thompson and William H. Long, *The Club Cricketers' Official Handbook for 1913*. (Club Cricketers' Charity Fund, 1913).

⁵⁹ Ibid., 7.

unchecked, would be cricket as a Saturday game operating like the 'Football League, with its motley teams of paid players and all its attendant evils'.⁶⁰

Without explaining what these 'evils' were, nor who was responsible for them, Dorey went even further by likening professional cricketers to a cancer. 'The knife', he stated, 'has to be applied first of all to the professional. He must be cut away from the cricket system'. Despite this uncompromising point of view, he conversely argued that professionals were still necessary as coaches and ground bowlers (indentured servants) to the counties and affluent members or subscribers of elite clubs; men who he regarded as the 'backbone of cricket, as in everything else'.⁶¹ Dorey identified a significant element within the ideals of voluntary societies, or what Robert Morris later called 'the subscriber democracy'.⁶² These were classic, male, urban middle-class phenomena, including cricket clubs themselves, but the CCCF and the CCC were to be far from democratic, for Dorey was yet to twist the knife. 'Must he [the professional] be left to starve?' he asked, but Dorey was no Liberal. Society, he stated, has 'only one answer – they must suffer for the sake of posterity'.⁶³ It was thus left to the professionals to make the self-sacrifices frequently advocated by the amateur classes.

These essays, in light of the authors and a number of vice presidents' association with the CCCF and the CCC, represent both the ideological foundations upon which the Conference was to build its approach to club cricket in the South and the increasingly fragile status of the social elites at this time. As discussed in Chapter One, *The Globe* had commented as early as 1892 on the rising status of the professional cricketer, and *The Field* had pointed out in 1913 how the rise of the professional's status had been at the

⁶⁰ Ibid., 8. Sir Home Gordon thought that cricket was 'trapped by its own popularity'. Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes 1870-1914*, 81.

⁶¹ Thompson and Long, *Club Cricketers' Official Handbook*, 1913, 12.

⁶² Morris "Clubs, societies and associations", 412-413.

⁶³ *Club Cricketers' Official Handbook*, 1913, 15.

expense of the amateur. Although *The Globe*'s editorial had been somewhat tongue-in-cheek, these appraisals did appear to catch the zeitgeist witnessed at many cricket club dinners in the 1890s and early 1900s.⁶⁴ For the gentlemen at the Fund, and many more individuals of a similar social status facing such changes, these were developments which were not to be simply bemoaned, but fought against. Consequently, a number of upper and middle-class amateurs were to react to such developments, and established an 'amateur plus' version of the game, which was to stand apart from the 'competitive' amateur cricket played by less exclusive clubs throughout the South. Constructed from the ethos of the public schools' these men had attended, the ideology of 'amateurism' had been firmly embedded in the middle and upper-classes from the mid-Victorian period in all aspects of cultural life. As seen in their writing above, voluntarism, self-sacrifice, honourable behaviour and the moral value of an undertaking proved to be omnipresent values in novels, poetry and at the dispatch box, pulpit and cricket dinner alike.⁶⁵ However, the men in charge of the CCCF, and its affiliated clubs, feared the future of club cricket replicating what had already transpired in football nationally and cricket in the ECC, and especially the Midlands and the North, where leagues had become central to the game and its cultural meaning. This was a future the influential men of the CCCF did not wish to contemplate, and they were increasingly eager to prevent it from happening. By 1913, it was clear that a more apposite and powerful organisation than the CCCF was required in order to avoid similar changes occurring in London club cricket. It was to be the Conference that would fulfill this role.

⁶⁴ See Horrall, *Popular Culture in London c. 1890-1918: The transformation of entertainment*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001) regarding the rise of the celebrity sportsman.

⁶⁵ In a sermon called 'Is War Justifiable?' at the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899, Canon Grant of Guildford spoke of, 'the moral character of war, which he called soldierly. He did not speak of mercenary arms, or mere conscript arms, but of the voluntary army. ... they found in war that most Christian power which they knew of – individual self-sacrifice'. *Woking News*, 27/10/1899. Similarly, in November that year these values were joined by a speaker at the Shalford CC dinner: 'Britain had stood at the wicket calmly waiting, and now the time had come to give what had been asked for. Nothing could equal the courage and self-denial of the Reservists'. *Woking News*, 24/11/1899.

The Club Cricket Conference

Following a meeting ‘called by E.A.C. Thompson by request of some clubs’ at the Charterhouse Hotel in London, on March 15th 1915, the Fund was re-formed into the London Club Cricket Conference (LCCC).⁶⁶ Unlike its predecessor, the LCCC was not established to raise funds for hospital charities, but to keep club cricket in wartime London going, protect and preserve private grounds and provide cricketers, both civilian and military, with opportunities to play. Despite the significant influence of the war upon its formation, the Conference took advantage of the suspension of professional sport in order to promote the strictly ‘amateur’ values expressed in the CCCF’s handbooks. These were born of, or at least greatly influenced by, the pre-War challenges to the status of the upper-classes and their role within the game.⁶⁷ These changes appear to have instigated the reactionary constitutionalisation of class exclusiveness and discrimination in southern club cricket following the outbreak of the First World War.⁶⁸

The core group of influential men who had established the CCCF were also those who set-out the ideological foundations for the Conference. These men, both the product and promoters of these values, had played competitive cricket at public school, university, county and even in Test matches – the most competitive level the game could offer – and yet league and cup cricket was to be outlawed at the very first committee meeting in 1916.⁶⁹ However, it will be demonstrated that what became ‘Rule 4’ (Conditions of Membership) of the CCC, was somewhat archaic at its very inception, for exemptions and

⁶⁶ Note on first page of LaSCCCC minute book. No date.

⁶⁷ In this regard the People’s Budget, expanding state intervention, rising industrial unrest, plus the revival of amateurism and voluntarism spawned by the early months of the War may have influenced this structured return to ‘traditional’ social relations by the time of the first meeting in 1916.

⁶⁸ Speak, “Social Stratification and Participation in Sport in mid-Victorian England with particular reference to Lancaster, 1840-70”, in Mangan, ed., *Pleasure, Profit and Proselytism: British Culture and Sport at Home and Abroad, 1790-1914*. Cited in Baker, “Whose Hegemony?”, 3.

⁶⁹ LCCC Minute Book, 1/4/1916.

compromises were made almost immediately – though we have seen, such compromises were commonplace.⁷⁰

This position was brought about by two decisions of the CCC Committee in 1916 which set the trajectory of this organisation and ‘club’ cricket in the South of England for the next fifty years. The first decision that was to have such far-reaching ramifications was made at the very first General Meeting on 22 March 1916, which was presided over by Sir Home Gordon. Gordon, along with Hon. Secretary Thompson and committee members elected that evening, decided that they alone, as the first committee, were ‘empowered to frame and agree upon the objects and code of Rules to govern the Conference’.⁷¹ Mirroring the educational and social composition of the Fund (but not strictly Morris’ associational structure), the biographies and social make-up of this first Conference committee was similarly narrow (Table Three), and, although not as well known nationally, this committee were similarly against the spread of competitive cricket leagues.⁷²

The second decision, which would create an elite version of amateur cricket and set the image and context of ‘club’ cricket in the South apart from the North of England, was taken at the first committee meeting not two weeks later. Having decided amongst themselves that they would decide the ideological direction of the Conference, this group then passed a set of Rules that would, over time, ‘enforce’ their collective ideology; the most significant of these rules being ‘Conditions of Membership’ (originally Rule 5):

5. It shall be an indispensable condition that this London Club Cricket Conference shall neither recognise, approve of, nor promote any Cup or League system, and no club connected with a Cup or League competition, or playing a man as a professional, except the groundsman, shall be qualified to attend any meeting of the Conference. Any club subsequently joining a Cup or league competition, or

⁷⁰ Similarly, professionalism was outlawed, but this aspect of the county game was not such an issue in the club cricket of London at this time.

⁷¹ ‘It was agreed to elect one military representative during the continuance of the War to sit on the Committee. Sgt. C. B. Fry (Record Office, Royal Fusiliers) was duly elected’. LCCC Minute Book, 22/3/1916.

⁷² Members of the Honor Oak, Mitcham, Parsons Green, North Middlesex and Hampstead Montrose cricket clubs were elected.

playing a professional other than a groundsman, shall, ipso facto, cease to become a member of the Conference.⁷³

Table Three: CCC vice-presidents and committee members, 1916-1920.

Name	School or College	University
Sir Home Gordon	Eton College	N/A
W. H. Wheeler	Marlborough College	Unknown
W. H. Long	Eton College	Unknown
C. B. Fry	Repton School	Oxford University
L. S. Wells	Dulwich College	Cambridge University
J. G. Q. Besch	Marlborough and Oakham	Cambridge University
J. Bowstead	Repton School	Cambridge University
E.W. Dillon	Rugby School	Oxford University
C.E. Green	Uppingham School	Cambridge University

Although no clubs were forced to join, these Conditions of Membership were to put into practice what the likes of Holmes, The Chiel and Dorey had been calling for. Ultimately, this rule became a divisive ideology, and it created an artificial distinction between what were now two kinds of amateur club cricket: the first being that played by the amateur ‘elites’, and the second, the cricket played throughout the South of England by members of less socially exclusive clubs – whether in a league or not. This was not, as might reasonably be assumed, an unintended consequence of the rule, despite its closely linked social and ideological origins. Thompson, from the outset, as he had done previously at

⁷³ LCCC Minute Book, 1/4/1916.

the CCCF, sought to recruit membership from the bigger more exclusive London clubs.⁷⁴ He was most successful in this endeavor; and an interim report noted that ‘practically all of the London senior cricket clubs still able to struggle along in order to maintain and preserve their grounds, pay the essential rents and taxes, and so save themselves from probable extinction, are now enrolled as members of the Conference’.⁷⁵ Clubs that relied upon municipal pitches were not discussed during the war, and despite the early presence of some works teams, clubs deemed to be ‘village’ were not invited to join the Conference until after 1936.⁷⁶

Constitutional compromise

As previously discussed, ‘competitive’ leagues and cups had been present in London and the South from the early 1880s, so it comes as no surprise that, even among Conference member clubs, an overt, rather than an amateuristic ‘contained competitiveness’,⁷⁷ was never far away. Only a matter of months after the Armistice, the Conference had to make its first decisions regarding so-called ‘competition’ cricket. While ‘City’ clubs were denied membership of the Conference due to their participation in a Cup competition, Thompson reported that the original benefactors of the CCCF’s fundraising efforts, the ‘Hospital clubs, who had for years competed in the [London] Hospital Cup Competition ... shall be ... exempt from Rule 5’. However, that was to be the extent of the committee’s generosity and it was decided that ‘no other exceptions shall be made in future’.⁷⁸ Despite the Hospital’s

⁷⁴ Ibid., 5/10/1917. Thompson also instigated the formation of a special sub-committee for the re-establishment of ‘senior London clubs’ in 1917. LCCC Minute Book, 2/11/1917. Further evidence of the Conference’s socially ‘narrow’ interests are illustrated in a resolution passed regarding the preservation of grounds. ‘That this London Club Cricket Conference in annual general meeting assembled, which represents the general interests of the private ground cricket clubs in Greater London...’ LCCC Minute Book, 6/3/1918.

⁷⁵ LaSCCC Minute Book, 24/6/1916.

⁷⁶ CCC Minute Book, 3/7/1936.

⁷⁷ Baker, “*Who’s Hegemony?*”, 1.

⁷⁸ LCCC Minute Book, 23/5/1919.

exemption being the result of long-held associations, it was a decision which immediately compromised the legitimacy of the Rule.⁷⁹

Membership of the committee, and the Conference in general, was still restricted to metropolitan clubs at this stage. It was becoming clear to the committee members, despite the geographical limitations and restrictive conditions of membership, that, as more clubs re-established themselves or were inaugurated following the First World War, membership was going to increase. In a move to regulate the status and behaviour of any new member clubs, the Annual General Meeting of February 1920 added a significant caveat to the Conditions of Membership:

5. Nor shall any player, or member of an affiliated club, institute, or take part in any league, cup or prize competition within the boundaries of "The Conference." Any player or member of an affiliated club so offending, shall be dealt with as the council shall deem fit. *All clubs affiliated to "The Conference" and the members thereof, shall accept this rule as final and binding upon them.*⁸⁰

This additional stipulation, although designed to control member clubs and negate any confusion regarding competition or professionalism, failed. This was due both to the inconsistency of the rule's construction (professionals were still allowed to play for teams if also acting as a Groundsman) and the manner of its application. It is clear, from the minute books, that compromise for some, and strict adherence to this Rule for others, led, as in 1919, to institutional hypocrisy. While a number of clubs were allowed to compete in their 'in-house' competitions,⁸¹ others, such as the factory side Steinway Athletic CC, were removed from the Register of Clubs, and their subscription returned. Steinway, in 'a flagrant breach of Rule 5', had joined a Music Trades League, but, apart from the

⁷⁹ In many respects the CCC's hands were tied in this regard. To not support the Hospital's Cup would have been to jeopardise one of the central pillars of voluntary culture in the post war period. As it was the AGM of 1920 decided that this competition was a 'semi-private competition'. LCCC Minute Book, 6/9/1920.

⁸⁰ LCCC Rules 1920. Italics added.

⁸¹ As all cricketers involved in the Great Northern Railway Company's Competition were employees, it was decided that 'no action would be taken'. LCCC Minute Book, 19/3/1920. A similar exception was made for the Beaumont CC regarding some of their players taking part in an Inter-Postal Competition. LCCC Minute Book, 21/5/1920.

competition involving numerous companies, quite what the CCC's problem was with this broadly similar enterprise is unclear. How clubs were 'dealt with' was inconsistent, particularly in light of the Executive Council's statement at the same meeting that: 'a club under the Rules of the Conference could play what club it desired'. Expulsion from the Conference was punishment enough, one may think, but other member clubs who had fixtures against Steinway were then 'notified that they must cancel their fixtures with the offending club forthwith'.⁸²

Steinway Athletic's excommunication would have further repercussions in the September of that year. A team called W. G. W. Eshelby XI's close association with Steinway Athletic CC also resulted in their 'removal through [a] transgression of Rule 5'.⁸³ 'Official' pariah status was then also given to Eshelby's XI, and, as if suffering from a contagion, further conference clubs were officially warned 'not to exchange fixtures ... as the two teams would appear to be closely connected'.⁸⁴ As for Rule 4, which in 1920 had, perhaps for the first and only time in sports history, constitutionally advanced the amateur ideal of 'play for play's sake', its existence was short lived and it was deleted from the Rules at the Annual General Meeting of 1921.⁸⁵ Consequently, Rule 5 then became Rule 4.

⁸² Ibid., 21/5/1920.

⁸³ Ibid., 9/9/1920. George Washington Eshelby was the American born manager of Steinway and Sons for Great Britain and her colonies. http://eshelbypianos.com/family_history Accessed, 7/11/2012.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 9/9/1920. Although both clubs would be re-admitted to the Conference in the October, a public point had been made.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 4/2/1921.

Rule 4 between 1921 and 1939

The early years of the Conference witnessed the organisation's expansion and attempts to establish its authority.⁸⁶ The uncompromising treatment of the Steinway and Eshelby 'trade' XIs apart, a mixture of benevolence, indecision and what may be described as 'tough love', characterises the *ad hoc* manner in which this authority was established. Once the Conference had settled into its increasingly influential role – 275 clubs were affiliated by 1921, the CCC were playing fixtures against international touring sides by 1926 and the MCC were consulting the Conference regarding potential 'Law' changes by 1928 – league competitions were increasingly prohibited.⁸⁷ E.A.C Thompson, who had established the first amateur football league – the South London – and helped to form the original Southern Football League in London,⁸⁸ wrote in 1923 that the obstruction of league formation would:

Tend to keep the game perfectly clean, strictly amateur, and ... see it played in the fine old spirit which has ever characterised it since the days of those who handed on their heritage for others to follow. Competitions do not make cricket any better; rather they make it a good deal worse by the birth of all sorts of evils, which, once entering the field of play, can seldom be ejected, so they become a permanent part of a vicious system, producing a bad atmosphere which is at once unhealthy and contentious. Furthermore, it leaves the real English spirit of amateur sport to be brushed ruthlessly aside for the more dangerous and unwholesome spirit of competitive adventure in which two league points, or a medal, or some piece of silver ware, may and does count to be of greater value, and so becomes more cherished in the end by the players than the actual game itself.⁸⁹

This followed the AGM of 22 February 1922, which saw a tightening of the new Rule 4, and the Hospital Cup exemption being removed. This forced the hospital clubs to resign from the Conference having (one must assume) refused to give up their competition.⁹⁰ Although finally appearing decisive regarding the issue of the hospital clubs, the Executive

⁸⁶ Eligibility for membership of the CCC had previously been restricted to clubs 'with grounds or headquarters within about a 30 mile radius of Charing Cross', but the Council decided to send a 'circular of invitation to South-Country Clubs'. LCCC Minute Book, 6/2/1920; 9/9/1920.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 16/11/1921; CCC Minute Book, 3/9/1926; 28/9/1928.

⁸⁸ *The Cricketer*, 3/5/1941, 16. Thompson came to deplore the part he had played in the formation of amateur league football. *The Cricketer Spring Annual 1941*, 77.

⁸⁹ Cited in Williams, *Cricket and England*, 36–37.

⁹⁰ LCCC Minute Book, 12/1/1923.

Council of the Conference was less so regarding professionalism, which it came to overlook. Although Conference rules were designed to eradicate the hiring of professionals specifically for matches, it would appear a number of member clubs maintained the long decried practice and that the rule not only caused the Conference problems, it now instigated friction between clubs, who often came to keep an eye on each other.

Wanstead CC accused the Seford CC of playing the Essex professional 'Jack' Russell against them in 1920.⁹¹ It was duly agreed that the Seford club be expelled from the Conference, but 'if a formal application for re-admission be made the Council would give it their best consideration'.⁹² Considering this lenient treatment of a club in clear breach of its rules, it is perhaps not surprising that the Cheam CC, having played the Surrey professional Lowe in 1923, contacted the Conference after he had the temerity to invoice the club for 'playing assistance'. Despite the Cheam club breaking Conference rules, the Council Committee decided this was not a disciplinary matter, but that it should be settled between the Cheam and Surrey clubs.⁹³ This confusion regarding professionalism in club cricket is peculiar, but it may be understood in light of an increasingly common and distasteful (to middle-class sensibilities and notions of amateur sport) challenge after 1920: commercially sponsored competitions. Although the Conference's reaction in this regard is important, it was not simply a desire to stifle competition cricket if Thompson's reaction to the CCC's Fixture Bureau becoming involved with A.G. Spalding & Bros. is a guide. The Fixture Bureau Regulations had been re-drafted in November 1929, and this event, allied to the illness of Mr. Titchmarsh, who had (as far as the CCC were concerned) organised the Bureau, had inadvertently highlighted a misunderstanding between the CCC and A. G. Spalding & Bros. who had supplied the secretarial labour in running the Bureau.

⁹¹ Charles Albert George 'Jack' Russell would not have been the most subtle of 'ringers', having played for England that season. He was also *Wisden* cricketer of the year in 1923.

⁹² LCCC Minute Book, 9/9/1920.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 12/1/1923.

Titchmarsh, an employee of Spalding and the Hon. Secretary of the Fixture Bureau since 1920, had been acting as a mediator between the two parties – quite what he was telling each we may never know – but the CCC decided, once aware that Spalding Bros. operated the Fixture Bureau in order to gain custom from Conference clubs (a notion ‘strongly resented’),⁹⁴ that they could not be ‘mixed up with the affairs of trade’.⁹⁵

Competitions’ prove resilient

As had been decried by first Holmes, and then ‘The Chiel’ in *Cricket*, newspapers had identified club cricket as an easy method for boosting circulation figures. The London newspaper market being highly competitive, the first newspaper sponsored prize competition affected the Conference in 1925, with *The Star* advertising its competition using the Conference’s name without permission.⁹⁶ It remains unclear as to the format of this competition, but *The Star’s* editor, Wilson Pope, was informed, via a very stiff letter with quasi-legal undertones, that *The Star’s* Prize Competition was, under Rule 4 of the Conference, ‘illegal and consequently must be banned’.⁹⁷ Pope chose to ignore this and the 1920s was a period where newspapers were actively sponsoring leagues and cups, and the awarding of prize bats to individual cricketers became increasingly common across the region.⁹⁸ Members of Crystal Palace, Richmond, Westminster Bank, Leytonstone Atlas, Springfield Mental Hospital, Bromley Town and Rams CCs’ had all

⁹⁴ Internal letter in CCC Minute Book, dated 7/3/1930.

⁹⁵ Letter to Spalding Bros. dated 12/3/1930.

⁹⁶ For details on *The Star* see: “In Memory of *The Star*”, <http://thestarfictionindex.atwebpages.com/the.htm> Accessed, 4/4/2013.

⁹⁷ LCCC Minute Book, 22/5/1925.

⁹⁸ Weybridge CC had violated Rule 4 by participating in the *Sunday Despatch* cricket competition. CCC Minute Book, 22/9/1933.

breached Rule 4 in this regard during 1926, but 'as the players had in every instance either returned or refused to accept the prize bats', the clubs were not disciplined.⁹⁹

Surrey was far from immune to such developments, and by 1921 some were airing the opinion that the lack of a league was detrimental to the game and the image of towns like Guildford. A *Surrey Advertiser* editorial reported:

Our columns of cricket scores are even heavier than heretofore, and the number of clubs now operating in Surrey must surely constitute a record. It seems strange that in a considerable area surrounding Guildford there appears to be only one competition – the Woking and District League. A league in the Guildford district would undoubtedly create tremendous interest.¹⁰⁰

The *Surrey Advertiser*, despite sponsoring competitions in other sports, did not attempt to rectify this situation and it was left to *The Weekly Press* to launch a cricket league in Guildford in 1927.¹⁰¹ The teams which entered that first season were: Congregational, Astolat, Guildford Bus Houses, Guildford Y.M.C.A., Biddles (a printing company), Trinity Guild, Sons of Phoenix, Stoughton, Rydes Hill, Merrow Downs and Guildford Gas Works. The names of these clubs strongly suggest the presence of a significant number of 'industrial' or working-class clubs. As the Conference had not extended its boundaries to include 'village' or other minor clubs in the rural west and east of Surrey, this league did not affect the Conference, nor any of its member clubs.

Despite a number of leagues operating parallel to the Conference, and other clubs choosing to abolish prizes themselves, numerous member clubs breached Rule 4 with regard to prize bats.¹⁰² October 1926 had witnessed the strengthening of Rule 4 further, in

⁹⁹ LCCC Minute Book, 3/9/1926.

¹⁰⁰ *Surrey Advertiser*, 1/6/1921.

¹⁰¹ Guildford Area Events 1925-1928, Scrapbook C, 111-112. Guildford Institute Collection.

¹⁰² An early example being the Kingston Town CC, who having elected a Dr. Sedgwick as president decided to abolish prizes. It was argued by a Mr. Hallett, in seconding, 'that by doing away with the giving of prizes they would also eliminate a good deal of friction which had been detrimental to the sport. (Hear, hear.)' *Surrey Comet*, 6/4/1912.

a reaction to the ever increasing number of newspaper competitions, with the following paragraphs added:

Inter-departmental league or cup competitions, wholly confined to bona fide permanent members of the staffs of their own business firms shall be approved, but clubs affiliated shall not take part in any recognised outside business house league, cup, or prize competition.

A prize competition shall be deemed to be one in which a club, or any of its members, may enter for prizes, either in money or in kind offered from outside sources for playing skill at cricket.¹⁰³

This alteration, which was established 'on the distinct understanding that no medals or prizes of any sort or kind be offered to players',¹⁰⁴ appeared to be an attempt to keep controversies – if not contradictions – to a minimum (the Conference had re-instigated its own inter-county tournament, with Lord's final, in 1925).¹⁰⁵ Peace appears to have broken out until 1929, when a further five clubs breached Rule 4 by taking part in newspaper competitions and their players accepting prize bats. Four of the five club players had either returned their prize bat or their club had prevented the winner from accepting it. However, in the case of the fifth, People's Palace CC, the member had refused to return his prize.¹⁰⁶ The club, likely threatened with expulsion, had then forced the player to resign. This, he duly did, much to the Committee's pleasure, who wrote to congratulate the club on 'their firm attitude towards their late member', however, they were reminded to 'take greater heed [of the Rules] in the future'.¹⁰⁷ It is unclear as to whether the clubs were trying to get away with entering competitions without the CCC's knowledge, but once exposed they were unanimous in accepting the Conference's judgment. Interestingly the Executive Council, following discussions regarding Rule 4 and those competitions to be sanctioned,

¹⁰³ CCC Minute Book, 1/10/1926.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 6/11/1931

¹⁰⁵ LCCC Minute Book, 27/3/1925.

¹⁰⁶ The People's Palace was opened in 1886 as an equivalent to the Crystal and Alexandra Palaces' for the working-classes of the east-end. Initially an entertainment centre it soon developed into an educational facility (now part of the University of London), although sport and other forms of leisure continued. See: "The People's Palace", http://www.library.qmul.ac.uk/archives/archives_galleries/peoplespalace Accessed 2/11/2012.

¹⁰⁷ CCC Minute Book, 23/9/1929. Another player was expelled from the Callenders CC in 1930 for a similar 'offence'. CCC Minute Book, 26/9/1930.

‘decided not to place on record in the Minutes any approved competitions under revised Rule 4, but to leave the matter open’.¹⁰⁸ A Special General Meeting of 1934 revised the Conference’s Rules in an attempt to eradicate any remaining ambiguity regarding competitions and prizes. Despite this, prize bats remained a problem throughout the 1930s.¹⁰⁹ Most significantly, however, the new rules included, for the first time, the phrase which was to both define the Conference, and hinder the development of leagues for decades to come: ‘To control and safeguard amateur cricket on strictly non-competitive lines’.¹¹⁰

Class relations deteriorate

Prize bats and newspaper competitions aside, this phrase represented a further withdrawal by the middle-classes from socially open, meritocratic, competition, and the years up to the outbreak of World War Two, in cricketing and political terms, were thought to be full of ‘menace’.¹¹¹ The establishment of leagues was but one element of what the middle-classes feared at this time, for as McKibbin has argued, class tensions were also high throughout the inter-war period. What may have set the tone for the breakdown of previously cordial relations immediately following the war was the Russian Revolution and the upper and middle-classes’ realisation, by 1918, that ‘the strategy of restricting working-class demands upon society to the margins had ... failed’. The social and political elites, thus, increasingly feared a working-class who they regarded as a central problem.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 22/4/1932.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 3/7/1936; 25/9/1936.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 26/10/1934.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 12/11/1937.

¹¹² McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, 259.

'Bolshevism', male working-class enfranchisement, and a squeeze on living standards saw many in positions of influence, who had previously advocated cross-class unity and self-sacrifice for the greater good during wartime, talking of self-preservation afterwards. Prior to any significant middle-class influence in Surrey's county towns, the value of the volunteer movement and a 'spirit of self-sacrifice' for the common good had been expressed by a Dr. Page during a speech in Guildford in 1915.¹¹³ By 1921, the Guildford branch of the Middle Classes Union heard Page state a very different case. In light of the post-war changes, Page proposed that 'instead of being pugnacious, the Middle Classes Union only desired to use that instinct of self-protection and self-preservation, which animated every creature'. The middle-classes, he contentiously argued, felt that 'the burden laid on them was disproportionately heavy to that laid on other classes and that, with incomes reduced by taxation, and by the depreciation of money, they were in a position which almost threatened them with extinction. ... Labour, during the years of the war, had never received or extracted a higher price for every service which it rendered'.¹¹⁴

Following the war, it is clear that the middle-classes in London, and increasingly those throughout rural Surrey, were not prepared to 'play a subordinate role in the new order', neither politically, nor culturally.¹¹⁵ Whereas senior cricket clubs were happy to meet working-class clubs in competition, support their efforts, or even merge with them prior to 1914, attitudes that may be regarded as self-serving were increasingly prevalent among the middle-classes in rural towns and villages and upon cricket fields. The more socially selective, and 'senior', Byfleet CC demonstrates this increasing retrenchment. Although they allowed the 'junior' Byfleet Village CC to use their ground while their own was being made ready in 1919, the Byfleet CC rejected the idea of a fixture against them in 1923.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ *Surrey Advertiser*, 22/2/1915.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 20/6/1921.

¹¹⁵ McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, 259.

¹¹⁶ Byfleet CC, 21/3/1923. SHC Ref: 2710/1

As discussed below in more detail, the shunning of one's neighbours in this way frequently remained private or local affairs at this time, but occasionally such conflicts were discussed in the local press.

Following an article called 'What is wrong with Teddington?' a trader in the town, Mr. E. A. Westwood, argued that there was 'mutual distrust' between the classes and that efforts by workers were not acknowledged by their social superiors or the press, who did offer 'Thanks to the devoted and untiring efforts of Mr. and Mrs. – the hospital was handed a cheque for umpteen pounds, being the proceeds of the town fete'. He went on to say that 'distrust between the workers and the "cultured" [will remain] ... until the two get together and do equal shares of the work, securing an equal share of the praise, encouragement or thanks, no social or free trade effort will flourish'.¹¹⁷ Much of this 'distrust' may well have been simple ignorance on the part of the middle-classes and other social elites, for only a month later, a guest speaker at the 'artisan' Teddington Town Cricket Club (TTCC) thought they should try to 'emulate the many old boys' associations that were springing up with their fine grounds, excellent accommodation and large number of supporters'. The TTCC, despite struggling financially, had already tried to improve its facilities by extending its pavilion. However, this had only resulted in placing a further financial burden upon the club. Already £25 in debt, Mr. A. Cleveland replied: 'In spite of the propaganda about a fitter Britain', the club's landlords, the Office of Works, following an extension to the pavilion, said 'they had improved it and must pay £1 extra in rent [£22 a year]'.¹¹⁸

As the Conference's boundaries and membership expanded, ever more vigilance was required to ensure that its rules were adhered to beyond London. Mr. C.B. French described the 'growing menace of local leagues in ... the south' and competitions being

¹¹⁷ *Surrey Comet*, 9/10/1937. Even after the war a Col. Upton; honorary chairman of the Guildford Festival, received £80 (approximately £2,500 in 2012) 'in recognition of his valuable services over several months and to reimburse his incidental expenses'. *Surrey Advertiser*, 17/7/1948.

¹¹⁸ *Surrey Comet*, 6/11/1937.

established in Dorking in Surrey, Bognor in Sussex and Gillingham in Kent were reported to the General Purposes Committee in 1937.¹¹⁹ It is not known if these were sponsored by newspapers, but it is clear that other commercial concerns saw opportunities to boost trade by becoming involved in club cricket. One incident that further highlights the power of the Conference, and the extent of its influence, is Bentall's Department Store of Kingston, Surrey, which decided to cancel its competition following correspondence from the CCC.¹²⁰ But it was the ever increasing number of newspaper competitions that created the most anguish for the Conference, with *The Star* remaining a serial offender.¹²¹

Metropolitan influence spreads

Leagues during the inter-war period in Surrey were not always reliant upon commercial sponsorship. The l'Anson League apart, there were a number of small leagues, independent of commercial influence throughout Surrey. Details of these competitions are extremely scarce. However, one example demonstrates not only the independence of lower status clubs in rural areas, but it also provides an early indication that some socially ambitious clubs in these areas were influenced by the metropolitan attitudes of the CCC, and began to look towards London for fixtures during the 1920s. The Hurtwood League was one of three leagues to be reported (almost always without reference that these fixtures were league matches) in the *Surrey Advertiser* at this time. Contested by Ewhurst, Peaslake, Holmbury St Mary, Oakwood Hill, Forest Green and Cranleigh Working Men, the Ewhurst CC decided, after only one season, to withdraw from the league in 1928.

¹¹⁹ CCC Minute Book, 12/11/1937.

¹²⁰ Bentall's withdrew a planned competition, having been informed that it was against Conference rules. Ibid., 27/9/1935.

¹²¹ Ibid., 25/5/1925, 22/9/1936 and 25/9/1936.

Ewhurst, near Cranleigh, a small, nondescript, village even today, provides an interesting example of how social elites in rural Surrey began to look increasingly towards London for social and cultural inspiration after the First World War. Despite a significant number of wealthy residents, the village possessing two schools by 1870 and The Ewhurst Institute and Reading Room's construction by subscription in 1901, H.E. Malden was less than impressed by the district's isolation in 1911. 'Nothing', he stated, 'shows the backwardness of the Weald more than the absolute disuse and forgetting of these lines of through communication'.¹²² Some of the village elites, perhaps stung into action by these words, appear to have thus re-established the Ewhurst CC in 1912, and addressing 'backwardness', and poor lines of 'communication' with the outside world, appears to have been central to this endeavour.

A meeting in April 1912 declared that the club must 'redouble our efforts to restore the Ewhurst Cricket Club to its former famous position amongst the clubs of the county'.¹²³ This ambition was not to be achieved overnight, but it required an ability to attract fixtures against the leading clubs, both local and metropolitan. By the late-1920s the club's participation in the Hurtwood League would not help in this regard. Having already refused to share their ground with the Ewhurst Pals Club in 1921, a special general meeting of the club decided that 'friendly fixtures were more sporting than any league match', and the club withdrew from the league in 1928, thus severing ties with a number of local working-men's sides.¹²⁴ Despite informing the Hon. Sec. of the League that the Ewhurst Club desired to 'play friendly games with the clubs as heretofore', indicative of the members desire to mix with a better 'class' of opposition, the following season's fixture with

¹²² Malden, "Parishes: Ewhurst", in *A History of the County of Surrey*, 97. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42937> Accessed, 1/11/2012.

¹²³ Ewhurst CC Minute Book, 10/4/1912. SHS Ref: 5406/1

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 15/3/1921. SHS Ref: 5406/1

Cranleigh Working Men was replaced by a match with the ex-Royal Grammar School side; Old Guildfordians.¹²⁵

Such a change in attitude towards matches with local working-men's sides, and the prioritising of friendly matches over meaningful competitive leagues, was indicative of a significant demographic change within the villages and Parishes of west and east Surrey. Ewhurst had attracted a number of wealthy residents during the late Victorian period, such as the pottery manufacturer Sir Henry Doulton, and the only house building from that time consisted of large residences.¹²⁶ This was also the case in nearby Cranleigh where outsiders had begun to price out the indigenous workers. Following a swathe of villas being built in the village, it was noted by the Hambledon Rural Council that terraced houses were now in demand due to an acute shortage of houses for the working-classes in the village. Mr. H. F. Lucas informed the Council in 1926 that 'over 20 [28] applications had been received for one vacant Council house', which a Mr. Waldy argued 'was largely due to the acquisition of strangers of cottages formerly occupied by local workers'.¹²⁷ A similar situation appears to have existed in the increasingly suburbanised town of Woking, where 600 applicants were waiting for Council housing in 1927.¹²⁸ Although the Woking example may indicate a simple shortage of housing for new workers in a rapidly expanding town, it is clear from the Cranleigh example that increasingly large numbers of the 'metropolitan' middle-class were beginning to dominate even the remotest parts of west and east Surrey.

It is impossible to pinpoint the exact time when these new migrants reached a 'critical mass', but the evidence would suggest that the late 1920s and 1930s was the period when

¹²⁵ Ibid., 15/7/1928 and 15/7/1928. By 1939 Ewhurst were approaching very senior clubs such as Banstead CC for fixtures. Ibid., 20/2/1939.

¹²⁶ 'Woolpits' was designed in 1884 by Sir Ernest George for Sir Henry Doulton.

¹²⁷ *Surrey Advertiser*, 24/7/1926

¹²⁸ *Surrey Advertiser*, 13/8/1927

the middle-classes were able, in the form of the Conference's approach to competition for instance, to not only dominate numerically, but also culturally. It is clear that, by this time, 'minor' clubs such as Ewhurst, and not just established and well connected villages or 'senior' clubs like Dorking, Guildford and Cranleigh, were eager to emulate the metropolitan elites of the Conference. Although regular whole-day matches were beyond all clubs at this stage,¹²⁹ the Ewhurst club's decision that 'friendly fixtures were more sporting than any league match' suggests that the Conference's values were spreading beside, and within, the new generation of middle-class men who now influenced cricket within the county.¹³⁰ Ewhurst CC's rejection of league cricket reflected a desire to emulate their senior neighbour, Cranleigh, who could boast some very exclusive fixtures.¹³¹

It is clear therefore that socially ambitious clubs, such as Ewhurst, needed to avoid league competition and the lower-status clubs within, in order to attract the elite opposition required to improve or attain the high social status, or 'fame', desired. Unlike the Guildford, Farnham or Dorking CCs, which had long-standing reputations based upon representing relatively large populations, the Ewhurst CC was unable to compete (on social terms) with more illustrious clubs until the demographic of the village had sufficiently changed.¹³² In a similar fashion, the Cranleigh CC (members of the CCC since 1919), who had previously met local working-men's sides under the presidency of Lord Alverstone, chose to develop increasingly close ties with a local public school, and turned down a

¹²⁹ Even at the Cranleigh CC, the 'pressure of business', forced the resignation of the secretary. Cranleigh CC Minute Book, 18/9/1925.

¹³⁰ Ewhurst CC Minute Book, 15/7/1928.

¹³¹ Indicative of how early fixtures with certain clubs could be, Birley notes that 'I Zingari were already a celebrated and prestigious adornment of anyone's fixture list' by the 1850s. Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 193.

¹³² The Cranleigh CC could boast one Major, two Sirs' and two Reverends', who between them had two Military Crosses, a CVO, a CBE, and two MAs, in 1932. One of these Reverends was a cricket blue at Cambridge in 1908 and 1909 and ex-Worcestershire amateur, the Hon. C. F. Lyttelton, who had become the new rector of Cranleigh in 1928. *Surrey Advertiser*, 2/6/1928. Lyttelton, the brother of fellow Blue and England cricketer, footballer, and politician Alfred (d. 1913), immediately became a vice president and committee member of the club. Cranleigh CC Minute Book, 19/12/1928.

ground share with Cranleigh Working Men.¹³³ However, even after demographic change of this nature, rural village clubs struggled to attract the social elites of old in large numbers,¹³⁴ and 'VIPs' were being actively sought by 1938.¹³⁵ Only after the migrant middle-class residents had reached a 'critical mass' were such village clubs able to 'rub shoulders' with the elite clubs. By 1939, both Cranleigh CC and the Ewhurst CC were approaching Fund and Conference founder members Banstead CC for fixtures.¹³⁶

Conclusions

Although competitions, be they in the form of a cup or league, were broadly accepted as important for the future popularity, health and improving standard of cricket prior to 1914, voices of concern had been raised as early as 1894. The Rev. Holmes' fear of an unholy football-like 'working-class/professional' revolution within cricket had largely remained an infrequent and isolated concern until the establishment of the CCCF in 1910. The CCCF, while not ostensibly designed to act as such, did provide a forum for a number of like-minded gentlemen to meet, discuss and express their antipathy towards league competitions. Although the repercussions' of social reforms and increasing state intervention in the early months of the war may have disturbed or influenced these gentlemen, it is unlikely that any serious actions would have been taken within gentlemanly cricket circles until after 1918. For, although the formation of the Conference in 1915 enabled their collective opposition to league competition to be organised and expressed in a set of rules capable of eradicating league and cup competitions from

¹³³ Ibid., 12/3/1937 and 1/11/1937. The club did allow the Cranleigh School hockey team permission to play hockey on the common during the winter. Ibid., 11/2/1938.

¹³⁴ The Ewhurst CC noted in 1932 that a number of V/P's had either died or left the district. It was thus now 'up to members to devise some means of meeting this deficit'. Ewhurst CC Minute Book, 4/3/1932.

¹³⁵ These were Sir Joseph Napier; Sir Kenneth Leigh, Rev. J. B. Dollar, Col. R. J. Few, Dr. W. H. Forshaw, Lord Macmillan and Messer's Bosanquet and Evans. Ibid., 13/3/1938.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 20/2/1939.

metropolitan cricket fields, they were unable to enforce them until after the end of World War One.

Such an outcome was far from certain in 1918, and the formative years of the Conference were marked by a confusing array of contradictory decisions. Despite the rather experimental establishment of its authority, by the late 1920s the Conference had firmly established itself as an integral part of the metropolitan cricket establishment (and indeed the international fixture list). Consequently, the social capital associated with affiliation to the Conference grew during the late 1920s and 1930s. This was a period that witnessed the interrelated processes of the middle-class suburbanisation of Surrey towns and villages, and the adoption of non-competitive values by socially ambitious clubs beyond the Conference's traditional metropolitan heartland. This established a 'virtuous' (or 'vicious') circle, in which social aspiration led to the conscious exclusion of neighbouring clubs. Clearly, for some clubs, this was an unintended consequence of Conference membership, but for many others, membership was based upon elite sociability and a conscious desire to avoid contact with lower-status clubs. This was both representative, and, as witnessed in metropolitan Teddington and the increasingly 'suburbanised' villages of Ewhurst and Cranleigh, the cause, of growing levels of suspicion and social distance between the classes.¹³⁷

Commensurate with Whitehand and Carr's identification of the inter-war period as the pivotal period in the evolution of Britain's suburbs, this period witnessed the migrant or commuting 'metropolitan' middle-classes' reaching a critical mass in what had been rural

¹³⁷ The erection by property developer Clive Saxton of the 'Cutteslowe Walls' between a privately owned 'middle-class' estate and the Council houses occupied by slum-clearance families in Oxford during 1934 represents the most arbitrary and symbolic ways in which the classes were 'separated' during the inter-war period. "CUTTESLOWE WALLS (1934–1959) 34 Aldrich Road, Oxford"
<http://www.oxfordshireblueplaques.org.uk/plaques/cutteslowe.html> Accessed, 5/12/2012.

Surrey.¹³⁸ This created a social blend suitable for the ‘metropolitan’ overthrow of what had proved to be resilient ‘rural’ social and cultural norms. As witnessed in urban north of Surrey by Samuel Wilberforce (Chapter Two, p. 96) a century before, the social and cultural dominance of these new middle-class residents resulted in a greater separation of the classes. Although Williams’ claim that ‘it is not difficult to find examples from rural England between the wars of village teams whose players had widely differing backgrounds’ may well have remained possible throughout the UK, such incidences were becoming increasingly rare in Surrey between the wars. As the 1930s progressed it would appear that individual cricket clubs throughout Surrey were becoming increasingly homogenous in social terms. A direct consequence of this increasing polarisation was that they were less likely to meet on the field of play.¹³⁹ Just as the operation of a small number of leagues refutes the orthodox narrative of club cricket in Surrey, there will of course be examples of socially mixed clubs during the inter-war period that may refute such a claim. It is clear however, that decisions similar to those made by the Ewhurst CC ensured, by the outbreak of the Second World War, that the playing or rejection of league cricket throughout all of Surrey was a distinct class-based cultural practice.

The Conference’s power and influence had clearly grown between the wars, and it had arguably peaked in the mid-1930s; the Conference assisted the MCC by getting member clubs to test and provide feedback on larger wickets in 1929,¹⁴⁰ and it was directly canvassing the House of Commons regarding the Government’s National Physical Recreation Scheme (copies of the letter sent to *The Times*, the President of the Board of Education and the National Playing Fields Association).¹⁴¹ Membership had also exceeded

¹³⁸ Jeremy W. R. Whitehand and Christine M. H. Carr, *Twentieth-Century Suburbs: A Morphological Approach*, (London: Routledge, 2001) cited in Mark Clapson, “Cities, Suburbs, Countryside” in Addison and Jones, *A Companion to Contemporary Britain*, 59-75.

¹³⁹ Williams, *Cricket and England*, 132.

¹⁴⁰ CCC Minute Book, 6/12/1929.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 23/4/1937.

1,000 for the first time in 1936.¹⁴² However, it must be noted that this membership had incorporated fourteen counties since 1927 and the membership of individual counties – even the strongholds of Surrey and Middlesex – were very small in terms of the county as a whole.¹⁴³ Despite an inability to exert influence over the numerous newspaper competitions throughout the South of England, the Conference was able to control the majority of member clubs who had transgressed Rule 4 by taking part in them. These members were fearful of jeopardising their valued membership of an organisation, so influential it was even able to sway a privately owned business (Bentalls Department Store) to cancel their planned competition.¹⁴⁴ Such threats led to players who had accepted prize bats being expelled from their clubs,¹⁴⁵ and a number of ‘sincere apologies’ being received by the Conference’s Executive Committee from repentant clubs.¹⁴⁶ Clearly, many of these member clubs, or committee members, were happy to simply accept what the Conference proposed,¹⁴⁷ while others were even prepared to report other clubs for transgressing Rule 4.¹⁴⁸ It was these latter clubs, a distinctly hard-line minority within the Conference, who would collaborate in order to quash attempts to establish leagues after the Second World War.

The following chapter examines the immediate post-War period where the Conference’s position as the premier (indeed the only) cricket organisation in the South outside of the ‘first-class’ game was challenged. In particular, it will scrutinise the attempts to establish league cricket in Surrey, Sussex and Essex during 1949 by three of the new county cricket

¹⁴² Ibid., 24/4/1936.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 25/2/1927. Surrey had 123 members in January 1928, whereas Middlesex had 167 and Essex, 67. Ibid., 6/1/1928.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 27/9/1935.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 23/9/1929 and 26/9/1930.

¹⁴⁶ Apologies were received from Weybridge CC, Borough Polytechnic CC and Clarendon CC. Ibid., 22/9/1933 and 25/9/1936. However, one club that was less deferential, Hitchin CC, were expelled from the Conference. Ibid., 22/9/1933.

¹⁴⁷ Despite initially being ‘unable to see what advantage [continued membership of the CCC] was to the club’, Cranleigh CC was later happy to ‘fall into line with other [conference] clubs’. Cranleigh CC Minute Book, 10/9/1923 and 12/5/1931.

¹⁴⁸ CCC Minute Book, 12/11/1937.

associations established after 1943. In doing so it will highlight the role of the press, and the *Evening Standard* in particular, and how the Conference defended its position and maintained non-competitive cricket.

Chapter Four

‘Gilligan’s Island?’: post-war attempts to form leagues in the South

Introduction

The inter-war years had witnessed the membership and powers of the Conference extend beyond London, and by 1939 the metropolitan elite’s non-competitive/anti-league culture had spread throughout the Home Counties. The expansion of this influence in Surrey was aided by a middle-class who migrated from, or looked towards, metropolitan London for cultural inspiration in an increasingly ‘suburbanised’ rural west and east of the county. Consequently, the traditional social and cultural structures that had shaped club cricket (and other forms of popular leisure) in Surrey prior to the First World War had been slowly – if not completely – replaced by the ‘urbane’, non-competitive, amateurism promoted by the Conference. Although leagues and cups persisted between the wars, the Conference and the increasingly dominant culture of the metropolitan middle-classes had altered the social function of many clubs. Many now represented specific class groups rather than the local community as a whole. This resulted in a two tier, socially stratified cricket structure in which the elite clubs played non-competitive cricket and the few that played league cricket were almost exclusively working-class, or clubs that sought to represent their local community.

The image of Surrey and the Home Counties as a broadly non-competitive ‘league free’ zone, suggested by almost all of the historiography, despite a small number of minor leagues, had, thus, finally come to pass. And yet, no sooner had the amateur

non-competitive ethos been broadly established, it, and the CCC's influence upon the game, came to be questioned during and after the Second World War by a number of non-metropolitan associations and certain sections of the media. Just as the First World War had allowed the CCC to establish a position of power and cultural influence within club cricket, the Second World War appeared to allow the Conference to consolidate this position. Unlike the southern leagues, which had postponed their competitions, the Conference maintained operations and continued to influence much of the cricket played during the hostilities.¹ However, the country that the Conference was to operate within after 1945 was very different to the one it faced in 1918.²

In broad terms, this Chapter will examine the changing landscape of cricket administration between 1939 and 1950, and the concerted attempts, by three of the new post-war regional cricket associations, to establish cricket leagues in Surrey, Sussex and Essex, in 1949. These attempts were not motivated by a simple desire to play competitive cricket, but the increasing recognition that the national game was being damaged due to their absence. This damage was to manifest itself in three ways: in the short-term it was a lack of international competitiveness, and a lack of young players in the club game which were to be the contemporary concerns. But, as Chapter Five demonstrates, it was also a severe decline in public support for the ECC and club cricket that was to lead to further calls for competitive cricket. As this Chapter reveals, the solution to these related issues was far from clear, and a distinct ideological schism developed between the established 'unitary' bodies of the MCC

¹ *The Cricketer Annual*, 1945, 66.

² Unlike period following the First World War, which allowed the ruling elites to preserve, or even extend their social, economic and political power, the period between 1945 and 1961 has been regarded as an era of social progress. Kenneth O. Morgan, *Britain Since 1945: The People's Peace*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). See also Peter Hennessey, *Never Again: Britain 1945 to 1951*, (Penguin Books Limited, 2006).

and CCC, and the new 'federal' cricket associations established throughout the counties. Did club cricket, as the CCC argued, simply exist for the players, or did it have an obligation to develop talent suitable for the counties and ultimately the national team? Indicative of the importance placed upon the need for a successful national side, the debate transcended the cricket media, and indeed the sport itself, but it was London's *Evening Standard* that covered the attempts to establish cricket leagues in the South in the most detail. The way in which it 'mediated' between the two camps proves illuminating; especially in relation to the league established by the ex-England captain A.E.R. Gilligan in Sussex. Despite the *Standard's* apparent desire for the creation of cricket leagues, the Conference's social and ideological power was to prove highly resistant to the egalitarian changes occurring in wider society.³

The Bradman effect

1948 must have been a very bleak summer of cricket for the vast majority of English cricket followers. The ECC title was won by the previously 'despised wooden spoon county of so many summers'⁴, Glamorgan, and thus left English soil for the first time. To make matters worse, Don Bradman's 'Invincibles' not only won the Ashes series 4 – 0, they remained undefeated in over thirty first-class games that summer. Although the powers that be would not have acknowledged it, Bradman had also exposed the folly of amateur captaincy.⁵ If not Glamorgan's Championship,⁶ it was certainly the

³ The various themes of post-war social and cultural change are discussed in Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (eds), *A Companion to Contemporary Britain: 1939-2000*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005).

⁴ *Daily Express*, 25/8/1948.

⁵ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 276.

⁶ Glamorgan's 'team ethic' was greatly admired by A. W. T. Langford in *The Cricketer Annual* of 1948/1949.

heavy Ashes defeat – despite a potentially more successful ‘Bradman-less’ future on the horizon – which stirred many within cricket and the media to ask what was wrong with English cricket?

Consequently, two editorials appeared in the *Evening Standard* in July and August 1948, by asking ‘What’s wrong with English Cricket?’ In the July editorial (under this title), the *Evening Standard*’s Bruce Harris acknowledged that what he proposed to remedy English cricket was controversial when he stated:

I know I am talking heresy, but if London followed the lead of the North the Southern clubs would be a fuller reservoir of talent for our county and England elevens’. Brian Sellers, writing in the new Wisden on “Rebuilding Yorkshire cricket” says this: *Much cricketing temperament is acquired in the leagues in Yorkshire. The County owes everything to them, for it is there that the budding young player is found.*

He then highlighted the attitude that prevailed in London club cricket and the consequences of a refusal to change: “Once leagues were started I should stop playing cricket altogether” a regular London club man told me the other day. “I play the game for pleasure, league cricket is too grim.” Harris had some sympathy with this attitude, but he was quick to point out that should such a ‘happy-go-lucky style’ persist, the cricketing public would have to remain ‘indifferent about the results of Test matches. ... we cannot have it both ways’.⁷ What went for club cricket also permeated the counties, at least in the South. The *Kent County Cricket Club (KCCC) Year Book, 1949*, also ran an editorial titled ‘What’s Wrong With English Cricket?’. In opposition to the realism demonstrated by Harris, the editor thought cricket was not prepared to undermine the game’s invented traditions (amateurism and the character building qualities of sport), and the oft-quoted, yet ever-elusive, ‘spirit’ of cricket to merely win a few Test matches: ‘Even to beat the Australians we are not prepared to sacrifice the spirit and rivalry of our village, club and county grounds. For the spirit is

⁷ *Evening Standard*, 5/7/1948 and 17/8/1948. Italics as original.

as much cricket to us as the finest strokes in the game'.⁸ Faced with such openly conservative attitudes, Harris knew full-well that he was swimming against a very strong tide, and he pessimistically concluded: 'Organisation is needed to develop them [young cricketers of promise]. But will it happen? Not on your life. In all probability we shall indefinitely continue to lose more Test matches against Australia than we will win'.⁹

Is competitive cricket the answer?

Despite their proliferation throughout the South before 1914, the 'introduction' of leagues to London club cricket had been suggested as early as 1911.¹⁰ Although the inter-war period was marked by the ascendancy of anti-competitive attitudes, renewed calls were made for the establishment of leagues before the end of the Second World War. Sussex led the way in 1943,¹¹ and again in 1946,¹² and following the end of the war, newspapers, such as the *Daily Mirror*, repeatedly asked the same question as Harris.¹³ Politicians, such as Edward Martell of the London County Council (LCC),¹⁴ even called for the LCC to promote a knock-out competition in its parks in order to 'beat Bradman and his successors'.¹⁵ Further concerns regarding the possible alteration of the game's traditional culture, meaning and structure, even the broadly conservative county clubs unanimously petitioned the MCC in November 1948 to instigate an Enquiry into that summer's poor performances. Although the

⁸ *Kent County Cricket Year Book, 1949*, Kent County Cricket Club, (Canterbury: UK, 1949), 24-25.

⁹ *Evening Standard*, 5/7/1948.

¹⁰ *The Observer*, 30/7/1911.

¹¹ CCC Minute Book, 13/8/1943.

¹² *The Cricketer*, 4/5/1946, 26.

¹³ *Daily Mirror*, 25/6/1949.

¹⁴ The LCC had 442 'reserved' cricket pitches in its parks and recreation grounds in 1907. Roy Hattersley, *The Edwardians* (London: Abacus, 2006), 316.

¹⁵ *Daily Express*, 20/10/1948.

development of young talent was central to the enquiry, and English cricket's future welfare, the lack of competitive cricket throughout the South soon dominated discussions.

The MCC subsequently appointed Repton old boy, ex-Winchester housemaster, journalist, and historian, H.S. Altham,¹⁶ to chair the Enquiry in 1949, and he is widely quoted as stating:

If only we can get enough boys playing this game in England and playing it right, it is quite certain that from the mass will be thrown up in some year or another a new Compton, a new Tate, a new Jack Hobbs, and when that happens we need not worry anymore about our meetings with Australia.¹⁷

This statement highlights the Enquiry's conclusion that 'more and better grounds, pitches, and coaching' were needed for the 'boys of Britain', and yet Altham was to directly contradict this egalitarian and progressive statement.¹⁸ Although Altham's committee had sidestepped, or even ignored, the role of competition, it was clear to many that the game in the South required, what the *Daily Mirror* called, a 'spirit of adventure' in order to bring about any significant change.¹⁹ In a second *Standard* editorial entitled 'This is what's wrong with English cricket', Harris believed he had to change, or instigate a debate about, the 'happy go lucky' cricket he thought was advocated by a minority group. Leading on from his conclusions of the previous month, Harris stated:

In [Southern] England the game is unorganised to the point of chaos ... the great majority of young players simply disappear into the trackless desert of uncompetitive club cricket, where they have little chance either of gaining first-class experience or of making their names known to the tired old men who rule the county cricket clubs.

Britain will never win the Ashes back unless the clubs drop their illogical attitude of caring only for the game and not the result. The fact is that most club cricketers do care about

¹⁶ Altham served on the MCC Committee from 1941 until his death in 1965.

¹⁷ *Wisden* "Obituary: Harry Altham" (1966)

<http://www.espncricinfo.com/wisdenalmanack/content/story/234605.html> Accessed, 13/11/2012.

¹⁸ Marylebone Cricket Club, *The Young Cricketer*, (London: The Naldrett Press, 1950), 7. Typically this collection of essays, which was 'approved by the MCC', reiterated the customary image of cricket. Doug Insole's essay "Light and Dark Blue" on Oxbridge cricket being typical.

¹⁹ *Daily Mirror*, 25/6/1949 and 18/4/1950.

the English team's miserable showing this season, and would be glad to see competitive cricket launched in Southern England. The only way to cure our cricketing ill is for the clubs to play league cricket ...

The daily queues at the Oval demonstrate the support the public gives to the game. It is therefore, the duty of cricket's rulers to respond to the people's wishes.²⁰

This 'problem' with the English team's recent record against Australia, and cricket in the South of England, had also been debated by A. W. T. Langford in *The Cricketer* in September 1948.²¹ Langford, who believed it to be 'right and proper' to 'discover the reasons for this state of affairs and seek the remedies necessary to re-establish English cricket', also suggested introducing competitions.²² But the root of the problem was highlighted, perhaps typically, by an Australian; the ex-Australian Test player turned journalist, Jack Fingleton. In his book, which covered the 1948 Ashes tour, *Brightly Fades the Don*, Fingleton recalled playing in a match at East Molesey in Surrey on a date between the two *Evening Standard* editorials. Fingleton wrote: 'The president of the club told me that there were over 1000 club teams in Surrey alone, but the county draws nothing from this colossal strength because in England to-day there seems to be no half-way mark between professionalism and amateurism'.²³

Harris, Langford and Fingleton all highlighted the largely Southern-based problems of amateur cricket: the amateur ideology of 'cricket's rulers' (the CCC) who dictated that matches were non-competitive, non-commercial, non-professional and success should remain unrewarded. The remedy for English cricket's ills was, thus, clear, but Langford underlined Harris' pessimism regarding the adoption of leagues in the South when he pointed out, in September 1948, that: 'It must not be overlooked that

²⁰ *Evening Standard*, 17/8/1948.

²¹ At this time Langford was the co-compiler of *Who's Who in Cricket*, and the sub-editor and 'Club Notes' correspondent of *Cricket*.

²² *The Cricketer*, 4/9/1948, 378.

²³ Jack Fingleton, *Brightly Fades the Don* (London: Collins, 1949), 222. The Kent County Cricket Club Yearbook of 1949 also noted that '... it is such a leap from club to county cricket. The distance is too great for all but the ablest to take in one bound and there is too little cricket of an intermediate standard between club and county to train on the young player'. *KCCC Year Book*, 1949, 24-25.

among the primary objects of the Club Cricket Conference is the following “To control and safeguard amateur cricket on strictly non-competitive lines”.²⁴ This strict ideological stance was not a simple *reluctance* to develop competitive leagues and the young players capable of emulating the likes of Hobbs, Compton and Tate in the ECC and Test arena; it resulted from a distinct *refusal* to do so. The Conference’s Competitive Cricket Sub-Committee, suggested an indifference towards the cricketing world beyond friendly club cricket, in stating: ‘It is not the duty of the C. C. C. to have regard to the interest of the County Clubs, but to function solely for the Clubs in membership with it’.²⁵

The Conference was seemingly not alone in this regard. The MCC’s Enquiry had reported back, and despite Altham’s progressive rhetoric, it would seem that the Enquiry had simply paid ‘lip service’ to those calling for change. As an article in the *KCCC Year Book of 1950* revealed, Altham (and the MCC) would appear to have wilfully missed the point and rejected competition in an effort to preserve the *status quo*. In opposition to his now famous statement above, Altham then wrote that:

... a new generation of Hobbs, Tates, Larwoods, and Comptons ... [all professionals] is not our real objective. We believe that cricket, more perhaps than any other game, can offer something of permanent value to life, as one of the great English crafts, as a training alike in individual enterprise and team co-operation, and as a recreation for body, mind and spirit.²⁶

The character building ethos of the public schools was alive and well. For Altham (and by implication the MCC) had advocated – yet again – that the purported character building qualities of village,²⁷ club and county cricket took precedence over the modernisation of the game. The ‘illogical attitude of caring for the game and not

²⁴ *The Cricketer*, 4/9/1949, 378.

²⁵ CCC Minute Book, 1949 – specific date unknown.

²⁶ *KCCC Year Book*, 1950, 21.

²⁷ Speaking at the Guildford CC dinner, Provost Sinclair even suggested that a love of the game was ‘a test of normality’. “There is something abnormal about a man who doesn’t love cricket”. *Surrey Advertiser*, 24/12/1949.

the result' persisted. But Altham did have at least one eye on the present – even if it was to make another unfounded association between cricket, conservatism, and civility. In acknowledging the fast developing Cold War, he went on to paraphrase the historian, G. M. Trevelyan's, famous analogy that the French aristocracy would not have had their chateaux burnt in 1789 had they played cricket.²⁸ 'If', he stated, 'the millions of boys now living behind the Iron Curtain [played cricket], the peace of Europe would be secure for generations'.²⁹

Despite the 'revolutionary' social change of the previous fifty years, and two world wars, it was unlikely that the conservative MCC, given its reluctance to modernise itself, would ever intervene at lower levels of the game. The MCC and *Wisden*, had chosen to have as little to do with the northern leagues, unless it was to paint them as an excessively commercial and professionalised version of the game, which did little except encourage rowdy crowds and gambling. One MCC member and I Zingari stalwart, The Right Honorable Gerald French DSO, went so far as to suggest distinct character traits between the northern and southern cricket followers and their preferred form of cricket. French, like Bennett, regarded the northerners' 'character' as 'being more susceptible, perhaps, to the excitement aroused by the struggle for points [and] the opportunity of betting'. But French went further in stereotyping the southern cricket follower: Their 'brethren of the south' he argued 'like[d] their club cricket for its own sake, unadulterated by commercial influences'.³⁰ It was clear the ideological stance of the Conference held wide support among those with influence. And yet, changes were afoot. The MCC and CCC's *laissez faire* attitude that the game could (and should) remain the same in an increasingly changing world was to be challenged. In line with the creation of the National Health Service, the

²⁸ George Macaulay Trevelyan, *English Social History*, (Longman, 1944), 405.

²⁹ *KCCC Year Book*, 1950, 21.

³⁰ Gerald French, *The Corner Stone of English Cricket*. (London; New York: Hutchinson, 1948), 134.

nationalisation of key industries, and other post-war developments associated with the Labour government, the establishment of a new structure of cricket administration had been set in motion prior to 1945.³¹ Despite such foresight, both enterprises were to attract the considerable ire of the cricket traditionalists.

Re-organising cricket

Organisation and planning were thus identified as the key foundations for the future success of the game. Although Sellers had suggested, in 1947, that the style of one-day league cricket in Yorkshire did not necessarily produce the ‘talent’ required for county cricket, the Yorkshire leagues were well organised and maintained close links with the YCCC. A 35 member county committee, drawn from all parts of Yorkshire, made annual recommendations as to who should be given trials and this process produced enough suitable talent to enable the YCCC to maintain success in the ECC.³² Leagues in the Midlands and other areas of the North were also well organised, and time-keeping, discipline and professionalism were strictly controlled. But where competitive cricket was not played – even in the northern regions – it was very rare that an organising or representative body existed. An exception to this trend was the Manchester and District Cricket Association (MaDCA). The MaDCA had been established as far back as 1892, and yet the metropolitan CCC had remained the largest and most influential cricket organisation outside of the MCC. Both the CCC’s hegemony, and the cultural homogeneity of the middle-class suggested throughout the first three Chapters,³³ was about to be challenged, however, as the

³¹ Robert Millward, “The 1940s Nationalizations in Britain: Means to an End or the Means of Production?,” *The Economic History Review* 50, no. 2 (1997): 209–234.

³² *Daily Herald*, 2/7/1947.

³³ McKibbin’s portrayal of a homogenous middle-class prior to 1951 may well be contentious in terms of varying degrees of wealth and status, but, as I have argued above, this class does appear to

progressive and far-sighted spirit of the post-War period was to witness a veritable 'explosion' in local and regional cricket associations. These associations would bridge the gap between individual clubs and large-membership organisations, such as the Conference, for the first time. Inevitably, the creation of these new cricket associations would challenge the CCC's pre-eminent position.³⁴

It would appear that Sussex was the first county to form its own cricket association – The Sussex Cricket Association (SCA) – in 1943, though this centralisation of administrative effort had followed the formation of the more localised Brighton and Hove District Cricket Association (BaHDCA) in 1940. Unlike football, which had dozens of County Associations affiliated to the Football Association from the late nineteenth-century,³⁵ cricket's administrative structure had not developed beyond ideologically discrete bodies such as the CCC and the MaDCA (non-competitive and amateur), and the various league Associations of the Midlands and North of England (competitive and semi-professional).³⁶ Whereas the league Associations in the Midlands and the North would have had little in common with the Conference, the MaDCA had sought to affiliate with its more illustrious and influential southern cousin in 1936. This emulated the metropolitan dominance of other sporting and voluntary bodies, but as the MaDCA operated a cup 'competition which was neither a league nor an ordinary cup, but one based on the percentage of matches won' their application was rejected.³⁷ Ultimately, relations between the CCC and the MaDCA would improve, with representative matches played after 1946, but it was to be the

subscribe to a universal 'public/grammar school' ethos in terms of sport and its meaning. McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, 529-534.

³⁴ Further research is required, but although more traditional elites, or upper middle-class figures appear to head many of these new organisations, it is clear that those lower down the middle-class spectrum were actively involved in the operation of these new associations after 1945.

³⁵ The Surrey County Football Association was formed in 1877. It affiliated to the FA in 1882; the same year it established a County Senior Cup competition. "Staff Contacts and About Us", <http://www.surreyfa.com/more/staff-contacts-and-about-us> Accessed, 13/11/2012.

³⁶ See: Genders, *League Cricket in England*.

³⁷ CCC Minute Book, 24/4/1936.

new county associations in the Conference's south-eastern heartland that were to provide the greatest challenges for the Conference, particularly in Surrey, Essex and Sussex.

Hampshire was generally regarded by the metropolitan elite within the Conference as a cricketing backwater, and despite the existence of a Southampton and District Cricket Association from 1943, the county's club cricket did not concern the Conference.³⁸ However, it was to be the SCA, and the persistence of the BaHDCA, that repeatedly drew attention as both bodies wanted to establish competitive cricket, or at least allow a club that competed competitively to be a member. The SCA's 'Aims and Objectives' included 'The promotion of competitive cricket'³⁹ and the BaHDCA's Rule 2 stated: 'The Association will not promote League nor other competitive cricket, but it will not debar affiliated clubs from taking part in any League or Knock-out Competitions of other Associations'.⁴⁰ Although their application for membership of the Conference was 'refused', the matter was still on the table two years later and the SCA's 'proposal to found league cricket in Sussex' did not elicit a definitive response from the CCC Executive Council until 1944, when the following resolution was passed:

That the Council of the Club Cricket Conference are of the opinion that any club joining an Association which has for one of its objects the promotion of league or competitive cricket cannot by reason of Rule 4 of the Conference continue membership of that body.⁴¹

By finally deciding on a course of action, the stance of the Conference had forced the hand of both the SCA and the BaHDCA. Symptomatic of the value placed upon

³⁸ This metropolitan / rural ignorance was mutual. A proposal to change the CCC's name to the Amateur Cricket Association thought the new title would undoubtedly carry with it far greater importance and significance, as the current title was useless. Clubs 'in the far South of England' regarded the Conference as 'only a London body, and it is of no interest to us'. Ibid., 28/9/1934.

³⁹ Ibid., 14/2/1944.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 31/10/1941.

⁴¹ Ibid., 13/8/1943; 10/3/1944.

membership of the Conference, be it real or imagined, both Associations crumbled and deleted the offending clauses from their rules in order to become members of the Conference.⁴² Indicative of the CCC's almost irrational insistence that the SCA delete such a clause at the mere suggestion of league cricket, a Mr. W. Walker of the SCA felt obliged to clarify the SCA's position in *The Cricketer* before the 1945 season. The SCA, he explained, was established 'in the nature of a crusade [rather] than a revolution'. Walker did use the article as an opportunity to point out how the long-standing rejection of league competition, which had distanced many clubs, and the older players within, from their community base and the younger players who would ultimately secure the clubs future, required addressing. The way that Sussex club cricket had subsequently developed had laid itself open to criticism: 'The game [he argued] was primarily and principally for the enjoyment of the players ... and the game had suffered from the non-encouragement of young players'. But the SCA also wished to re-establish the traditional community values of old, and 'restore the club grounds to their old position as the social centre [for all] and the proper place to spend the Saturday afternoons'.⁴³ This desire to relocate clubs at the heart of their communities represented a fundamentally different attitude to the Conference, who had been so successful in enforcing what were socially prejudicial values between the wars, that many affiliates had abandoned any ties with the local community in favour of becoming 'private' 'class' clubs.⁴⁴ Certainly the Conference would appear to have preferred club cricket to remain in a social vacuum.

⁴² Ibid., 14/2/1944.

⁴³ *The Cricketer Spring Annual*, 1945, 60. According to Sir Len Hutton, cricket in Yorkshire remained 'the game to play and the cricket ground the meeting place for all during the summer months'. Hutton in A. Woodhouse, *The History of Yorkshire County Cricket Club* (London: Christopher Helm, 1989), 3.

⁴⁴ 'Old Boy' clubs had always been around, but certain clubs were now neither representative of the local community as a whole, or, in some cases, perhaps even the best players despite a prevalence of 'Blues'.

By the end of the 1945 season, Walker felt compelled to re-iterate the importance of the new county associations in ensuring the game's future by encouraging youth: the 'efforts of the County Associations must be directed, to induce the senior clubs to make much greater feature of providing for their local boys, and the older players to transfer their interests to bringing on another generation of cricketers, – may I whisper it ... even by dropping out of the local side a little earlier if need be'.⁴⁵ The non-competitive system, under which selecting the best eleven players did not matter, had clearly allowed many of the senior clubs in Sussex (and beyond) to operate for the established members only. If the CCC regarded the development of young players as a task outside of their role in club cricket, members of new cricket associations, such as Walker, thought the opposite. The Association of Kent Cricket Clubs (AKCC), whose principal objective was the 'development of youth, and to provide prospective county players for Kent', placed this cause at the heart of their operations.⁴⁶

A desire to remedy this neglect of young players may well have been one reason for the establishment of other Associations, but following the foundation of the Derby and District Cricket Association (DaDCA) in 1945,⁴⁷ a group of regional cricket organisations including the Yorkshire Federation, Nottinghamshire Cricket Association, the SCA and CCC met in London to discuss the formation of a central body. The National Club Cricket Association (NCCA) was established in 1947; a year that also witnessed the establishment of the Lancashire Cricket Federation, the

⁴⁵ *The Cricketer Annual*, 1945, 46.

⁴⁶ *Kent County Cricket Club Yearbook*, 1950, (Canterbury: the Club, 1950), 28. From 1951 the Guildford Area of the SACC had a long-standing affiliation with the Alf Gover Cricket School, and funded the coaching of promising young cricketers', including England bowler Bob Willis.

⁴⁷ The DaDCA intended to establish a league based upon the Bradford League, but this was rejected at the first meeting. *The Cricketer*, 18/5/1946, 46. The DaDCA contacted the CCC for advice regarding ground preservation, but the Conference decided it was not in a position to advise, and recommended they write to the Chairman of the National Playing Fields Association, Sir Lawrence Chubb. CCC Minute Book, unknown date, 1946.

Midland Club Cricket Conference, the Cricket Associations of Devonshire and Leicestershire, Manchester and District and the Surrey Association of Cricket Clubs (SACC) amongst others.⁴⁸ Ostensibly, the NCCA appears to have been, broadly speaking, a national arm of the CCC as it also looked to preserve grounds and protect clubs against taxation 'in loyal conformity to the authority of M.C.C.'⁴⁹ Although the development of young players was also high on the agenda of the NCCA, the Conference remained resolutely opposed to the development of first-class cricketers. Despite the establishment of the NCCA, the CCC had retained its primary position among the cricket associations, and yet, the establishment of these new regional associations, particularly in the South, represented an undeniable challenge to the Conference's hegemony. Although some chose not to promote competitive cricket, and conform to the CCC's ideological position, others were to clash with the Conference amid the increasing clamour for league cricket.

A new way of life?

Despite the CCC's claims that their rules had been 'thoroughly overhauled to meet modern conditions'⁵⁰ in 1947, very little had changed from 1915 up to the appearance of the *Evening Standard's* editorials in 1948.⁵¹ Despite this stasis, it was increasingly obvious to many by early 1949 that the 'spirit of adventure,'⁵² called for by the *Daily Mirror*, was manifest across the South. H. M. 'Monty' Garland-Wells,⁵³ President of

⁴⁸ Founder members were: The Army Cricket Association, Bolton Cricket League, Derby and District Cricket Association, Notts. Cricket Association, The Royal Navy, Universities Athletic Union, Bolton and District Association, The Club Cricket Conference, North Stafford and District Cricket League, R.A.F. Cricket Association, Sussex Cricket Association and the Yorkshire Federation.

⁴⁹ *The Cricketer Annual*, 1947, 70.

⁵⁰ CCC Minute Book, 20/2/1948.

⁵¹ Bruce Harris and Peter Goodall of the *Evening Standard* took more interest in the efforts to establish leagues, and the CCC's resistance to them, than any other newspaper.

⁵² *The Cricketer Spring Annual*, 1949, 50.

⁵³ Wells had his captaincy of Surrey cut short by the outbreak of World War Two.

the SACC, noted how league cricket had been the 'frequent topic of discussion at club dinners during the winter months',⁵⁴ and that he had:

... been impressed ... with the great swing of public opinion in regard to the type of cricket which should be played, which opinion has been expressed by the younger members at these meetings for some form of competition. In one of the Areas in the County, Clubs have participated in a competition for a Cup, which competition has aroused the utmost keenness. ... Other Areas have gone further and suggested that the Association should foster league cricket.⁵⁵

Although the younger club members were keen on competitive cricket, and the Flora Doris Cup (FDC), which is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, had proved an instant hit with players and public alike, the desire to foster league cricket throughout the South was not universal. Letters, both for and against, appeared in *The Cricketer* at this time, but it was clear that many of the older generation were resolutely against change of any kind. Perhaps typical of the anti-league camp was the opinion of a Mr. J. A. Wright who wrote that League cricket 'is not wanted by the great majority of clubs [of repute]'. But, indicative of his conservatism and the traditionalists' resistance to change, within cricket or wider society, he stated; 'the real danger lies in the fact that supporters of a new way of life, in whatever sphere, by the very nature of things are to be heard with greater frequency and with louder clamour than those who prefer the *status quo*, as it were'.⁵⁶ Similar sentiments were expressed by F.L. Monro: 'Because we have realized that social reforms are necessary. This craze of altering everything else just for the sake of altering it. ... [Competition will] end the game that was once cricket [and it] will be played in the bull ring with the exhibitionism of baseball'.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ *The Cricketer Spring Annual*, 1949, 50.

⁵⁵ Louis Palgrave (ed), *Surrey Association of Cricket Clubs Illustrated Handbook for 1949*, (London: Surrey Association of Cricket Clubs, 1949), 11.

⁵⁶ *The Cricketer*, 6/8/1949, 408.

⁵⁷ *The Cricketer*, 30/6/1945, 149.

Such comments are significant against the backdrop of the Labour party's policy of nationalisation (Bank of England in 1946; the Coal Industry in 1947; Railways in 1948; Steel in 1949), Communism in Europe and the escalation of the Cold War. But these were already tired comparisons that had been utilised by MCC/CCCF/CCC stalwarts Lord Harris and 'Plum' Warner (editor of *The Cricketer*), and acolytes such as Neville Cardus from the end of the First World War.⁵⁸ The same analogies were now being used to ward off league competition, though some were able to cloak their objections to nationalisation and the possible introduction of leagues in humour. E. Gleave contributed 'The National Cricket Corporation (A Fantasy)' to *The Cricketer*, in which he drew clear analogies to firstly, Communism and nationalisation: Cricket was to have a 'Ten Years' Cricket Plan', and 'a red flag adorned with the letters N.C.C. should fly over every nationalised ground'. Secondly, Trade Unionism: 'an official card ... must be carried on the person of the cricketer during the season',⁵⁹ and even the regionalisation of the National Health Service (NHS): 'The setting up of regional committees is envisaged in the Act, and already some opposition has been aroused by the suggestion that Lancashire and Yorkshire should constitute one region'.⁶⁰ Gleave concluded that his 'fantasy' government 'would never rest until it had also nationalised [the similarly middle-class and anti-league sport] Rugby Football'.⁶¹

Although a clever piece of humour, these opinions were expressed freely, and with little irony, elsewhere. General, Sir Walter Kirke, who had been Commander in Chief of the British Home Guard, unambiguously stated his dislike of Communism and

⁵⁸ Harris and Warner used 'Bolshevism' to decry any hint of industrial action by professionals, while Cardus wrote in 1922 that: "Too many Lancashire, Nottinghamshire, and Yorkshire elevens have overdone the collectivist philosophy, turning out just "utility" teams, mechanically efficient'. Cited Bateman, *Cricket, Literature and Culture Symbolising the Nation, Destabilising Empire*, 116. For more on the cricket elites fear of 'Bolshevism', see: Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 217–220.

⁵⁹ *The Cricketer*, 11/6/1949, 210.

⁶⁰ It had been proposed that Yorkshire and Lancashire become one health 'region' or authority.

⁶¹ *The Cricketer*, 11/6/1949, 210. See also: *Daily Express*, 15/2/1950.

professional sport, when presenting the Games League trophies at the Whitley British Legion (located near affluent Weybridge and the St George's Hill Estate in Surrey):

It is in country districts such as this that one can best find the spirit of old England – the spirit which has made England what she is – where everyone pulls together undeterred by Communist agitators. ... In the towns the majority of people seemed to spend their spare time watching professionals – professional dogs, speedway racers and footballers – and the personal contribution they made was with their lungs, or rattles, or having a shy at the referee if their team lost.⁶²

Kirke clearly deprecated urban attitudes, and the rise of mass spectatorship, over participation. While apprehensions relating to Communism, professionalism and the urban industrial working-classes remained strong. Commentators within cricket, such as the cricket historian G.D. Martineau, were to utilise even older criticisms related to the effect of league competitions, such as 'excessive gambling'.⁶³

Writing in 1952, the league cricket historian, Roy Genders, noted that 'writers on the game of cricket ... make no mention of the game as played by league sides', and he cited John Arlott's reason for his opposition. Arlott feared that the northern leagues 'enticed' so many good players away from the county game, the national game was poorer for their 'desertion'.⁶⁴ Genders may well have overegged Arlott's position, but Arlott not only failed to question why these players were better off playing league cricket, he also regarded northern cricket as lacking a certain grace. The opposition to long-established leagues in the North was clear, but different reasons why leagues were an undesirable addition to southern club cricket were highlighted by the CCC's captain, and committee member, A.C.L. Bennett in his book *The Week-end Cricketer* (1951). Bennett revealed a key factor in grass roots opposition to the leagues by arguing that 'the choosing of opponents is a most important factor' in club cricket;⁶⁵ a choice that playing in leagues would remove. This was clearly no problem for the

⁶² *Surrey Advertiser*, 16/4/1949.

⁶³ *The Cricketer*, 8/9/1945, 303.

⁶⁴ Genders, *League Cricket in England*, 13.

⁶⁵ Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*, 246.

exclusive clubs, such as Oatlands Park CC, who always had a full fixture list including matches against Old England (including ex-England captain Douglas Jardine).⁶⁶ However, at the opposite end of the club cricket spectrum, Oatlands Park Working Men's' CC were struggling to obtain fixtures and were forced to advertise for opponents.⁶⁷ The supporters of reform within club cricket cited that standards of play and the old perennial of poor time-keeping, would improve, and that the recently embarrassed national side would, in time, only benefit from the new talent produced. Crucially, as G. R. Langdale and Andrew Kempton, the Surrey coach who had been president of the South Eastern Cricket League (SECL) between the wars,⁶⁸ pointed out, those against league cricket were, essentially, a group who had never tried it.⁶⁹ Naturally, this was countered by the anti-league lobbyists who thought sportsmanship would suffer and a number of cautionary anecdotes of life in the northern leagues were imparted in committee rooms.⁷⁰

Friendly cricket was not quite the oasis of good sportsmanship and fair play the anti-league campaigners portrayed, however. Dull play and batting out for a draw or overtly aggressive/deliberately defensive bowling were common, and tempers were often tested, with, on occasion, violence ensuing. Thus, the *Surrey Advertiser* reported a violent incident between a wicket keeper and a batsman under the humorous title; 'Stumped and thumped'. Humour aside, the affair was deemed serious enough to appear before Woking magistrates court, although the names of the clubs involved were not mentioned.⁷¹ The battle lines were thus drawn, and fought, upon the issues of a club's right to choose their opposition and play as they

⁶⁶ *Surrey Advertiser*, 30/6/1948.

⁶⁷ *Surrey Advertiser*, 23/4/1949.

⁶⁸ The SECL was 'a league for the working men and lads of Bermondsey and District'. *The Cricketer Annual*, 1948-1949, 458.

⁶⁹ See: *The Cricketer Annual*, 1948-1949, 458, and *The Cricketer*, 14/5/1949, 166.

⁷⁰ For instance, Mr. Brown of the Normandy CC's recollections of the Lancashire League to the Guildford Area of the SACC. SACC Minute book, 3/5/1965.

⁷¹ *Surrey Advertiser*, 13/8/1949.

liked, versus the need to maintain the health of the game at all levels by introducing competition and encouraging youth. The inflexibility of the Conference and the progressive nature of the new association led to three independent, but overlapping, attempts to establish leagues in Sussex, Essex and Surrey. As the SCA had stated in 1945, these challenges did not wish to appropriate the Conference's authority, but simply to relax its ideological adherence to non-competitive cricket for the benefit of the game's future.

Challenging the Conference

Late in 1948, the ex-Sussex and England captain A. E. R. Gilligan, who was president of the SCA, stated his desire to inaugurate some form of competitive cricket in Sussex. In due course his idea was relayed to the Conference via member clubs writing to elicit a reaction or guidance. Having been 'jolted' into action, the CCC informed all Sussex member clubs that this would be in contravention of Rule 4, and clubs risked expulsion if they participated. Hot on the heels of the Sussex proposal, the Conference received 'another jolt' in January 1949.⁷² This time, the challenge emerged from Garland-Wells and the SACC. The *Evening Standard's* Peter Goodall reported on the meeting and suggested similarities between the Conference and the Communist states many of the anti-league campaigners dreaded. The CCC was not simply respected, but perhaps even 'feared':

The inevitability of competitive top-class cricket being played in the South of England was shown at the annual general meeting of the Surrey Association of Cricket Clubs, held at the Oval. Discussion and reactions were very similar to those of A. E. R. Gilligan's Sussex conference I attended in Brighton not long ago. But *stifling free speech* at both places was the old bogey, "What will the Club Cricket Conference say?" ... nothing can

⁷² *Evening Standard*, 20/1/1949.

be arranged until there are sufficient clubs resolute enough to agree to resign from the Conference – if necessary – so that they may play the type of cricket they choose.⁷³

The SACC decided to canvass the opinions of member clubs directly, leading Bruce Harris to note in the *Evening Standard* in March that Garland-Wells, in by-passing the CCC, had overtaken Gilligan's now flagging challenge (due to the CCC's intervention). Somewhat cryptically Harris reflected on what the league options for the South would be:

Competitive cricket in the south is a means of developing young players who in time, may stand a chance against highly organised Australia. There is enthusiasm for it among the clubs, but plans in Sussex ... are far behind those of Surrey.

First move was by ex-England captain, A. E. R. Gilligan, in Sussex, but he made little progress among the bigger clubs, who were not prepared to commit themselves. They are hesitant because they are Club Cricket Conference members, for whom competitive play is banned.

Clubs must choose

First detailed proposals for a southern competition are contained in a circular received by all members of the Surrey Association of Cricket Clubs to-day under the signature of H. M. Garland-Wells, their president, following a recommendation at their AGM that the committee should act ...

Mild and bitter

Northern league cricket, it seems, is divided into two categories – "mild" and "bitter." The committee, I believe, are more partial to "mild". The "bitter" (Lancashire League) is too strong for southern consumption.

Only reference to the CCC is indirect. The committee realising now decisions might affect "other bodies" state that replies will be "top secret".

In considering the options, Harris subliminally re-enforced the broadly false 'professional and competitive' stereotype, widely held in the South, of the northern leagues. He was not alone in this regard as Andrew Kempton had written in the *SACC Hand Book of 1949* that: 'The spirit of commercialism' featured too much in the league cricket of the Midlands and the North. Such criticisms notwithstanding, Kempton did 'believe that some sort of competitive cricket ... would be acceptable' in the South.⁷⁴ The deeply flawed image of the northern leagues, suggested by Harris and Kempton, had a long history, and yet these leagues had strictly controlled

⁷³ Ibid., Italics added.

⁷⁴ Palgrave, *SACC Handbook of 1949*, 63-64.

professionalism for decades. The Lancashire League in particular, had, since 1900, enforced a maximum of one professional per side – they just happened to have many of the best.⁷⁵ There is no doubt that these leagues were highly competitive, but this emphasis was as misplaced as that of overt commercialism, rowdy crowds, uncontrolled gambling and excessive professionalism. Addressing a national audience in the foreword of Kay's *Cricket in the Leagues*, Learie Constantine was at pains to explain that league matches were not 'a series of dog-fights'.⁷⁶

Despite similar assurances that league cricket was a healthy and vital form of the game, the CCC persisted in prosecuting any attempt to establish competitive cricket in the South of England, including that proposed in Surrey. Colonel Vernon Robins, an SACC councillor with whom Harris discussed the SACC circular, hinted that the new regional associations were now less prepared to unquestioningly accept the Conference's authority. In referring to the Conference's reputation as something reminiscent of an Orwellian 'Big Brother', Robins did not 'see any personal reason for secrecy. "If Surrey clubs want competitive cricket, whether mild or bitter." He said; "they are going to have it, CCC or no CCC – and you can quote me on that"'.⁷⁷

The rather droll beer analogy aside, it was clear, following a further meeting of the SACC's Central Committee at the Oval in April 1949, that the idea of forming leagues was still 'strongly approved' of by most SACC areas in Surrey. The committee then decided to 'await replies from clubs'.⁷⁸ But they were to be let down by their membership as a majority of the SACC's member clubs who replied declined the SACC's offer. How typical the Worplesdon CC were in spurning the opportunity to

⁷⁵ Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*, 217. The Bradford League, which allowed for four paid players at this time would have been a better example. See Genders, *League Cricket in England*, 14.

⁷⁶ Kay, *Cricket in the Leagues*, 12.

⁷⁷ *Evening Standard*, 25/3/1949.

⁷⁸ SACC Minute Book, 11/4/1949

play competitive cricket is uncertain, but it is possible that in rejecting the proposal unanimously, non-committee or junior club members were not fully-consulted.⁷⁹ The decision appears even more peculiar given the recent establishment and burgeoning popularity of the FDC among players and public alike, discussed below.

Robins – despite his apparent bullishness – did highlight just how sensitive the issue was. ‘Top secret’ ballots, usually associated with politics and trade unionism, ought not have been deemed necessary in a club cricket context, but the zeal with which the CCC defended its amateur ideology, and with its social and cultural status at stake, such a move was enacted. Although the elite classes had largely lost the battles for football and rugby’s cultural ‘heart’ (identity) and ‘mind’ (meaning) in the North, the cricket elites within the CCC were determined to maintain their administrative and on-field power in the South. Norman Baker and Stephen Wagg have ably demonstrated how this power was maintained by the MCC within ‘first-class’ cricket nationally,⁸⁰ and, as in cricket, this power was also maintained in rugby union, even if it was to the detriment of the national game.⁸¹ Like the class-based conflicts that developed in ‘football’ discussed in Chapter One, the distinctions that existed between Conference member clubs and what were deemed ‘village’ or ‘working men’s’ clubs only came to light during Gilligan’s campaign in Sussex. Before this challenge was resolved, the CCC also had to deal with a third encounter with a Mr. G. M. Parkinson, who wished to establish an ‘Essex County Senior League’.⁸²

⁷⁹ Worpleston Cricket Club Minute Book, SHC Ref: 5087/1 and Worpleston Cricket Club, *100 Years to Remember*, (Worpleston Cricket Club, 1990), 32.

⁸⁰ Norman Baker, “A More Even Playing Field? Sport During and After the War,” in Nick Hayes and Jeff Hill, *“Millions Like Us”?: British Culture in the Second World War* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999); S Wagg, “‘Time Gentlemen Please’: The Decline of Amateur Captaincy in English County Cricket,” *Contemporary British History* 14 (2000): 31–59.

⁸¹ Collins, “The Ambiguities of Amateurism.”

⁸² CCC Minute Book, 20/5/1949.

Although his challenge appears to have been the last underway, Parkinson felt the wrath of the CCC Committee very quickly. Proposing a league with two divisions of twelve teams each, Parkinson and his Essex comrades 'were in a happier position', according to Goodall in late April, for the CCC had, 'after a certain amount of evasion ... let it be known that if sufficient members want to play competitive cricket they are prepared to consider any scheme put before them'. Having taken 'the very reasonable course of preparing a programme for next season', Parkinson's group then went 'to the Conference for their advice before proceeding any further'.⁸³ In what were to prove somewhat prophetic words, Goodall then noted that: 'To my mind, by far the most important point is that at last the Conference must make a decision as to whether this type of cricket is compatible with continued membership of the Conference. If not it is unlikely that we shall see any league cricket of any standing played in the South for many years'.⁸⁴ Clearly, as Goodall had implied in January and April 1949, it was up to member clubs to resign, for it was never a question of the CCC sacrificing its amateur values.

The Essex challenge, the third, to its world-view of non-competitive amateur cricket, now 'made the Conference act',⁸⁵ or rather, react. Although there are gaps in the evidence, the chronology would suggest that the CCC rejected the initial Essex approach. This then resulted in Parkinson's Essex group tabling a 'second' resolution to the Conference's meeting on 20 May 'which would allow them to play in "a cricket league which has been approved by the council."' ⁸⁶ Somewhat bizarrely, the *Evening Standard's* Harris, who, according to Bennett, 'has often said that he advocates

⁸³ *Evening Standard*, 29/4/1949.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer.*, 235.

⁸⁶ *Evening Standard*, 20/5/1949.

league cricket among southern clubs',⁸⁷ then performed a journalistic *volte face* in an article headed 'Are Essex clubs too impatient?'.

Harris's article revealed that the Conference's Secretary, H. E. Scheele,⁸⁸ had written to Parkinson informing him that 'the meeting would produce "no concrete answer." Even if approved, the rule could not be altered before the next AGM in February 1950'. However, as this proved wholly unsatisfactory to Parkinson and the Essex group he represented, a parallel meeting was called that same evening in Brentwood, Essex, 'where Parkinson will ask clubs to request convention of an extraordinary general meeting of the CCC under rule 8 (f) which, if backed by at least 24 clubs, must be called within two calendar months'.⁸⁹ Yet strangely, at this point Harris withdrew his support, accusing the Essex clubs – who only wanted to introduce something he and Goodall had 'campaign' for – of being premature and impatient in calling their meeting, stating that; 'Surely the council reply should have been awaited'?⁹⁰

The Conference's Executive Council meeting that night, as Parkinson, and no-doubt Harris and Goodall, would have known, produced no surprises. Although it is uncertain what it had to do with them, the meeting opened with letters from a number of clubs from counties other than Essex, including a number from Surrey including Dulwich CC.⁹¹ Once completed, Parkinson's Essex resolution was eventually debated, and, according to Bennett, these discussions became rather 'heated, but the general feeling, after all opinions had been aired, was clearly against any change

⁸⁷ Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*., 234.

⁸⁸ Scheele, who had attended Dulwich College, was also the secretary of the Badminton Association of England at this time. A position he held for 25 years. "A Tribute to 'Mr Badminton'" in *Badminton Magazine*, May 1981, 4.

⁸⁹ *Evening Standard*, 20/5/1949.

⁹⁰ *Evening Standard*, 20/5/1949.

⁹¹ Clubs mentioned are Banstead, Chertsey and Epsom Kingsley. CCC Minute Book, 20/5/1949.

of rule'.⁹² The committee then prepared a statement for the Chairman Mr. Jack Cooper, of Barclays Bank CC, to issue to the press.⁹³

This Council considers the introduction of competition cricket in the south is not in the interests of club cricket and that no alteration to the objects and rules of the Conference is desirable.⁹⁴

The apologists for league cricket, such as Ivan Sharpe, a man who had remained resolutely amateur despite playing for a number of professional football clubs,⁹⁵ could not have regarded matters more differently to Cooper:

The keenest cricket of all ... it is a far cry ... from Lord's and far removed from the pattern of the headquarters game ... Superior people say it isn't cricket. 'Slap-dash' they call it. Lord's probably doesn't think much about it. Too hurried, too tense; no poetry in it, no science ... The northerner has reached the stage when he prefers pep in his play. This league cricket goes far to meet the demand.⁹⁶

The language is revealing. Whose 'interests' in the South and 'demands' in the North were being served? As Harris had demanded in August 1948; 'it was up to cricket's rulers to respond to the people's wishes',⁹⁷ but the minutes of the CCC's Executive Council meeting in May 1949 record that such an action was not in the minds of the committee. Despite an absence of delegates from member clubs the meeting decided that:

In view of the rumours to the effect that Mr. Parkinson might be able to obtain sufficient signatures to call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Conference, it was ... agreed unanimously that a special sub-committee be formed to prepare a memorandum for consideration of the Council in support of the motion just passed.⁹⁸

Over in Brentwood, Parkinson was to feel the sharp end of the power of the press. Harris' article on the evening of the two meetings had, as Parkinson told Goodall

⁹² Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*, 235.

⁹³ According to Bennett, this consisted of Goodall only at the meeting.

⁹⁴ Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*, 235-236.

⁹⁵ Playing for clubs local to where his work as a journalist took him, Sharpe represented a number of clubs including Derby and Leeds United. He was editor of the *Athletic News* and the *Sunday Chronicle*. "Leeds United F.C. History", http://www.ozwhitelufc.net.au/players_profiles/S/SharpeIG.php Accessed, 14/2/2013.

⁹⁶ Williams, *Cricket and England*, 23.

⁹⁷ *Evening Standard*, 17/8/1948.

⁹⁸ CCC Minute Book, 20/5/1949. At this meeting the Brighton Hove and District Cricket Association resigned, having requested the Conference's opinion on competitive membership back in early March.

later, 'made the Essex representatives waiver' and eighteen clubs out of the twenty-five invited 'ignored their promises and did not attend Parkinson's meeting'.⁹⁹ This immediately resulted in the failure of Parkinson's resolution to alter the CCC's constitution, and ended both the most serious challenge to the Conference's dominance and any genuine chance of forming an 'official' league in Essex until the Essex Cricket League was established in 1972.

Now that the Essex clubs had been given, in Bennett's rather knowing and smug words: 'a nasty jolt [of their own] ... the C.C.C. was [now] taking no chances'. The Conference's specially selected Competitive Cricket Sub-Committee¹⁰⁰ had reported back in July, and had prepared, as Bennett recalled:

... a memorandum listing the main arguments for and against competitive cricket, so that if the Essex clubs returned to the attack, or for that matter if any clubs had similar ideas, it [the CCC] would have most, if not all, the answers in support of the view that southern clubs in general opposed any departure from their normal game.¹⁰¹

With the proposal to establish a league in Surrey appearing to be defeated internally, and Essex routed, what of Arthur Gilligan's challenge in Sussex? Naturally, under these circumstances, Gilligan's proposal, despite being described as 'a mild form of competitive cricket',¹⁰² had also met with strong and coordinated resistance. Following the CCC's initial correspondence in December 1948, Gilligan 'had a hard time persuading the bigger Sussex clubs that they should compete'.¹⁰³ These influential Sussex clubs, faced with a resolute CCC, were not prepared to risk 'being banned'¹⁰⁴ and 'backed out as soon as they were told that the Conference would

⁹⁹ Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*, 236. *Evening Standard*, 23/7/1949.

¹⁰⁰ The Committee consisted of the four elected members: A. C. L. Bennett, A. W. Chadwick, A.R. Duff and K. D. Poulter, along with the ex officio members G. F. Clatworthy, E. H. Cooper, F. L. J. Dolman and B. H. Goulding.

¹⁰¹ Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*, 236.

¹⁰² *The Cricketer Spring Annual* 1949, 50.

¹⁰³ Bennett, *The Weekend Cricketer*, 237.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

never approve'.¹⁰⁵ However, Gilligan, together with the remodelled SCA (in the form of the Sussex Association of Cricket Clubs), did get his league, albeit one without the more 'established' clubs. Bennett indirectly stressed the importance of this re-negotiation of terms/teams, and how the absence of the 'established' clubs resulted in the new league being deemed, to some extent, irrelevant. Without addressing the Conference's threats of excommunication, Bennett noted, somewhat speculatively:

Now, though I've never heard Arthur Gilligan mention it, I myself believe he would have been far happier if the more powerful clubs could have been persuaded to enter the competition. But clubs like Middleton, Worthing ... Hastings ... and Haywards Heath, which at first showed interest in what was going on, made it quite clear that they didn't want to have anything to do with the scheme.¹⁰⁶

Today, we may only contemplate if Bennett ever asked Gilligan, but Harris, Gilligan, Parkinson and other pro-league campaigners in Surrey, such as Garland-Wells and Robins, may well have realised that the elite clubs, despite their 'power' and the positive emphasis given in the national and local media to the presence of Oxbridge 'blues', were not necessarily the best in playing terms. The *Evening Standard* in June of 1949 reported on Gilligan's league, and allowed him to make this point, and remind the readers that a realm of working-class cricket existed which thought very little of the Conference:

Gilligan says that there are any number of working men's clubs in Sussex, who care less than nothing for the CCC, and that many of them have material rich in promise. He adds: "It is a mistake to suppose all youngsters worth developing are attached to Conference clubs".¹⁰⁷

A further report in late July was also positive about 'Arthur Gilligan's Tournament',¹⁰⁸ in stating that – as league activists had predicted – the matches were "live" affairs, with quite a number of thrilling finishes'.¹⁰⁹ But while Bennett confirmed that the interest of more 'powerful' clubs only began to wane once the CCC had made its

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ *Evening Standard*, 15/6/1949.

¹⁰⁸ CCC Minute Book 6, 33.

¹⁰⁹ *Evening Standard*, 14/7/1949.

threats of exclusion explicit, he also made it clear that without the socially elite clubs – or rather, with the working men’s clubs – Gilligan’s league was somehow deemed a ‘lesser’ undertaking. Nonetheless, Bennett, in summarising the various challenges to the CCC, noted both the strength of the Conference and its inherent fragility should senior member clubs decide to act more independently in the future:¹¹⁰

Whereas Arthur Gilligan’s success story was only threatened by the unwillingness of clubs to risk excommunication from the C.C.C., Parkinson’s Essex experiment was ruined by it. ... Gilligan’s argument that exclusion from the ... Conference did not necessarily mean the end of cricket [being vindicated].¹¹¹

This was an opinion shared by both Goodall and Harris, but the former, in acknowledging the success of Gilligan’s league in July 1949, was quick to spot that the Conference had scored a significant victory. He also noted that if competitive cricket was to materialise in any meaningful way, it was the senior clubs, with their superior facilities and closer associations with the county clubs, who must take part:

There seems little possibility of league cricket being played in the South yet. Eventually, no doubt, it will come, but at present its protagonists confine themselves more to talk than action.

All that is, except Arthur Gilligan, whose Sussex competition is doing very well indeed, I understand.

But that competition is confined, if I may say so, to minor clubs. It is the bigger clubs that must compete if such cricket is to produce the [County] newcomers and the keener cricket needed so badly.

Goodall also predicted just how much organisation and work would be required simply to get the project off the ground, let alone overcome a Conference who were busy constructing even higher defences in the event of future challenges:

I think it would be a full-time job for at least three people and the organiser would have to have guaranteed support from at least 20 clubs to make a start.

... The Conference Council have nothing whatever to do with league cricket. Nor according to their latest statement, do they want to. But they can be ordered to change

¹¹⁰ Promising young players, such as David Sydenham of Oxshott CC, were advised by the SCCC in the 1950s to join a ‘bigger and more fashionable club’ in order to further any potential career. *One Hundred Years of Cricket in Oxshott* by Tim Cotton (Oxshott Village Cricket Club Centenary, 1896 - 1996), 17-18.

¹¹¹ Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*, 238.

their rules if sufficient clubs wish it. So just in case they are challenged again, secretary Jack Cooper will have the report of the sub-committee, after it has been discussed by the Council, for guidance.¹¹²

Goodall appears to have missed the point Gilligan had made in June, that working men's clubs were a full reservoir of potential talent. But in downplaying the fact that 'working men's clubs' were participating in a competitive form of cricket for which he and Harris had 'campaigned', he revealed the undue respect and importance given to 'elite' clubs in the *Evening Standard*, *The Cricketer*, and numerous cricket histories. Gilligan's league, contrary to the established history of cricket in the South, was played from 1949, with Rottingdean CC the inaugural winners. It joined another southern 'village' league, similarly ignored by orthodox cricket historians, which has good claim to be the oldest 'village' league in the world – the l'Anson Cup Competition, established in 1901.¹¹³ Despite having operated throughout the period that witnessed the wider prohibition of leagues, the l'Anson had not attracted much – if any – attention. A combination of rural location and the low-status of the competing 'village' clubs led to this anonymity – even in local terms.¹¹⁴ League cricket's competitive and, above all, entertaining nature was seldom discussed outside of the specific locality. Such traits – ably highlighted by the fact that only two draws were recorded in the l'Anson competition throughout the 1949 season – were only being publicised by the *Farnham Herald*.¹¹⁵

¹¹² *Evening Standard*, 23/7/1949.

¹¹³ The l'Anson Cup, which was based upon Alverstoke's West Surrey Village Cup, is played in the Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire borders near Farnham, and was established in 1901. Graham Collyer, *One Hundred Years of the l'Anson Cup: A Century Not Out Incorporating A Cup for Cricket* by L.T. Pope, (Derby: Breedon Books Publishing, 2002), 21.

¹¹⁴ The establishment of a Woking and District Cricket League in 1921 notwithstanding, the *Surrey Advertiser* appear wholly ignorant of the l'Anson's existence (it had been re-established in 1920), in stating: 'Our columns of cricket scores are even heavier than heretofore, and the number of clubs now operating in Surrey must surely constitute a record. It seems strange that in a considerable area surrounding Guildford there appears to be only one competition – the Woking and District League. A league in the Guildford district would undoubtedly create tremendous interest'. *Surrey Advertiser*, 2/5/1921 and 1/6/1921.

¹¹⁵ *Farnham Herald*, 9/9/1949.

If the length of column inches devoted to the debate is a guide, the *Evening Standard* recognised that there was much interest in the issue of league cricket, and certainly the Essex and Sussex challenges. And yet, the *Evening Standard* published no letters on the subject, and the *The Cricketer* only gave a voice to a very narrow vocal minority on this issue in 1949. Indicative of the deference afforded to the senior metropolitan clubs, the 'Club Notes' editor, A. W. T. Langford, thought F. R. D'O. Monro's 'long association with Hampstead, Repton Pilgrims, Nondescripts and other [socially exclusive] clubs gives great weight to his [anti-league] opinion'.¹¹⁶ Being able to 'shout the loudest' was exactly the accusation Monro, and other anti-league campaigners, made against their challengers. Yet, of the 'numerous' letters (two) objecting to league cricket published in *The Cricketer* during 1949, both B. T. Yonge and A. J. Wright, who made oblique comparisons between the pro-league lobbyists' and the 'loud clamour' of Communism, represented the same club: Dulwich CC. Moreover, the Dulwich club, a major player in the CCC that had been represented at the very first meeting of the CCCF in 1910,¹¹⁷ was allowed to influence matters outside of its own county. Although a Surrey club, their letter was among the first read at the meeting opposing Parkinson's league proposal in Essex.¹¹⁸

As Goodall reported, the close-knit committee members of the Conference remained determined to maintain both their control of amateur cricket, and its preservation on non-competitive lines, with a swathe of counter measures should they be challenged again.¹¹⁹ This was no 'subscriber democracy',¹²⁰ and, despite many clubs remaining suspicious of leagues, this move only served to make the Conference's Chairman,

¹¹⁶ *Cricketer Annual, 1948-1949*, 458.

¹¹⁷ CCCF Minute Book, 19/6/1910.

¹¹⁸ *The Cricketer*, 25/6/1949, 287, and 6/8/1949, 408. Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*, 235.

¹¹⁹ CCC Minute Book, 26/10/1934.

¹²⁰ Robert Morris, "Civil Society, Subscriber Democracies, and Parliamentary Government in Great Britain", in Nancy Gina Bermeo and Philip G Nord, *Civil Society before Democracy: Lessons from Nineteenth-century Europe* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000).

Jack Cooper's statement that 'the clubs have their own solution. We only carry out their wishes', appear extremely hollow.¹²¹ As the next Chapter shows, it was not simply a fear of the Conference that led to such caution, but a range of conservative attitudes and self-interests.

The Conference compromises?

Following the deciding match of the l'Anson's sister competition, the Miller Cup, the *Farnham Herald* reported on the speech given by a steward of the competition, a Mr. G. Arnold. In presenting the cup to the 1949 winners Shottermill: 'Mr. Arnold said that if the people who criticised competitive cricket could have experienced the excitement and keenness of the closing stages of that game they would have been convinced that such cricket could only increase interest in the game and bring the best out of the players'.¹²² Only two days earlier, a meeting of the SACC at the Oval discussed another significant competition. Although the member clubs of the SACC had rejected the proposal of a league, many of these clubs, including the Worplesdon CC, competed in the FDC. The cup, which pre-dated the SACC, had been established in 1946 by Frank Robson Ayres and another unknown local man (the cup was named after their wives) to raise funds for the SCCC's Centenary Fund.¹²³ Initially the competition was a one-off final between the Guildford and Cranleigh CCs, both of whom were long established Conference members,¹²⁴ but following the

¹²¹ *Evening Standard*, 20/5/1950.

¹²² *Farnham Herald*, 23/9/1949.

¹²³ *Surrey Advertiser*, 10/9/1949.

¹²⁴ Guildford had joined the Conference in 1925, three years after their 'reformation'. CCC Minute Book, 17/9/1925.

expansion of the competition by the Western (Guildford) Area of the SACC, the FDC had 'become famous throughout the County' by 1949.¹²⁵

The Conference was unaware of the FDC until the SACC decided to expand the competition, and, as CCC member clubs were taking part, this presented the Conference with another 'competitive' challenge.¹²⁶ Only months after it had finished dealing with Gilligan, and in typically blunt fashion, the Conference then contacted the Western (Guildford) Area of the SACC to demand compliance with its rules. SACC committee man, Rear Admiral S. H. Dunlop's unrepentant response was reported in a positive, yet light-hearted, way by Harris in the *Evening Standard* in March of 1950. The FDC, which Harris downplayed as an 'annual piece of fun', was too well established to be upset by the Conference. Established or not, Dunlop was robust in defending the competition from any external interference and told Harris' reporter that 'far from abandoning the competition, we have every intention of encouraging and enlarging it'.¹²⁷

The FDC is possibly the earliest incarnation of what is now known as Twenty20, and was played on mid-week evenings with the final on a Sunday afternoon.¹²⁸ 40 clubs, of various origins and social make-up from the Guildford Area, were competing against each other by 1951 – very often for the first time, and like the FA Cup, 'giant-killings' were not uncommon.¹²⁹ Working men's teams knocking out of the likes of Guildford, Cranleigh and Normandy, and the fast and exciting pace of play, only served to enhance the competition's popularity within the Guildford area and beyond.

¹²⁵ Garland-Wells, *SACC Illustrated Hand Book for 1949*, 11. SACC Minute Book, 29/9/1954.

¹²⁶ CCC Minute Book, 9/12/1949.

¹²⁷ *Evening Standard*, 7/3/1950.

¹²⁸ Initially sixteen overs, the competition consisted of eighteen eight-ball overs (22 in the final) each innings after 1953. SACC Minute Book, 29/4/1953.

¹²⁹ 500 watched the 'surprise' victory of the Guildford City Supporter's CC over local 'giants' Ripley CC in an early round of the FDC. *Surrey Advertiser*, 10/5/1950.

By 1954 the final was attracting between 4,000 and 5,000 spectators, a second competition (The Admiral Dunlop Plate) for clubs knocked out in the first two rounds established, and other areas of the SACC, such as Carshalton, who were keen to emulate the FDC's success, attended Guildford Area meetings to learn about the competition.¹³⁰ And yet, this competition further highlighted a number of issues that were crucial flashpoints during the preceding years.

As noted previously, the loss of cricket's traditional role as a simple conduit for social mixing, as a community or between generations, had been raised by the SCA's Walker. Although he had only dared to whisper it, many clubs also excluded younger players in order to allow the established older members to play.¹³¹ In light of the post-war debates, competition's such as the FDC were now identified as a means for the eradication of this regrettable and damaging habit. Consequently, Dunlop identified the problem, and now noted how the FDC was a potential remedy:

... In ordinary club cricket the tendency is for the old players to keep the youngsters out. They won't give up their places.
"In this cup cricket you've got to be lively in the field and at the wicket and the youngsters get a chance in these games. The competition has livened local cricket and generally done it a great deal of good."¹³²

Although the competition was clearly a 'shot in the arm' for local cricket, any attempt to push out the older generation of established players may have revived some of the Conference's old fears. Although the competition did not interfere with long-held and, for many, sacrosanct Saturday fixtures the choice of opposition was left to the 'luck-of-the-draw'. Socially elite CCC clubs in metropolitan Surrey, and beyond, may well have baulked at the prospect of playing the likes of Guildford City [FC] Supporters

¹³⁰ SACC Minute Book, 21/2/1951.

¹³¹ *The Cricketer Annual* 1945, 46.

¹³² *Evening Standard*, 7/3/1950.

Club CC,¹³³ Dennis Brothers CC or C.N.D. [Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament] Haslemere CC.¹³⁴

Harris' article, unsurprisingly, came to the attention of the Conference, and having been read out at an Executive Council meeting on the 17 March 1950, it was referred to the General Purposes Committee for further discussion. Harris' colleague, Goodall, had also come to the Council's attention. Despite the failure to instigate a 'senior' league among the elite clubs of the South, Goodall wrote to the Conference suggesting that his paper begin to collate the 'results of matches played by certain leading London clubs ... in such a way as to imply the existence of a league'.¹³⁵ In line with the *Evening Standard's* geographical circulation, Goodall's emphasis upon London clubs is understandable, but it is clear that a metropolitan bias existed across a number of sports within and outside of the press.

The Conference's General Purposes and Publicity Committees met the following month, where both issues were discussed. Regarding the Flora Doris Cup, it was agreed that the 'CCC's Chairman was to contact Rear Admiral Dunlop, the Hon. Secretary of the competition, by telephone to advise him as to the Conferences views. The Conference requested that rules be drawn up and that any profits from the competition be donated to charity, "in order that the Council could recognise the competition under Rule 5 (e)".¹³⁶ Dunlop's specific response is not recorded, as Conference chairman Mr. Spong reported that he had died suddenly the day before the CCC's next meeting. If Dunlop's bullish attitude in the article is any guide, he may

¹³³ *Surrey Advertiser*, 10/5/1950.

¹³⁴ SACC Minute Book, 13/6/1963. Peter Hennessey devotes significant attention to the spectre of the atomic bomb in his history of the 1950s, but the C. N. D.'s (and other activist groups) broader social engagement may make an interesting study. Peter Hennessey, *Having it So Good: Britain in the Fifties*, (Penguin Books Limited, 2007).

¹³⁵ CCC Minute Book, 17/3/1950.

¹³⁶ Rule 5(e) allowed approved, 'not for profit', competitions to take place for a fixed term of five years. CCC Minute Book, 12/4/1950.

well have told Spong that what the Guildford Area of the SACC did was none of the Conference's business. Having been informed that another knock-out cup competition was in operation in the Molesey area of Surrey, the Conference was thus faced with two choices; pursue another, potentially damaging, conflict or allow the FDC (and other similar competitions) to continue unhindered.

The Guildford Area of the SACC's refusal to accept the Conference's demands, and the fact that a small number of senior member clubs were openly competing in the FDC, was clearly a problem. However, the Conference had been assured by the Hon. Secretary of Farncombe CC that the FDC's 'organisers were much adverse to any type of league cricket',¹³⁷ and they decided to allow the competition to continue 'in view of the harmless nature of the competition'. Despite the open rebellion of senior clubs such as Guildford, the FDC's mid-week format negated any aggressive action on the part of the Conference, although the committee did recognise that Rule 4 might require some remodelling.¹³⁸ Bennett, overlooking the large crowds attracted by the FDC and the Conference's own constitution, employed some serious spin when he recalled:

You may well ask why such well-known C.C.C. clubs as Guildford are permitted to take part. The answer is that it is considered to be too small a competition to worry about, and the existing Conference rules permit this type of competitive play.¹³⁹

Goodall's proposal to tabulate the results of friendly matches had also received a pragmatic response in 1950 as it was thought the table would result in 'greater publicity for club cricket'.¹⁴⁰ Despite the contradictory tone of the Conference's 'anti-commercial' statement, letters were sent to the clubs concerned, and Bennett was to talk to Goodall directly to inform him that the Conference had no objections to the

¹³⁷ CCC Minute Book, 12/4/1950.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 26/5/1950.

¹³⁹ Bennett, *The Week-end Cricketer*, 239.

¹⁴⁰ CCC Minute Book, 12/4/1950.

clubs involvement in Goodall's proposal as long as two conditions were met: first, that no points or percentages be awarded (for matches won), and second, that the *Evening Standard* publish the table in alphabetical order.¹⁴¹ Bennett agreed to tender this request verbally,¹⁴² and, following his meeting with Goodall, he reported to the Executive Council on the 21 April 1950 that Goodall was still keen to allocate a points system to the results, despite acknowledging the Conference's concerns. He had, however, agreed to publish the table in alphabetical order.

Conclusion

The immediate post-war period witnessed a significant restructuring of cricket's administration outside of the 'first-class' game. The CCC's position as the premier administrative body within southern club cricket was thus threatened by a number of independent cricket associations, of whom many wished to promote leagues. As Baker has demonstrated, the government and a number of sporting bodies had begun planning for sports post-war future as early as 1941.¹⁴³ The establishment of these regional cricket associations were indicative of this foresight, and the long-held desire that the 'ways in which the divisions of social class determined who could or could not play a sport at any given level would diminish'.¹⁴⁴ Such idealistic aims coloured the period within and outside of British sport, but little did those who dreamt up such notions realise what they were up against in terms of a powerful and equally resilient establishment. As far as cricket was concerned, the MCC's position, despite

¹⁴¹ The *Evening Standard* eventually published two tables (north and south of the Thames).

¹⁴² CCC Minute Book, 12/4/1950 and 21/4/1950.

¹⁴³ Baker, "A More Even Playing Field" in Hayes and Hill, *"Millions Like Us"?*, 135.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 125.

some internal conflict,¹⁴⁵ was impregnable, and the CCC were similarly able to force any new association to accept its terms if desirous of affiliation.

Despite their apparent impregnability, the English side's capitulation to Bradman's 'Invincibles' in 1948 was to re-ignite the reformist's fire, as this embarrassing defeat placed both the MCC and the Conference under further and more sustained scrutiny. Non-competitive cricket did little to develop the young talent required to reverse such results, and all of the new associations placed the encouragement of youth at the heart of their operations. Competitive leagues were seen as the encouragement needed to attract this youth and, in the long-term, improve the national side, but the Conference, which remained the most influential body outside of the MCC, sought to act in the member clubs short-term interests only. Amateur governance at all levels of cricket was thus accused of failing the public's needs, and a lack of competitive cricket in the South was cited as a significant contributing factor by numerous sections of the media including the *Evening Standard*. The attempts by new regional cricket associations to introduce leagues to Surrey, Sussex and Essex were supported by the *Standard*, but when Parkinson's Essex proposal actually looked like forcing the Conference to hold have an Extraordinary General Meeting in order to resolve the issue, the *Standard* buckled and ruined what was the most serious challenge to the CCC's hegemony. Gilligan's league, despite the obvious talent within, was overlooked for similar reasons, as it was not the established Conference clubs, but working-men's teams who were taking part.

Despite the egalitarian and progressive aims of those who sought reform, the social and cultural power of the Conference, ensured that it was able to exploit ideological support and any residual pre-war deference within the media. What had always been

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 138.

a small but influential group, had, arguably, become even smaller. And yet, this elite group were able to express their opinion freely, and preserve club cricket's socially dichotomous hierarchy. Clearly, as the SACC's attempt to establish league cricket in Surrey suggests, large numbers of clubs were wary of leagues. Issues regarding commercialism, a decline in standards of behaviour/sociability, and even the spectre of 'excessive gambling', were cited by opponents to leagues, but for the elite clubs such issues were incidental, for it was the potential loss of long-held and valued fixtures that concerned them most. Although the Conference managed to defeat all three attempts to form leagues, it was to prove a Pyrrhic victory, for the SACC had opened a second front, in the form of the FDC, that the Conference could not defend. Thus, in order to ensure that cricket, especially long-held Saturday fixtures, remained untouched and non-competitive, the Conference had to compromise its own rules regarding the FDC and the *Evening Standard's* 'Table of Merit'.

This costly victory, despite the Conference's pragmatism, did not mean an end to its authority being questioned, or requests to establish competitions. Ever more senior Conference member clubs, such as Guildford and Cranleigh, began to compete in a variety of competitions based upon the FDC, and the *Evening Standard* not only introduced 'finals',¹⁴⁶ it abandoned the alphabetical compilation of the 'Table of Merit'.¹⁴⁷ The CCC's anachronistic adherence to non-competitive 'friendly' cricket was becoming increasingly obvious, but it was not only the club game that remained frozen in the past. In this concern, Goodall and the *Evening Standard's* progressive agenda may well have been better served had they directed their energies toward the ECC, and the 'tired old men' who really set the social and cultural agenda that

¹⁴⁶ *Evening Standard*, 16/8/1952 and CCC Minute Book, 26/9/1952.

¹⁴⁷ CCC Minute Book, 3/12/1954.

allowed the Conference to maintain its damaging ideological stance.¹⁴⁸ The following Chapter demonstrates that an officially recognised league competition in southern club cricket was still some way into the future. The establishment of the Surrey Clubs' Championship was of course dependent upon a significant shift in the attitudes of the CCC, but its introduction in 1968 was dependent upon further social and cultural adjustments within and outside of the game. Crucially, the changes leading to the transformation of club cricket were required in the ECC first, and they involved the further intervention of the media and, to a lesser extent, the State for the first time, for 'amateur' versus 'professional' debates were not confined to the ECC.

¹⁴⁸ *Evening Standard*, 17/8/1948.

Chapter Five

The Surrey Clubs' Championship: Competitive cricket 'arrives', 1950 – 1970

Introduction

Despite Gilligan's partial success in 1949, many of the more influential clubs were still not prepared to either challenge or resign from the CCC in order to play league cricket. By the early 1950s, it appeared that the Conference's largely successful campaign against the 'introduction' of league cricket in Surrey, Sussex and Essex – and the report of the CCC's league sub-committee – had quashed any dissent among its membership. This was not, however, achieved without a level of compromise regarding the conference's attitude towards cup competitions and its own position within cricket administration. The reluctant sanctioning of the FDC in Surrey allowed Conference member clubs to compete in this competition, and minor changes were made to CCC Rules in order to 'accommodate' the FDC and a host of similar cup competitions. Such decisions were more pragmatic than progressive as the approved competitions did not interfere with long-standing Saturday fixtures. But although the inherent weakness of the Conference had been demonstrated it failed to change its constitution. It was, thus, left to the new cricket associations to take the game and its improvement seriously regarding the development of young cricketers.

Although the Conference had scored a significant victory in sustaining the prohibition of any 'visible' leagues in elite club cricket, the immediate post-Gilligan period was

less benign than the lack of challenges to the CCC and the relative social and political stability of the time might suggest.¹ The air of complacent superiority created by those who had governed British sport between the wars, was, very quickly challenged. This chapter will demonstrate that the process which ultimately led to the establishment of the SCC in 1968, was dependent upon a number of significant changes in the game nationally. The changes required to the MCC and the ECC before the introduction of leagues resulted from a concerted campaign which opposed the cultural/ideological values and social make-up of the MCC. Thus, we must first consider the wider social pressures and the calls for changes to the amateur governance of the MCC, which had long sustained unpalatable social distinctions within the game. Cricket, the love of which some traditionalists regarded as a 'test of normality',² had now become a game that increasingly divided public opinion,³ to the point that it was openly disliked.⁴ Moreover, these criticisms were emerging from ever more diverse quarters.

Critical discourses of amateur governance

Despite the election of a reformist Labour government in 1945, it has been proposed by Paul Addison and Norman Baker that the immediate post-war period was

¹ Marwick, *British society since 1945*, 102–111; McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, 337.

² *Surrey Advertiser*, 24/12/1949.

³ The association of elite social-class with those who control cricket via the MCC, whether real or imagined today, still divides cricket. The Labour MP, Dennis Skinner famously providing the title to Mike Marqusee's book, *Anyone but England*. Mike Marqusee, *Anyone but England: Cricket and the National Malaise* (London: Verso, 1995), 250.

⁴ The *Picture Post* provides a number of examples between 1951 and 1954 of complaints relating to cricket, including southern players' dominance in the England team, and hence their complicity in the national team's failure; how the Scottish people were force-fed 'English' cricket on radio and television; that only 'one man in ten' was really interested in cricket in England; and even that 'the national game' had become 'boring'. *Picture Post*, 27/1/1951, 39; 2/8/1952, 12-13; 1/8/1953, 6; 12/6/1954, 13.

coloured by a desire to 'get back to normal' as soon as possible.⁵ Sport was certainly reflective of this, and Baker argues that the 'familiar patterns and styles of competition' were quickly embraced by the British sporting public.⁶ Although established sports maintained their position at the nation's cultural heart, it is unlikely that the heavy loss to Bradman's 'Invincibles' in 1948 was part of this desire for 'normality'. Indeed, despite the success of London's 'austerity' Olympics in 1948, this was only one of a number of post-war defeats which reflected Britain and British sport's declining global status.⁷ The Ashes loss of 1950-51 in Australia (4 – 1), had followed a first ever home series defeat to the West Indies (3 – 1). The English football team's first home defeat to a foreign team occurred in 1949 when the recently independent Republic of Ireland won 2 – 0 at Goodison Park.⁸ This was followed by the 1 – 0 humiliation by the United States in 1950, and the 3 – 6 and 7 – 1 defeats to Hungary in 1953 and 1954. A solitary gold medal at the Helsinki Summer Olympics of 1952 proved similarly embarrassing. All were regarded as symptomatic of the complacency and limited desire to modernise within three of British sport's largest governing bodies. These sporting defeats were embarrassing enough, but they were contemporaneous to similarly humiliating political and economic events such as the devaluation of Sterling in 1949, the Suez debacle of 1956, the break-up of Empire, and increasingly uncompetitive industrial output.⁹

⁵ Paul Addison, *Now the War is Over*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1984), 114 cited in Norman Baker, "Olympics or Tests: The Disposition of the British Public, 1948", *Sporting Traditions*, Vol. 11, 1984, 58.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ The *Daily Express* for instance called for the 1950-1951 Ashes tour to Australia to be called off because the MCC team was not strong enough. Norman Baker, "A More Even Playing Field?" in Hayes and Hill, *"Millions Like Us"?*, 125–155.

⁸ England teams were still selected by a committee at this time.

⁹ According to John Darwin the ignominious defeat and hand-over of the Suez Canal to the Egyptians was almost wholly absent from the campaigning for the 1959 election. J. G. Darwin (1986), "The Fear of Falling: British Politics and Imperial Decline Since 1900", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 36, 27-43.

The social and political classes who oversaw this decline were essentially the same personalities who had governed British society and sport during the inter-war period, and the perception that British sports were controlled by socially 'detached' amateur administrators was widespread. Whereas criticism before 1939 was rare, these institutions, and the MCC in particular, were increasingly challenged, and, as the *Evening Standard's* campaign suggests, those in charge were scrutinised in terms of their social class and their related cultural approach to sport. These challenges appeared to replicate those motivating post-war social and political change, but, in this concern, Baker has suggested that 'the drive for change that may have influenced the political realm ... made little impact on British sport'.¹⁰ This may have been the case regarding those seeking reform, but it is clear that those defending the *status quo* used highly politicised analogies in the defence of their ideals and their influential position. Political motivations apart, 'class' repeatedly permeated the ensuing debates, with the MCC, and many of those who defended its composition and cultural approach to the game, accused of 'snobbery'. Cricket, by 1950, had become polarised in social and cultural terms, but the path the *Evening Standard* had taken in 1948/49 was neither original, nor seldom travelled.

In June and July 1947 the Left-leaning *Daily Herald* published a series of lengthy articles on the theme: 'What's Wrong with British Sport?'. The third in the series was devoted to cricket, and, like all the articles of the series, this one took the form of a debate between Vic Thompson, the sports editor, Charles Bray, the *Herald's* cricket correspondent, and Brian Sellers, the YCCC captain. The role of cricket leagues in the YCCC's success has been referred to in the previous chapter, and, although Sellers thought the 'determination' present in the North was missing in the South, it

¹⁰ Baker, "Olympics or Tests", 58.

was Bray who criticised the MCC for being ‘too much concerned with amateurism, with Eton and Harrow cricket and University stuff’. Being fully aware of the Australian’s meritocratic Sheffield Shield competition and grade cricket system, where such elitism was absent, he went on to cite the need for ‘classless cricket’.¹¹ It was clear, whether the protagonists favoured the ‘amateur’ or ‘league’ versions of the game, the social polarisation these different cultural approaches created was damaging to the game.

At the beginning of the 1950s, John Arlott, a man who may be regarded as ‘establishment’, but for whom the fair treatment of professionals was very important, summarised the long-standing and polarised nature of the debate, and how those for or against cricket reform approached the subject.¹²

Its devotees, addressing themselves to the already converted, presupposing sympathy and knowledge, have often exalted cricket beyond its due sphere, annoying non-cricketers by their lack of sense of proportion. Its detractors have rarely done more than indulge in rhetoric, boasting an ignorance of the subject which must discredit them.¹³

Although Arlott was referring to those who disliked cricket in the latter instance, his portrayal of the game’s ‘detractors’ was one that would be levelled by ‘devotees’ towards some critics who only had the game’s progress and future success at heart. It was clear to Arlott that the game had suffered ‘real damage’ at the hands of those he obscurely described as ‘unscrupulous moralists in search of analogy, however inapt, who have represented its players as priggishly sinking its essential competitive quality to maudlin quixotry’.¹⁴ These ‘moralists’ were to be at the forefront of such

¹¹ *Daily Herald*, 2/7/1947. I am most grateful to Norman Baker for a précis of his research notes on this matter.

¹² Arlott was a member of both the establishment led Cricket Writers Club and was president of the Cricketers’ Association.

¹³ *The Cricketer*, 8/7/1950, 290.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* It is unclear whether Arlott’s accusation that the sanctimonious substitution of cricket’s essential competitiveness in favour of a sentimental conservatism and false morality was deliberately obscure, but similar accusations were made in plainer terms by Bowen with regard to southern club cricket. Bowen, *Cricket*, 116.

defensive accusations. Those who had sacrificed the inherent, and arguably necessary, competitive nature of cricket in order to present (predominantly amateur) cricketers and the game itself as 'more than a game', were, according to Arlott, responsible for English cricket's lack of competitiveness in 1950. Having originated in the writing of Pycroft, the snobbish elevation of cricket, be it mere pastime or international Test Match, to a particularly English 'religion' was heard with staggering regularity at cricket dinners throughout Surrey. Major General F. S. G. Piggott informed the Ewhurst CC dinner in 1949 that: '... everyone who held another religion than that of cricket was a schismatic, a sectarian, a heretic. "Cricket is inborn in the Englishman"'.¹⁵

These and other associations, which often propagated the image of the village or rural idyll, were expanded and perpetuated by generations of amateur cricket players, administrators, authors and historians who controlled the game and its image. The values of cricket as a character-building and moral 'education', that the Victorian middle-classes had invented to distinguish their cricket from the profligate aristocracy and the coarse working-classes, now shaped the game's national meaning. This was, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, especially the case in the South, where such an elevation, based almost entirely upon a late-Edwardian metropolitan desire to avoid personal contact with the working-classes, had led to the continued prohibition of competitive cricket.

Competition, or the rising importance of utilitarian 'victory', had, according to C. B. Fry, increased following both World Wars.¹⁶ Yet, in line with Arlott's accusation and

¹⁵ *Surrey Advertiser*, 3/12/49. Also see: *Surrey Advertiser*, 14/2/48; 9/10/48; 24/12/49; 24/12/49; 28/1/50 and 28/10/50.

¹⁶ *The Cricketer*, 7/8/1954, 364.

his own close association with the early days of the CCC, Fry remained firmly against competitive cricket – even at the highest level:

Much as we need the County Championship for financial reasons and to suit the exigencies of the Press, there is no escape from the fact that no match is related to any other and that ideally we want each match for its own individual sake.¹⁷

Fry was just one of the protagonists for the defence who ranged from establishment figures: B. K. Castor, Secretary of the SCCC; E. W. Swanton of the *Daily Telegraph* and MCC committee-man and broadsheet journalist H. S. Altham. They faced an increasingly diverse prosecution which ranged from professional cricketers, such as Wally Hammond¹⁸ and Jim Laker; relatively new ‘outsiders’, such as the academic and journalist, C. L. R. James and, his colleague in the press box, Arlott; the independent think-tank, *Political and Economic Planning* (PEP); ‘rebel’ members of the elite, such as C. G. Howard, Secretary of the Lancashire County Cricket Club (LCCC) and the popular press. It was the *Daily Express* journalist, Frank Rostron, who was to rile the cricket establishment in October 1955 with an article entitled, ‘Sport with the Lid off’.¹⁹ What ensued was an increasingly hostile debate between Rostron and E. W. Swanton, of the *Daily Telegraph*, over reform of the MCC: ‘the snob Lords of Cricket’.²⁰ This very public spat was to demonstrate how little the cricket establishment’s views had changed since the Late-Victorian and Edwardian period.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Walter R Hammond, *Cricket’s Secret History*. (London: S. Paul, 1952).

¹⁹ *Daily Express*, 24/10/1955.

²⁰ The debate was replayed in *The Cricketer Annual*, 1955, 467.

The MCC come under heavy fire

Rostron argued that the MCC, as a private club, was not admired, but actively disliked – especially in the North. This antagonism was due to its elitism, the segregation of the working-classes exemplified by the MCC's persistence in holding out-dated Gentleman v Players matches, and a lack of accessible week-end cricket. Swanton replied, with gusto, in *The Cricketer Annual* of 1955 under the title 'M.C.C. and the "Daily Express" Fact v Froth: A Little Spleen Returned'. In failing to address Rostron's accusations, Swanton attacked not Rostron, but the popular press, and Lord Beaverbrook's 'peppy, progressive publications' in particular. Unlike the 'establishment' broadsheets that he and Altham wrote for, Swanton accused the Beaverbrook roster of newspapers of employing a 'monosyllabic, kindergarten-simple style', and the *Daily Express* in particular of being 'no better informed about cricket than it habitually is'.²¹ Despite making such a vague accusation, Swanton concluded, that Rostron's rather pointed article 'discloses nothing but a good deal of froth'.²²

The debate escalated, following Rostron's riposte to Swanton's 'immoderate attack', in Fleet Street's 'trade paper', the *World's Press News*.²³ Further correspondence ensued and *The Cricketer*, in what looks, retrospectively, like an attempt to have the last say, published the protagonists' 'last words' on the matter, along with a 'representative' letter from a reader, and a summing up of the debate by the

²¹ It is very difficult to characterise the media at this time. The Beaverbrook owned *Evening Standard* and *Daily Express* were generally opposed to the Labour government, and both had called for the abandonment of the 1948 Olympics. And yet, despite frequent opposition to the sporting 'establishment' the *Evening Standard* had undermined its own campaign for competitive cricket by being overly deferential towards the CCC. Personal correspondence with Norman Baker.

²² *The Cricketer Annual*, 1955, 467-468.

²³ The *World Press News* described Swanton's reply as 'an "amazing" attack'. *The Cricketer Spring Annual* 1955, 33.

‘distinguished *Punch* contributor’, H. F. Ellis.²⁴ The reader’s letter, from ‘H.S.’ of Southampton, displayed an attitude perhaps typical of *The Cricketer’s* editorial stance and a vocal minority of its readership. No letter criticising Swanton’s position was received, but ‘H.S.’ praised Swanton for his ‘courage’. Ellis regarded the row as ‘stupendous and to the onlooker, it must be admitted, increasingly entertaining’, but in an exemplary, yet frustrating example of ‘fence-sitting’, he then stated that ‘the detailed points at issue in the dispute I should not dream of entering’. However, Ellis’ reticence to actually engage with what he thought were disproportionate criticisms did not mean that he, like other anti-league campaigners, would pass up an opportunity to declare Communism ‘evil’.²⁵

That the cricket establishment avoided addressing any of the charges directly was evident in Swanton’s letter to the *World’s Press News*, in which he chose to move away from the detail of the original issues raised and refuted Rostron’s claim that he was ‘a semi-official spokesman of MCC’. Instead, Swanton chose to attack further the journalistic style of the *Daily Express* and its policy of ‘disparagement and abuse ... at the expense of the M.C.C.’.²⁶ Rostron, in-part, continued to address the original criticisms raised, and indeed expanded upon them:

... if any M.C.C. propagandist tries to tell me there is no snobbishness, on the lines of a pre-war generation, in any of the 8,000 members, or that there is not a determined section of members not strongly resistant to the changes that are steadily being made, I can only marvel in their myopia.²⁷

Rostron was highly critical of the ‘privilege the members [of the MCC, and the All England Club], exact from circumstances’. Both clubs reaped the direct and indirect benefits of commercialisation, and yet, strived to ‘maintain a division between

²⁴ *The Cricketer Spring Annual*, 1956, 33.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 36-39.

²⁶ *The Cricketer Spring Annual*, 1956, 38.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

amateur and professional which today is only technically existent'.²⁸ He also made a personal attack upon Swanton, one that struck at the underlying issues of amateurism, elitism and 'snobbery' central to the original accusations. No doubt frustrated by the evasiveness and diversionary 'froth' of Swanton (and Ellis), Rostron went beyond what Curran and Seaton regard as the toned down 'radical commitment' of the reformist papers of the time.²⁹ Significantly, this debate developed a parallel line to that within the game, as Rostron accused Swanton of having no professional qualifications to work in Fleet Street. Most cuttingly, he claimed that 'the wide feeling in Fleet Street ... is that he discredits himself professionally with emotional outburst written from the standpoint of the "flannelled fool" and not with the cold professional objectivity expected of trained newspaper critics'.³⁰

Exactly who now had the 'authority' to report on cricket (and how they did it) was at stake. Swanton, like the MCC, was regarded as a romantic, out-dated, amateur in an increasingly meritocratic, professional and unsentimental world. Rostron, and his fellow critics in the popular press, on the other hand – despite their specific criticisms remaining unanswered – had their 'right' to criticise the authority of the MCC, All England Club, and the CCC etc. questioned. In this concern, Martin Polley notes the University of Birmingham's 'influential pamphlet'; *Britain in the World of Sport*, which was published that same year. Although a call for greater state involvement/funding, rather than a direct critique of gentlemanly amateur control, 'amateurism' (in the concepts relatively new derogatory sense) was identified as the cause of British sports ills:

²⁸ Ibid., 34.

²⁹ This was in an effort to maximise sales. James Curran and Jean Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility: The Press and Broadcasting in Britain*. (London: Routledge, 2003), 89.

³⁰ *The Cricketer Spring Annual*, 1956, 33.

Whether, in a world which regards success in sport as an index of national vitality and national prestige and in a world which contains so many governments which are 'professionals' in the organisation of sport, the British government remain 'amateur'.³¹

Despite the apolitical conclusions of McKibbin and Baker, it would appear that, by 1956, the gloves were off; many within Fleet Street had not only discarded much of the deference displayed by Harris and Goodall in the *Evening Standard*, they had declared 'open season' on the MCC, other bastions of sporting amateurism and many of those prepared to defend them.³²

The reluctance of those close to the MCC to address the criticisms directed towards them was very likely tied to the fact it remained a private, and inherently conservative, club. Yet, despite the MCC's inability to stop the publication of criticisms – the MCC, County Committees and the specialist cricket media displayed few, if any 'Liberal' tendencies, let alone 'socialist' ones – they were, in opposition to what Orwell regarded as the essential basis of liberty, not prepared to listen to what they did not want to hear.³³ The amateur/professional distinction remained the most obvious and antiquated target for persistent criticism and this was, understandably, attacked from within the game. Unlike the Victorian and Edwardian period, when players were unwilling to openly condemn prejudicial social and financial distinctions, players were increasingly prepared to criticise the restrictions placed upon them and the long-standing abuse of the system by amateurs. The Surrey professional, Jim Laker, would expose the rampant social prejudice within the MCC and the 'anomalies of the amateur distinction' that Rostron and others were questioning. Recalling the social differences of the 1955 Ashes tour of Australia in his

³¹ Cited in Martin Polley, *Moving the Goalposts: A History of Sport and Society in Britain since 1945*, (London: Routledge, 1998), 18-19.

³² McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*. Baker, "Olympics or Tests".

³³ George Orwell, original preface to *Animal Farm*. See: I. R. Willison, *George Orwell; Some Materials for a Bibliography*. (London, 1953).

controversial book, *Over to Me* (1960),³⁴ Laker revealed how the professionals had to refer to the manager and assistant manager on the tour as 'Mr.' Brown and 'Mr.' Eagar. The tour's financial inconsistencies were summed up by Derek Birley thus:

The professionals wryly accepted that the amateurs should now get not only expenses but compensation for loss of earnings. They had been startled on the voyage out, however, by the rumour that this compensation was to be tax-free, like their expenses. Laker commented that he had seriously thought of turning amateur, adding sardonically, 'I might have been better off'. As for Peter May [his amateur captain], in the same week that he won £500 from an Australian newspaper for scoring a century between lunch and tea, it was announced that he had turned himself into a limited company.³⁵

Rostron and Laker's criticisms of the increasingly indefensible hypocrisy of the 'amateurs' – for which Laker was banned from both the Oval and Lord's – was recognised by the MCC.³⁶ Rectifying these long-established social anomalies was not the priority however, for, to do so would have meant significant reform and the end of amateurism. Indicative of the public's increasing antipathy, hundreds of thousands of spectators were deserting the game, and in order to address this issue the MCC (once again) instigated a 'string of reports'.³⁷ One report, once again headed by Altham, went so far as to recommend a knock-out competition in order to produce the ever elusive 'brighter cricket' needed to attract supporters. The inequalities of the amateur distinction were to be maintained, however, not, according to Diana Raitt-Kerr, 'for the sake of the "old school tie", but with a sincere desire to regain and preserve the unfettered spirit of high adventure, which, since the Golden Age, had been the amateur's priceless contribution to cricket'.³⁸ The MCC, under the stewardship of Sir Walter Monckton, thus maintained a belief that

³⁴ This book was ghost-written and Laker did later apologise, not for its contents, but the manner in which they were expressed.

³⁵ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 291.

³⁶ His privileges at the Oval were restored in 1964, and Lord's in 1967.

³⁷ Half a million had deserted the game in 1956 alone. Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 289.

³⁸ Diana Raitt-Kerr and Ian Peebles, *Lord's 1946-1970*, cited in Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 291.

‘amateur’ aesthetics, rather than professionalism, competitiveness and socially progressive change, remained central to a healthy future for the sport.

Pressure is exerted

Almost a decade after the *Daily Herald* had highlighted the need for urgent reorganisation, cricket reform was high on the agenda. On the 13 of August 1956, *Political and Economic Planning* (PEP)³⁹ published its report *The Cricket Industry* in which it made proposals as to the best way for this ‘Industry’ to flourish.⁴⁰ The report noted that ‘there have been, and still are, criticisms of county cricket as a preserve of snobbery and class distinction’. Further, the MCC Committee, which was ‘often criticised for the same sort of attitude to the game as a whole’, was ‘drawn from a limited group of people, a group similar to those who form the majority of County Committees’.⁴¹ Had the PEP researched the club game in the South, it may well have drawn a similar conclusion regarding the CCC. Much of what the report suggested, such as the widening of social representation on the committees of the Counties and the MCC, would require a significant reversal of attitude and a willingness to sacrifice control by the incumbents. What the Report otherwise suggested, highlighted the anomalies that more than a century of amateur administration had produced: the ambiguity inherent in the MCC’s desire to remain a private amateur club in charge of a sport that relied upon the paying spectator for its maintenance and survival. As was to emerge during these debates, the attitudes of

³⁹ The PEP was an independent and highly influential ‘think tank’. It had previously played a significant role in the planning and implementation of the National Health Service.

⁴⁰ *The Cricket Industry*. (London: PEP, 1956).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 171.

the cricket establishment were exactly the same in 1950s Britain as they had been prior to the First World War.

The PEP Report suggested two paths were open: to preserve the game under the Victorian culture of amateurism, and leave it 'in the hands of a distinctive set of people' and rely solely upon subscriptions and the membership of clubs. Alternatively, as Dorey had feared in 1913, the MCC could be forced to 'nationalise' itself, fully professionalise, and organise cricket 'as an entertainment [which would] rely more heavily on gate and ticket money'.⁴² In a post-war era when amateur cricketers were unable to rely on private incomes (if such a situation was ever fully the case), the MCC's desire to maintain amateurism within an elite international sport had failed. It had led to shamateurism, social segregation and the frequent dismissal of the public's requirements, all of which were increasingly obvious and deemed unacceptable and divisive. The PEP report only served to exacerbate the scrutiny the MCC was under and prolong the debate instigated by Rostron the previous year.

Despite an Ashes series victory that included Laker taking nineteen Australian wickets in one match,⁴³ criticisms of the establishment refused to go away. Thus, the 1956 season became, what B. K. Castor referred to as, 'The summer of our discontent'.⁴⁴ Tellingly, *The Cricketer Annual* presented 'Southern' and 'Northern' views of the previous months' debate and the PEP Report. Castor, the then SCCC Secretary, represented a southern view, while C. G. Howard (despite being born in a salubrious district of London), as the Lancashire County Cricket Club (LCCC) Secretary, presented a northern view. Arguably, as both played as amateurs and

⁴² Ibid., 169.

⁴³ ESPN Cricinfo, "Jim Laker", <http://www.espncricinfo.com/england/content/player/16172.html> Accessed, 21/2/2013.

⁴⁴ *The Cricketer Annual*, 1956, 475

were County Club Secretaries, each represented an establishment view. Castor in particular lived up to the public school educated, cricket establishment, stereotype, using a Latin phrase “*suppressio veri et suggestio falsi*” [suppression of the truth is the suggestion of falsehood], in order to critique Rostron’s alleged lack of intimate cricket knowledge. Typically, the ‘truths’ Castor claimed were being suppressed remained unstated. Moreover, he regarded the PEP report as ‘arguable’ and ‘misleading’,⁴⁵ and defended the structure of mid-week matches, which, Birley notes, had originally been ‘designed around the mealtimes of the leisured’.⁴⁶ Whereas Howard acknowledged the importance of Test revenues, Castor naïvely regarded this income as merely ‘a very pleasant further help’ to the game’s staple revenue; ‘the subscription of the member’.⁴⁷ Although Dorey may have been excused for making a similar statement in 1913, such naivety in an increasingly commercial age must have worried the most ardent of amateurs – even C. B. Fry had acknowledged the importance of this revenue. Ultimately, as Castor thought the game to be in rude health, he chose to overlook the increasingly out-dated structure and control of the sport, and blame external factors. Falling spectatorship, he argued, was ‘symptomatic of entertainment in general not necessarily of ill-health of any particular branch’.⁴⁸

Howard’s view was certainly less reactionary. He acknowledged the criticisms raised by the PEP Report and cricket correspondents, ‘particularly those of the more thoughtful papers whose policy is generally directed towards encouraging what is good, discouraging what seems to be, and, what very well may be, less good’.⁴⁹ In

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 242

⁴⁷ *The Cricketer Annual*, 1956, 475

⁴⁸ *The Cricketer Annual*, 1956, 476

⁴⁹ Ibid.

acknowledging how the game now polarised opinion, Howard cryptically argued that the game would interest the 'numbers it deserved'. The many 'devices' present to stimulate such interest, including radio and television, would mean that the support required was imminent. He was against the expansionist policies adopted by many county clubs since the war, however, and called for less, but more entertaining, cricket.⁵⁰

Unlike the PEP Report, which was produced solely on cricket by an independent but highly influential 'think tank', the Wolfenden Report of 1960 looked at sport in general and specific issues such as facilities, coaching and organisation. Most significantly, this similarly independent report investigated amateurism and, regarding the future role of amateurism, the Report's committee were united in their 'dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs'.⁵¹ The committee were divided however as to what to do about the anomalies which 'permit, or even invite, what look to the outside world very much like hypocrisy or even plain dishonesty'.⁵² Some believed in the simple abolition of the distinction between amateur and professional, but others questioned the repercussions of such a move. Thus an important caveat was added, namely that: 'for those purposes for which the distinction itself holds, namely, the purposes of official regulations and status, and that the only way in which this could be brought about would be the influence of public opinion on the Governing Bodies'. A forlorn hope as the MCC and the CCC were most adept at turning a deaf ear to such opinions, be they from the public or from within their own membership. The majority, concerned with the potential exclusion from the Olympic Games such an action may lead to, preferred to allow individual administrations to maintain their autonomy, but it

⁵⁰ Ibid., 477

⁵¹ Central Council of Physical Recreation (Great Britain). Wolfenden Committee on Sport, *Sport and the Community* (London: Central Council of Physical Recreation, 1960), 57.

⁵² Ibid., 54.

was hoped that those in charge of these bodies would 'assert more firmly the existing regulations and insist on their being observed'.⁵³ Whichever course of action was to be taken regarding the operation of first-class cricket, it was up to those in control at the MCC to make significant changes.

The cricket authorities fail to act

It was clear that the status, social position and legitimacy of the amateur administrator and cricketer were gradually diminishing in light of long-standing challenges and incremental changes in class relationships. Nationalisation had resulted in increasing state intervention throughout society. 'From the cradle to the grave' was the mantra of the welfare state, but both government and the amateur sporting bodies were highly resistant to any state involvement in sport. Matt Taylor highlights the shared culture of the politicians and sporting administrators that would have made any such involvement unlikely: 'The social complexion of central government and the civil service – dominated by ex-public schoolboys and Oxbridge graduates schooled in the tenets of amateurism – highlighted an ingrained institutional resistance to the politicalization of sport'.⁵⁴ In this concern, McKibbin has suggested that there was reluctance on the part of the state to become involved in the debates surrounding sport, and that those who did, consciously kept any political dimension out before 1952. Regarding the period that followed, both Martin Polley

⁵³ Ibid., 55.

⁵⁴ Matt Taylor, "Class and sport in Britain, 1850-1939" in Pieter Breuker, *Brood en spelen: sport als kracht in de samenleving* (Leiden: Stichting Leidschrift], 2008), 38; Holt, *Sport and the British*, 344–346; Holt and Mason, *Sport in Britain, 1945-2000*, 146–147.

and Kevin Jefferys have demonstrated how Harold Wilson's Labour government began the process of bringing sport and politics much closer together.⁵⁵

An absence of direct political discourse may well have been the case in other amateur led sports, but within cricket it is clear that those defending the *status quo* followed the lead of their predecessors by employing unfounded analogies or suggesting that change would reflect or lead to 'Communism'. 'Most sports continued to be administered by male self-recruiting corporations',⁵⁶ and some political pressure was brought to bear. Denis Howell, the Labour Minister for Sport between 1964 and 1970, denied both the MCC (still a private club) and the National Club Cricket Association (NCCA) financial assistance as neither, in his opinion, constituted a national body. Attitudes within the cricket establishment, as reflected by the editorial policies of *Wisden*, *The Cricketer* and broadsheets such as the *Daily Telegraph*, frequently remained politically hostile, throughout the 1950s, to anything but the most superficial of changes. Men such as C. G. Howard had, belatedly, woken-up to the fact that Test Matches – the most competitive and popular level of the sport, or what he called the 'big stuff' – were what the public wanted in the decades ahead, but what did the public want from the club game in the South during this period, and were the CCC prepared to provide or allow it?

The PEP Report had discussed the competitive, structural and commercial differences in northern and southern club cricket,⁵⁷ concluding – as it appeared to reflect the social conditions within each region – that 'North or South, there seems little wrong with club cricket. On the whole it is a game for players – spectators may

⁵⁵ Polley, *Moving the Goalposts?* And Kevin Jefferys, *Sport and Politics in Modern Britain: The Road to 2012*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁵⁶ McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, 381.

⁵⁷ The Report did cite the competitive cricket organised in Sussex, of which Gilligan's league would have been a part.

come to watch if they wish'.⁵⁸ This, even among those sympathetic to non-competitive cricket, was a far from accurate conclusion. The Cricket Society, the home of cricket conservatives such as Wynne-Thomas, held a debate in November 1951, at which the motion was 'That in the opinion of this House, League Cricket should be played in the South of England'. A report of the debate, which appeared in the *Society News Letter*, is worth citing at length:

Judging by the speeches from the Platform, the arguments seemed very much in favour of the Opposition; but when the Debate was opened to the House by our Chairman (who kept an exemplary control of proceedings throughout), a surprisingly large number of people wished to speak. Mr. L. H. Phillips, taking a neutral view, gave a sound exposition on the virtues of League Cricket in the North; but several other members attacked Club Cricket and produced strong emotional grievances which appeared, like greyhounds in the slips, to have been straining upon the start for several years. The complaints were mostly those of the spectator rather than the player, and were concerned with unpunctuality, long tea intervals and too much light-heartedness generally, which was often (the speakers claimed) focussed in the direction of the Club bar.

As the *Evening Standard* had suggested, it would appear that the CCC had indeed stifled 'free speech', and those who seized the opportunity to speak provided the CCC's Bennett, who had 'come under heavy fire', with a warning: 'Discipline was sadly lacking in Club Cricket, and unless the Club Cricket Conference did something about it, League Cricket would have to "take over"'. Characteristically, Bennett made a robust defence and claimed that the CCC was not an organisation with disciplinary control, but an 'advisory council with a voluntary membership'.⁵⁹ Such a claim, if he meant advising others how they ought to act, might have been accurate, but the history of the CCC and the continued suppression of leagues suggested otherwise. The defeat of the three attempts to form leagues in 1949 had serious implications regarding the club game's health by the late 1950s. The old perennial of time keeping aside, the game, somewhat akin to golf, appeared to exist exclusively for the

⁵⁸ *The Cricket Industry*., 168.

⁵⁹ *The Cricket Society News Letter* No. 22 (1952 – No. 1), 1. The Motion was 'narrowly defeated by 9 votes to 8, several members abstaining'.

older players to socialise. This was hardly going to encourage the younger players needed to populate the first-class game and they increasingly shunned cricket for alternative pastimes. With the ECC also haemorrhaging spectators, the game's decline was becoming critical. Calls for progressive change, in the form of more leagues, increased, but, despite the deepening crisis, resistance to leagues within the CCC remained firm. It was apparent that Gilligan's league alone, despite its success, could not reverse these trends.

Competition on the agenda

Some within the CCC were coming to recognise that 'rightly or wrongly, competitive cricket on a wide scale was coming'.⁶⁰ Despite this realisation, the Conference's success in 1949 appeared to have contained any further public discussion, and *The Cricketer* noted in the months prior to the Cricket Society's 1951 debate, that 'the question of Competitive Cricket does not crop up quite so much as it did a year or so ago'.⁶¹ Indeed, as the *Evening Standard* predicted, no significant challenge was to occur for almost twenty years.⁶² The interim was punctuated by numerous attempts to establish competitions or introduce points systems throughout the region. These proposals, which included competitions throughout Surrey and the South, often received conflicting responses from the CCC, as demonstrated by the failure of the Twickenham Methodists' attempt to introduce the playing for points between themselves and other Methodist clubs.⁶³ It was, however, only the *Evening*

⁶⁰ CCC Minute Book, 26/5/1950.

⁶¹ *The Cricketer*, 9/6/1951, 238.

⁶² *Evening Standard*, 29/4/1949.

⁶³ These included a cup based upon the FDC in Croydon; The Molesey and District Knock-out Competition in Kingston; the Maidenhead Julian Cup Competition; and the Aarvold Cup in the Dorking

Standard's Table of Merit, which had been collated since 1950, that involved all the major metropolitan member clubs.

Goodall's 'Table of Merit' was a cause for consternation but limited debate. Having been approved by the CCC, the Executive Council were challenged in 1954 as to 'whether it could now accept that the Council encouraged competitive cricket'?⁶⁴ Following a denial that the CCC did so from the Chairman, one Committee member, Mr. Comben Longstaff,⁶⁵ believed that the Table of Merit, 'tended to induce a spirit of unhealthy rivalry and cut throat comments which was not in the best interests of the game'. But what Longstaff objected to the most was the challenge match between the respective winners of each section at the end of the season as 'this savoured of competitive cricket, sponsored by a paper for its own ends, and was to be depreciated'.⁶⁶ Once again letters were sent to the clubs involved requesting that they 'disassociate' themselves from the Table, but these were not universally adhered to.⁶⁷ The most significant competition in Surrey remained the FDC; a competition which led to the more socially exclusive clubs playing against 'working-class' clubs regularly for the first time since before the First World War. Compared to week-end matches, these were less time consuming, fast-paced, competitive and, most significantly, well attended – thus generating revenue.⁶⁸ The FDC, which arguably represents a parallel to the 'big stuff' alluded to by Howard, was to be an

area. While some competitions, such as the George Fuller Cup for the Blind Competition were approved for entry by Conference member clubs, others such as the Queensbury and District Sports and Social Association's competition were deemed in breach of Conference Rules. CCC Minute Book, 20/5/1954.

⁶⁴ CCC Minute Book, 3/12/1954.

⁶⁵ Longstaff, co-founder of a merchant shipping firm, was known as a strong advocate of amateur cricket. He was a CCC committee member from 1949, and owned his own private cricket ground in Surrey, which he leased to the West Surrey CC.

⁶⁶ CCC Minute Book, 6/4/1955.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 14/11/1956.

⁶⁸ The attendance for the Flora Doris Final of 1954 was 'estimated at 4000 – 5000'. SACC Minute Book, 29/9/1954.

almost solitary competitive success story within Surrey club cricket. All formats of the game in Surrey, including SCCC's poorly attended matches at Guildford, reflected the apparent malaise of a dull and poorly attended sport where even the county clubs were struggling to survive financially or even field a team.

By 1961 the SCCC was in some financial difficulties. Match receipts had dropped from £21,000 in 1959 to only £10,000 in 1960. The retirement of the professionals, Bedser, Fletcher and Clark, allied with the termination of Williams' contract, meant that the professional staff would be reduced by four. In order to keep wages off the ledger sheet, the committee stressed 'the necessity of obtaining more amateur players'.⁶⁹ These parochial concerns were soon redundant, following the drawn-out abolition of the amateur/professional distinction. Concerted pressure to do away with the 'hypocrisy that still festooned the game' from the Press and disgruntled ex-professionals finally prompted action from the MCC in 1962.⁷⁰ The (amateur dominated) Monkton committee having fudged the issue in 1959 the MCC's Advisory County Cricket Committee, despite calls for yet more deliberation from the counties, finally abolished what the 'decidedly unrevolutionary' *Daily Telegraph* called 'a form of legalised deceit'.⁷¹

And yet, even after the abolition of this distinction, young players were hard to come by. A match between the Surrey Second XI and the Sussex Second XI, to be played at Cranleigh, was embarrassingly cancelled in 1967 as Sussex could not raise a side of eleven players.⁷² If this was the state of affairs at the county clubs, it is no surprise that other clubs, large and small, struggled to find young players and had to rely

⁶⁹ SCCC Minute Book, 19/7/1961. SHC Ref: 2042/1/13

⁷⁰ Birley, *A Social History*, 290.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 291-292.

⁷² A notice on the pavilion stated: 'The three-day match to be held on the cricket common has been cancelled owing to the fact that Sussex C.C.C. could not raise a side of 11 players'. *Surrey Advertiser*, 29/7/1967.

upon their members and ground collections to survive. Although the MCC chose to ignore public opinion, the wishes of the spectators, even at village club level, were taken seriously. Within a year of leaving the l'Anson Cup, Tilford CC had gone into debt (due, in part, to longer journeys for away matches) and interest in the club within the village had declined.⁷³ In the hope that it would revive public interest, it was unanimously agreed to apply for re-admission to the l'Anson Cup in 1950. A lack of meaningful competition was not the only reason for falling attendances and associated incomes in club cricket, however. Various theories were being espoused throughout the period as to why not only spectators, but players, especially younger players, were abandoning the game in their thousands.

Giving the public what they want?

The Wolfenden Report made no specific recommendations with regard to the club game (the CCC was not one of the controlling bodies consulted), but spectators were staying away from both non-competitive club cricket in Surrey and the SCCC's matches played at the Oval and Guildford. Lord Cobham had spoken to the CCC AGM as early as 1955 about the 'counter attractions' which the game faced, and that the game needed to be made 'more attractive' to maintain the interest of the young.⁷⁴ A 'return' to the mythologised brighter cricket of old, rather than the introduction of competitive cricket or older players retirement, was the antidote for many at the MCC, the Conference and beyond. Such a point-of-view was evident in the editorial stance of the *Surrey Advertiser*, which bemoaned the 'lost amateur flourish',⁷⁵ and

⁷³ *Farnham Herald*, 14/1/1949.

⁷⁴ CCC Minute Book, 25/2/1955.

⁷⁵ *Surrey Advertiser*, 9/6/1962.

the paper published letters citing ‘stone-walling’⁷⁶ tactics as one reason for the poor attendance at successive Guildford Cricket Festivals. This culminated in 1960 with ‘one of the worst ever’ gates – a derisory 4,214 people over seven consecutive days – and despite appeals from the Mayor of Guildford, it led to the temporary withdrawal of SCCC fixtures from Guildford in 1964.⁷⁷ These figures were in contrast to the FDC. For whereas ‘the growing lack of spectators at cricket matches at all levels’ was bemoaned, the FDC final, which often attracted upwards of 5,000 spectators, was regarded as one of the ‘best remedies’.⁷⁸ The estimated attendances of 6,000 to watch the comedian Harry Secombe and the Australian captain Ritchie Benaud et al, and 4,000 to watch the cast of the television series *Z Cars* play pro/celebrity cricket at Cranleigh in 1960 and 1963 respectively would suggest another.⁷⁹ It is clear that competitive cricket and television personalities were the ‘big stuff’ the public wanted. Conversely, Peter Beagley of the Farncombe CC claimed it was just such a combination of ‘TV and cars’ that was also affecting club cricket. Cricket, he argued, was losing its broader appeal and was ‘becoming more and more something just for the players, the club’s faithful followers, and the few genuine cricket enthusiasts’.⁸⁰

If speeches at cricket club dinners are a guide, there was always some alternative attraction threatening the game.⁸¹ An 80% rise in real wages between 1950 and 1970 placed previously unattainable luxury goods and alternative attractions within

⁷⁶ Ibid., 9/7/1960.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 2/7/1960 and 24/4/1964.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 27/4/1963.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 9/7/1960 and 6/7/1963.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 29/10/1960.

⁸¹ Cycling was cited as a popular alternative to cricket in Surrey in 1898. *Surrey and Hants News and Guildford Times*, 19/11/1898.

reach.⁸² This increased affluence, especially prevalent within the mixed economy of the South,⁸³ soon began to impact upon the popularity of all sports and how people spent their Saturday afternoons. In 1960 a Gallup poll recorded that sport was well down the list of activities, with 'shopping', 'jobs around the house or garden' and 'worked' occupying the top three activities. Significantly, when sport did feature, 'watched BBC TV *Grandstand*' came fourth.⁸⁴ It was clear, as identified by Beagley, that television and private transport was having a detrimental effect.

The problems of 'TV and cars' were exacerbated by the recently introduced breathalyser which the Thames Ditton club identified as 'something that will affect club cricket in the future'.⁸⁵ Not all clubs were struggling of course, and those, like Tilford, which maintained links with the community did best in what was increasingly 'suburbanised' Surrey.⁸⁶ The metropolitan club game, as Holt suggests regarding suburban golf clubs, did little to broaden social appeal unless motivated by financial concerns.⁸⁷ As the Cricket Society debate suggested, club cricket was primarily a 'boutique' pastime for small sections of the middle-classes to interact and socialise. The middle-classes' exodus to rural Surrey had continued unabated and those who populated such clubs were increasingly present in rural villages and their cricket clubs. The role that sports clubs in 'suburban' Surrey performed for the commuting middle-classes was highlighted by Connell in *The End of Tradition: County Life in*

⁸² Thomas William Heyck, *The Peoples of the British Isles: A New History. Volume III: 1870 to present*, (Lyceum Books, 2008), 225.

⁸³ P. W. Daniels, "The Geography of Economic Change", Addison and Jones (eds), *A Companion to Contemporary Britain: 1939-2000*, 203-225.

⁸⁴ Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton, *An Affluent Society?: Britain's Post-War 'Golden Age' Revisited*, (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2004), 86.

⁸⁵ Thames Ditton Cricket Club, Committee meeting, minutes and business folder, October 1957 to 1969, 26/9/1968. It was also argued that the drinks trade had 'slumped' in Surrey following the introduction of the breathalyser. *Surrey Comet*, 11/10/1967.

⁸⁶ The Farncombe CC had a very active supporters club in the early 1960s.

⁸⁷ Richard Holt, "Golf and the English Suburb: Class and Gender in a London Club, C.1890-C.1960," *The Sports Historian* 18, no. 1 (1998): 76-89.

Central Surrey (1978) and the Phals' study *Managers and Their Wives* (1971). Connell cited the disparity in subscription rates for the Horsley Sports and Social Club, which charged full membership fees of £5.50 for cricket, £7.50 for tennis and £3.50 for hockey in 1971.⁸⁸ If the rates are any guide, tennis was the most exclusive 'section' of the club, but the purpose of membership was set out by a respondent to the Phals' study, who noted that: 'people do not engage in sport as an exercise in competitive athleticism but as an occasion for social intercourse'.⁸⁹

As witnessed from the late 1920s in villages such as Cranleigh, the new middle-class migrants were monopolising the housing stock, as well as dominating the sports clubs. Inflationary land costs, which had been an issue before 1914,⁹⁰ were beginning to affect the whole county, but, in the more populous west of Surrey, the issue was causing broader problems. What the *Surrey Advertiser* described as a "Klondike" Gold Rush for land in West Surrey⁹¹ had led to a significant rise in house prices.⁹² The working-classes, be they indigenous or not, were becoming an increasingly rare breed in certain parts of Surrey, and so acute was the problem, the West Surrey Committee of the Regional Board for Industry were forced to raise the issue of a 'shortage of labour' in the county.⁹³ As they had since the nineteenth-century, metropolitan institutions were establishing facilities in rural areas. These included leisure facilities, such as the Charing Cross Hospital Medical School Sports Ground, in the small picturesque village of Stoke d'Abernon, which was opened in 1960 with a match played against the Lord's Taverners.⁹⁴ Whereas some parts of

⁸⁸ Connell, *The End of Tradition*, 134.

⁸⁹ Cited in Connell, *The End of Tradition*, 137.

⁹⁰ F. E. Green, *The Surrey Hills*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1915), 193.

⁹¹ *Surrey Advertiser*, 20/2/1960

⁹² *Surrey Advertiser*, 18/6/1960

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 28/5/1960

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 14/5/1960.

Surrey had retained trace elements of traditional rural life, villages such as Stoke d'Abernon and East Horsley were now part of a 'large, high-status residential area very dependent on central-London employment'.⁹⁵ This 'glorified suburbia', a forester noted, was 'full of people playing at living in the country', and the migrants to these villages knew very well that they were contributing towards the demise of traditional village life; with one knowingly stating that: 'you can't have a stockbroker suburb and call it a village'.⁹⁶

Ultimately, this demographic change led to much ill-feeling between the old and new residents upon wealth/class lines (only the wealthy house owners could afford to stay) and the 1960s was a period where the loss of 'locals' and a village's 'character' was publicly bemoaned.⁹⁷ The dominance of the middle-classes now permeated all of Surrey life and certain sports represented obvious examples. Specific 'class clubs', regulated by high levels of subscription or membership, had developed across a variety of sports. Connell observed that 'following the demise of the West Clandon Football Club in the early 1970s the players did not then join other sports clubs in the village'. Examples such as this, and the elitist hierarchy of much metropolitan and 'suburban' cricket, suggest, as Connell concludes, that 'sport was scarcely a mediator between the classes'.⁹⁸ Compared to 'village' or 'working-mens' clubs, the middle-class clubs, with the best grounds and finances, were less inclined to feel the same financial pressure exerted by increasing local authority rates. Apart from the lucky few who obtained help from the National Playing Fields Association,⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Connell, *The End of Tradition*, 205.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁹⁷ *Surrey Advertiser*, 12/5/1962.

⁹⁸ Connell, *The End of Tradition*, 138.

⁹⁹ Cobham CC had received a grant. *Surrey Advertiser*, 22/12/1962.

the number of clubs struggling to pay these growing expenses increased.¹⁰⁰ By 1964, the situation was becoming so serious that Godalming Borough Council was being accused of 'killing sport' and letters asking 'Is village cricket dying?' were published in the *Surrey Advertiser*.¹⁰¹

Further research as to whether the scales were justly held is required; there is evidence, albeit undeveloped, that some clubs were treated more equally than others after World War Two. Esher CC, a club with no financial problems and possessing a President on the SCCC Committee, received a £1,000 grant from Esher Urban Council towards a new pavilion in 1967. This occurred despite the Council acknowledging 'the cricket club's [significant] resources',¹⁰² and having stated, in 1964, that it would only help sports clubs if they were 'private, local and in need'.¹⁰³ The opposite end of this spectrum – if receiving council grants at all – was Worplesdon Parish Council's contribution of £40 to Wood Street (village) CC for ground maintenance.¹⁰⁴ An incredible disparity in affluence existed at this time, with some clubs, such as Chessington, able to give Mickey Stewart a £300 benefit in 1966,¹⁰⁵ and Oatlands Park CC, who played against the likes of MCC, Stoics and both Oxford and Cambridge Universities, made £284 profit in 1969.¹⁰⁶ Other clubs – even large concerns such as the Leatherhead and Guildford CCs – had annual struggles to survive, while the Godalming Red Cross CC folded.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 10/2/1962, 20/4/1963, 7/3/1964, 30/1/1965.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 11/4/1964 and 18/4/1964.

¹⁰² Ibid., 24/6/1967.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 10/10/1964.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 2/10/1970.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 26/1/1966.

¹⁰⁶ *Surrey Comet*, 24/1/1969.

¹⁰⁷ *Surrey Advertiser*, 28/3/1964.

Sociability or competition?

The embrace of commercialism by senior clubs throughout the South was, no doubt, needed in order to remain viable, and yet, such moves were frequently criticised by the old guard and, as early as 1953, such changes were being decried in *The Cricketer*. Yet, like those who defended the MCC from the criticisms discussed earlier, those unhappy with modernisation provided scant detail of their specific concerns. In a letter entitled 'Club Cricket and Commercialism', 'B. Relf of Herts.', conceded that 'the big London clubs must have funds to keep their grounds going' and that 'the days when the members used to put their hands in their pockets to pay for improvements and other amenities' were gone. And yet, Relf failed to propose any alternative, choosing to merely state his dislike of ever more elaborate scoreboards, stating: 'we used to do very well without such things before the war'.¹⁰⁸ Embracing licenced bars, football pools and other revenue raising activities, including the emulation of the northern leagues 'commercialism', by charging admission or making collections during matches, was simply not enough to reverse the on-going deterioration of club cricket.¹⁰⁹

Indeed, as many of the elite clubs were financially sound, it was the lack of meaningful competition that appears central to any decline. The game was either haemorrhaging players or failing to attract them in the first place. Faced with these problems, clubs which could not boast the best facilities and large supporters' clubs moved away from the exclusionary stance of high subscription rates and the abolition of prizes taken between the wars. Bramley CC re-introduce awards (in the form of caps), in an attempt to attract younger players, while Chertsey CC halved

¹⁰⁸ *The Cricketer*, 11/7/1953, 301.

¹⁰⁹ Despite concerns as to the validity of such actions, the Cranleigh CC had presented a Mr. Jim Chuter, who had collected over £124 at home matches during the 1947 season, with 'a framed photograph of himself with the ground collecting box'. *Surrey Advertiser*, 7/4/1948.

their subscription from two guineas to one.¹¹⁰ This, by the 1960s, was miserably insufficient bait to attract what was an affluent, mobile and independent youth.¹¹¹ National service notwithstanding, the young appeared ready to embrace cricket, but not on the non-competitive terms established during the Edwardian era. Sportsmen across Surrey and the South of England had been able to compete in leagues in almost every other sport imaginable for decades with the exception of the middle-class/amateur dominated sports, rugby union, hockey, the particularly suburban sports of golf, tennis and, of course, cricket.¹¹² The inability of cricketers – of all classes – to play the game competitively was being blocked by an older generation unwilling to relinquish control or submit to change. This unwillingness was slowly and drastically affecting the popularity of the game.

The popularity of the FDC indicated not only the spectator's desire for meaningful competition, but also the unwillingness of some members of the older generation to relinquish their grip on the game. The SACC, an organisation without the social or ideological baggage of the CCC, embodied the progressive aims of the age and, in order to reinvigorate the game in Surrey, it was well prepared to challenge the 'old guard'. Having stood up to the CCC on the issue of the FDC in 1950,¹¹³ it was clear that the SACC genuinely had the game and the younger players' future interests at heart, but 'the old bogey'; the CCC and entrenched attitudes within club committees remained significant obstacles.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 19/3/1949 and 24/12/1960.

¹¹¹ A lack of encouragement aside, it is likely that many young men would have preferred a weekend in Brighton to a semi-idle afternoon of 'friendly' cricket with a group of older men. Bill Osgerby, "Well, it's Saturday night an' I just got paid': Youth, consumerism and hegemony in post-war Britain.", *Contemporary Record*, Volume 6, Issue 2, 1992.

¹¹² These included: The Cygnet League (Badminton); The Jack Nihell Cup (snooker); and the West Surrey Fencing League.

¹¹³ This was a decision that the CCC admitted was 'invidious to any future application of ... Rule [4]'. CCC Minute Book, 4/11/1964.

Although the FDC had acted as the blueprint for a number of knock-out competitions established throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, no 'senior' leagues emerged.¹¹⁴ Interest in the FDC's sister competition (for those clubs knocked out in the FDC's first round), The Admiral Dunlop Cup, was apparently falling off and a plan to change the format to a six-a-side competition was suggested. However, following the vote, in which the proposal was heavily defeated, the SACC secretary, when pressed on the matter, admitted 'that it was about half a dozen of the bigger clubs' who had advocated the change.¹¹⁵ Clearly, the larger clubs were coming to recognise the value of competition, but it needed to be to their own advantage and on their terms.

Thus, by the beginning of the 1960s, further calls for competitive cricket were coming from ex-professionals, such as Alec Bedser, club captains and in intermittent letters to *The Cricketer*. Bedser, at the l'Anson Cricket League's diamond anniversary dinner in 1960, had expressed his desire to see 'more competition in club cricket'.¹¹⁶ That same year, the executive committee of the CCC were asked if they were aware of 'the growing desire among Conference clubs for competitive cricket'.¹¹⁷ The following meeting heard the Chairman report on the subject, and a telling confrontation at a member club's dinner. The chairman said he had witnessed Keith Walker, the Malden Wanderers captain, state that 'league cricket was inevitable' in his speech, only for it to be 'immediately rebuffed in the speech of the club's Chairman, who spoke against the format'.¹¹⁸ As Norman Parks recalls, the pre-war generation were simply not prepared to allow the formation of leagues.¹¹⁹ By the

¹¹⁴ For example 'The Beckenham C.C. Invitation Knock-out Competition' was established in 1963. *The Cricketer*, 10/5/1963, 24.

¹¹⁵ *Surrey Advertiser*, 26/3/1966.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 22/10/1960.

¹¹⁷ CCC Minute Book, 30/9/1960.

¹¹⁸ *Malden Wanderers Cricket Club: 1879 – 1979*, Malden Cricket Club, 1979, 59. CCC Minute Book, 27/10/1960.

¹¹⁹ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part Two, 28:04.

1960s, letters to *The Cricketer* were often similarly explicit. One indignant correspondent, a D. G. Crossley of Essex, accused non-competitive cricket of creating, not the self-sacrificing team player, but the ‘conceited little individualist’ who, without any concrete results to boast of, brags ‘of his own personal success’. He saw progress elsewhere in the MCC’s instigation of the Gillette Cup competition and the abolition of the amateur professional distinction but, he concluded:

It has taken many season (sic) for the ‘old school tie’ at the headquarters of first-class cricket to realise what the public want. And the sooner the ‘brass hats’ of the Club Cricket Conference realise it too the better it will be for everyone. How on earth can a cricket body foster interest in the sport when league cricket is condemned?¹²⁰

Despite such an emphatic display of the strong feelings surrounding the issue, *The Cricketer* largely maintained an editorial bias towards the cricket played by, and the opinions of, the elite clubs and the MCC. The reports of the friendly matches, or what Mr. P. G. Thompson regarded as ‘little more than social gatherings’, played by socially exclusive clubs such as I Zingari and The Arabs, took space away from ‘**REAL** cricket’ in *The Cricketer*.¹²¹ This bias clearly had its social and historical antecedents, but questions regarding the lack of competition in club cricket were now reaching a crescendo. The ‘brass hats’ at the CCC were very quick to respond to Crossley’s accusations the following month, disingenuously claiming, despite numerous applications to establish competitions and their own internal doubts, that there was no ‘real demand for competitive cricket from their 2,400-odd member clubs’. Langford gave full coverage of their position in *The Cricketer* and cited E.A.C. Thompson’s regret in establishing an amateur football league at the turn of the century, which ‘he considered had a bad influence on the game’.¹²² Langford did note that there were clubs, such as Malden Wanderers, who desired a move away from

¹²⁰ *The Cricketer*, 30/8/1963, 26.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 10/5/1963, 21. The accusation that *The Cricketer* was ‘too exclusive’ was made explicitly in 1967. *Ibid.*, 16/6/1967, 22.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 13/9/1963, 20.

the evils of late starts and prolonged lunch and tea intervals, but he did not explain why the opinion of one man, based upon an experience relating to a different sport prior to the First World War, was relevant to how club cricket ought to be played in the 1960s. Crucially, as in 1949, the question remained as to who was going to make a concerted effort to enforce such a significant change among the elite clubs. And would it be necessary for these clubs involved, as the *Evening Standard* had previously suggested, to resign from the CCC to achieve such an aim?

When Raman met Norman

1966 was to be the pivotal year. The proposed University of Surrey and the influx and effect, of '1000 extra sportsmen ... whose main aim is to dominate the sports leagues of the area and perhaps to form a few leagues of their own' was high on the sporting agenda in west Surrey.¹²³ All sports, but cricket in particular, and specific cricket clubs such as Oatlands Park, 'famous for its social activities',¹²⁴ were increasingly affected by the repercussions of the breathalyser and, according to one player of the time, the birth control pill.¹²⁵ Women now had greater power within their relationships and this had a profound effect on the Victorian tradition of 'seeing the opposition off the ground'. Such was the change in this regard by 1967, Guildford Councillor and former Chairman and Director of Guildford City Football Club, Alderman H. 'Vic' Tidy, speaking at the Guildford Sports Advisory Council's first AGM, said that 'there are too many men pushing baskets for their wives, when they

¹²³ *Surrey Advertiser*, 1/1/66.

¹²⁴ *The Cricketer*, 9/8/1952, 360.

¹²⁵ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part One, 14:12.

should be out, busy upholding sports in the area'.¹²⁶ Despite such concerns, P. G. Thompson may well have had a point. The nature of these and other 'elite' club matches, if speeches at club dinners are any indication, was, indeed, centred upon the intra-class sociability highlighted by McKibbin.¹²⁷ The importance of this is exemplified by an eight day tour of Devon by a selection of Surrey club cricketers in 1968. Re-christened 'Surrey Gentlemen', all of those selected from a variety of clubs were 'especially picked for both their cricket and their social talents'.¹²⁸ This on and off-field aspect of the club game was to be used as a defence against those advocating a move towards league cricket, but it only served to highlight the schizophrenic nature of club cricket at this time.

The clubs, as did the CCC, remained on the horn of a dilemma. Did they exist as social clubs or as a means for the promotion of sporting excellence and the game in general? The Ashes debacle of the late 1940s had led to a debate around what club cricket's role was in relation to producing talented players for the ECC and Test cricket. By 1956 the PEP Report uncritically regarded southern cricket and the clubs therein, as simply 'an outlet for people who wish to play the game'.¹²⁹ By 1966 nothing had changed, except perhaps a further reduction in the game's popularity. That the antiquated concerns of E. A. C. Thompson were deemed relevant indicated as much. Few would have realised it, but change was on the horizon and the middle-class culture that had dominated club cricket in Surrey for fifty years was to be challenged by two men who were, crucially, well known and accepted in Surrey club cricket. Whereas Gilligan had been a famous Test and County cricketer, Raman

¹²⁶ *Surrey Advertiser*, 16/12/67. Although fighting a losing battle Tidy was still writing letters on this issue in 1970.

¹²⁷ Many speeches (and replies) at club dinners were little more than 'mutual appreciation societies'. *Surrey Comet*, 29/1/1966, 5/2/1966 and 29/3/1967.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 13/3/1968.

¹²⁹ PEP, *The Cricket Industry*, 168.

Subba Row and Norman Parks, despite Subba Row's Test and County career, were *bona fide* club cricketers. As such, it would appear they were able to persuade a number of clubs to attend a preliminary meeting to discuss the formation of a cricket league. Their motives for doing so were not revolutionary or even, strictly speaking, progressive for this action was stirred, in part, by a number of fears.

Coincidentally sitting together at the Old Mid-Whitgiftians cricket dinner in 1966, Parks and Subba Row discovered that they had simultaneously, but separately, spoken to other people about establishing a cricket league in Surrey. Rumours that a 'northern' entrepreneur or consortium was planning to establish a league involving London and Surrey cricket clubs were in circulation and both men, although desirous of more competitive club cricket, thought this unacceptable. A further, and older, fear, naturally, concerned a lack of younger cricketers. These players were, more often than not, playing other sports in leagues, and Parks recalls that fears that they would continue to 'drift away' from the game were very real.¹³⁰ Parks' concern, despite R. H. Attwell noting at the Cranleigh CC AGM in 1962 'that the average age of the two teams is dangerously high and that we need young players', was not always recognised by the older cricketers, nor many of the administrators.¹³¹ As Parks recalls, 'the older established player just didn't want league cricket under any circumstances'.¹³² Age was, according to Parks, one of the main reasons why some people were against the proposal, as '... all the people who were against us were the guys that had played regular club cricket before the war'.¹³³

¹³⁰ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part One, 28:20.

¹³¹ Agenda of 97th Cranleigh CC AGM, 8/3/1962.

¹³² Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part Two, 13:56.

¹³³ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part Two, 28:01.

The break created by World War Two had (unsurprisingly) caused a rift in attitudes, or values, between the older and younger cricket generations. As in 1949, the 1966 campaign for league cricket came up against a generation who, for the most part, had only known a 'friendly' version of the game and were imbued with the moralistic dogma of amateurism promoted by the MCC/CCC. What is more, many of the same men, such as Frank Dolman, were still in charge at the Conference.¹³⁴ But although certain members of the 'pre-war' group were keen to see competitive cricket, or may have been philosophical about change, Parks is quick to point out that men such as Garland Wells and Fender in Surrey and Gilligan in Sussex, who had been at the forefront of their respective 1949 campaigns, were not club cricketers. Despite their credentials, these men may have been regarded as outsiders and they may not have felt the same level of club loyalty, or fear the changes (loss of fixtures/sociability) that league cricket may have removed from the clubs.

Choosing sides

Subba Row offered to host a meeting and asked Parks to discuss the meeting among six captains from the 'best' sides from the metropolitan area of Surrey to identify which clubs to invite.¹³⁵ The meeting, chaired by Subba Row, at the Old Mid-Whitgiftians pavilion a week later, was attended by 21 clubs, but things 'weren't going particularly well'¹³⁶ for Subba Row and Park's scheme until a man called Teddy

¹³⁴ Certainly Frank Dolman had been on the Conference's Committee since at least 1930 and remained so in 1966. Previously, H. G. Dorman had been an Executive Council member from 1916 to 1948.

¹³⁵ Subba Row and Parks picked out the best 20-25 clubs in the metropolitan area of Surrey for the meeting. These clubs included: Addiscombe, Banstead, Bank of England, Barclays Bank, Cheam, B.B.C., Malden Wanderers, Old Whitgiftians, Spencer, Streatham, East Molesley, Westminster Bank, Beddington, Dulwich, Mitcham, Old Emmanuel, Esher, Epsom, Purley and Wimbledon.

¹³⁶ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part Two, 15:22.

Hart spoke up. Hart, the President of Wimbledon CC, according to Parks, 'went mad'.¹³⁷ He stood up, attacked both Subba Row and Parks personally and then 'stormed down the aisle'¹³⁸ with his captain, Bill Burton, behind him.¹³⁹ Sensing a window of opportunity, Subba Row then called the meeting to a halt for a 'few beers, [to] talk about what we've been [discussing], come back and then we'll have a vote'.¹⁴⁰ According to Peter Wreford, the Esher CC captain: 'Of the club captains present those voting in favour of considering setting up such a league outvoted those who were against by more than three to one and it was agreed that all the clubs should refer to their committees to see if they wished to participate in a league'.¹⁴¹

Hart's personal attack reflected the defensive position that his generation had occupied for decades, and it appears to have galvanised most of those present to proceed with the endeavour. By 1966, the case for not having an 'official' cricket league in Surrey was almost indefensible – even sightings of the Surrey 'puma' were less elusive –¹⁴² and although many of the younger captains had reservations, pockets of support or enquiries about league cricket were emerging from all over the county. Regardless of the merits and demand for league cricket, Parks believes that Hart's attack only served to speed up the introduction of leagues, 'by at least a year'.¹⁴³ And so, following the unanimous vote to proceed, a committee was elected, consisting of Subba Row as Chairman, John Cope, of Malden Wanderers as

¹³⁷ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part Two, 15:48.

¹³⁸ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part Two, 5:56.

¹³⁹ Burton recalled: 'We were enjoying our cricket as it was; [and] we considered it to be competitive. It sounds snobbish, but we enjoyed playing the sides that we were playing. We didn't want to drop them to fit in with other sides that were in this new league'. Stephen Chalke, *The Wimbledon Club 1854 - 2004: a Sporting Scrapbook* (London: The Wimbledon Club, 2004), 114.

¹⁴⁰ The club representatives present voted, despite reservations, in favour of the proposal. It requires pointing out that Subba Row and Parks have not reported just how many beers were consumed – or who was buying. Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part Two, 16:08.

¹⁴¹ Letter from Peter Wreford to Cranleigh CC, 30/9/1966. Black folder of miscellaneous documents, Cranleigh CC.

¹⁴² *Surrey Advertiser*, 30/8/1966.

¹⁴³ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part Two, 17:20.

Secretary, Alan Richards of Purley CC organized fixtures, Nick Busk of Cheam CC was Press Secretary, Fred Munro of Epsom CC acted as Treasurer and Vic Hucknall of Mitcham CC and Parks of Beddington and the SCCC 2nd XI, who had also played for Wanderers, Stoics and ironically the CCC, assumed 'free roles' and contributed where and when required. A 'pretty intense'¹⁴⁴ two years ensued for the committee members as their 'defensive measure'¹⁴⁵ to form a league on their own terms, got under way. The group's aims were to increase spectator interest and numbers; 'to inject a note of urgency into the game; to attract young players; and to improve the standard of play'.¹⁴⁶

Once the decision to go ahead with the league had been made, one of the very first meetings in 1966 was, naturally, with the CCC in the form of their President, Frank Dolman, and the then Secretary, Major Sidney Woods. Subba Row and Parks revealed that they planned to start straight away with a league of three divisions with promotion and relegation. Within seconds of hearing this, Woods emphatically stated that there would not be any league cricket in London 'except over my dead body'.¹⁴⁷ Dolman, who had previously 'expressed the view that there was a more general desire for club cricket to be played on competitive lines', felt the same way, albeit in a less melodramatic manner.¹⁴⁸ Subba Row and Parks, realising that there was no point in continuing, called the meeting to an end. 'Bugger the Conference',¹⁴⁹ thought the pair, but this outright and immediate rejection of the proposal by the CCC's

¹⁴⁴ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part Two, 18:35.

¹⁴⁵ Raman Subba Row interview, 21/9/2009, Part Two, 2:08; Raman Subba Row and Norman Parks interview, 34:48.

¹⁴⁶ *Surrey Advertiser*, 5/11/1966.

¹⁴⁷ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part One, 25:54.

¹⁴⁸ CCC Minute Book, 12/10/1966.

¹⁴⁹ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part One, 25:23.

representatives did mean that the league committee now had to refine and reduce the ambition of their plans.

The CCC was not alone in their opposition to the proposal. Following the publication of an article by Subba Row explaining the rationale behind the proposed league and its aims in *The Cricketer*, a number of clubs, led by Peter Wreford, formed what became known as the 'Esher Group'.¹⁵⁰ Wreford, along with the Honor Oak CC, called a meeting in December 1966 with the aim of protecting 'clubs [from] losing fixtures through the formation of any league'.¹⁵¹ This meeting was attended by '70 people representing nearly 40 clubs from Berkshire, Kent, Middlesex, Surrey and Sussex' and it was agreed, after Sidney Woods had informed the meeting that 'the formation of such Leagues contravenes the Conference Rule No. 4', to oppose the proposal. The "Esher" Committee had formulated three, seemingly non-negotiable, recommendations:

- (a) No approval be given to the Surrey Cricket Clubs' Championship Association nor any amendment of Rule be made to accommodate it.
- (b) The C.C.C. Fixture List be enlarged and divided into two grades. The first to include two day full representative matches. The second to include at least 3 matches against clubs in each of the Counties covered by the Conference. In the case of Surrey, the C.C.C. should fill the gap left by the discontinuance of Club and Ground matches.
- (c) The Selection and Match Committee should consist largely of players currently playing regularly, and have powers to co-opt when selecting teams for second grade matches. The Council and the Committee should maintain a close liaison with County Committees and, to meet the need to supply young players to the County, C.C.C. representative XIs should consist of players likely to come within that category.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ *The Cricketer*, December 1966, 30.

¹⁵¹ *Surrey Comet*, 23/12/1966. His memorandum was sent to all the clubs that Esher CC normally played as well as the clubs present at the meeting who appeared to object to the introduction of league cricket. These were: Reigate Priory, Southgate, Cobham, Bank of England, Wimbledon, Ashted, Hampstead, Leatherhead, Otlands Park, Thames Ditton, B.B.C., Metropolitan Police, Old Citizens, Guildford and Horsham. Letter from Peter Wreford to Cranleigh CC, November 1966. Black folder of miscellaneous documents, Cranleigh CC.

¹⁵² CCC Minute Book, 26/1/1967.

The Esher group's rationale for these recommendations was that their 40 clubs – despite representing five counties and a tiny proportion of the CCC's 2,400 clubs – outweighed the 16 of the SCC who, according to Wreford, did not represent broader opinion. Wreford, in his own article in *The Cricketer*, also refuted Subba Row's claims that competitive cricket would produce brighter cricket, attract youngsters to the game and help county cricket. He maintained that:

Personally I have never played in a non-competitive club cricket match and surely the great charm of London club cricket is that whilst it is wholly competitive it is free of the entanglements of 'pot or points hunting' and all the ancillary problems inherent in that particular type of cricket.¹⁵³

Wreford, like a large number of critics before him, implied rather than explained the 'problems' with competitive cricket. If previous critics are a guide, Wreford may well have been referring to the cheating, aggression, gambling and commercialism associated with league cricket since The Rev. R. S. Holmes in the nineteenth-century.¹⁵⁴

Follow the leader or greater hypocrisy?

Whereas Holmes' concerns had been consigned to the past by the MCC, who had belatedly accepted full professionalism, and embraced commercialism and cup competition, the men at the top of the CCC and senior member clubs remained resolutely opposed to change. However, the Conference was not entirely united in their opposition, especially in light of increasingly hypocritical decisions. Many had, of course, supported the concept for decades, but an increasing number who were approaching retirement (albeit at the less recognised clubs), accepted that the style

¹⁵³ *The Cricketer Spring Annual 1967*, 110.

¹⁵⁴ *Cricketer*, 30/8/1894, 354. Subba Row and Parks looking back regard Wreford's actions as somewhat selfish, claiming that he was not keen on their league as he would rather have come up with the idea himself. Raman Subba Row and Norman Parks interview, 18/11/2009,

of cricket they had played belonged to a by-gone era. Sunbury CC's president, Frank Steffens, and secretary, Councillor Geoffrey Kaye, upon their retirement in 1967, noted that it was 'time for a change'.¹⁵⁵ And Kaye, on being persuaded to come out of retirement for the clubs entry of the SCC and its 30th anniversary, also noted that the SCC would bring in extra supporters.¹⁵⁶ The Mitcham CC Year Book of 1967 echoed these sentiments, but emphatically suggested that the game had stagnated long enough. One of the strongest supporters of league cricket, the club was aware of the responsibility it had towards its own members, the club's future success, and even the game's survival:

Cricket – all standards of it – has been struggling against competition from other sources for a long time. Spectators have fallen off and the youngsters have been attracted to other pursuits of leisure. ... We MUST take a more realistic view. We MUST maintain a high standard of play, we MUST ensure a steady supply of youngsters into our club – and at a fee they can afford. To ignore these facts would be a gross dereliction of duty to a very ancient club. And we feel that the introduction of this championship competition will give the game a much needed boost.¹⁵⁷

Mitcham and the other clubs supporting the new competition knew they had a fight on their hands, despite the original three-division plan being reduced to one. Plenty of clubs were still interested in the project and had agreed to join, but the invisible hand of the CCC meant that many of them, who said that they would join, would only join with the Conference's blessing. True to form, the CCC, as they had in Essex and Sussex in 1949, let it be known that joining a league would mean being expelled from the Conference. Such an expulsion, for many clubs, would be tantamount to a self-imposed exile from the cricket elite and fixtures at some of the best grounds in

¹⁵⁵ *Surrey Comet*, 4/11/1967.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 30/12/1967.

¹⁵⁷ *The Cricketer*, 2/6/1967, 30.

the South-East that went with them. Unsurprisingly, this meant that a small number of the original clubs withdrew from the proposed league.¹⁵⁸

Despite its continued opposition to league cricket, the CCC had been considering alternative ways of re-introducing 'brighter cricket'. In 1965, Ray Smith Publicity Services had suggested a competition between Conference member clubs for a 'Fast Scoring Table' with the winners receiving £500, £250 and £100 towards ground improvements. At the same meeting, the Conference's Inter-County Tournament was also discussed, with Smith stating that he believed the knock-out competition would have no problem attracting sponsorship and possibly even television coverage.¹⁵⁹ Despite a long history of anti-commercial rhetoric, both competitions were approved at the following meeting, but after the Inter-County Competition had failed to attract a sponsor it was passed over for the 1966 season. It is unclear whether the fast-scoring table was ever collated, but the approval of sponsored competitions demonstrated the confusion within the Conference regarding their own rules and values. One competition, which did divide the Conference committee at the 1967 AGM, was the Kemp Cup. Based upon the Gillette Cup, this sponsored limited over knock-out competition involved a number of Conference clubs, including Wimbledon CC and Honor Oak CC, both vocal forces against league cricket at CCC meetings.¹⁶⁰ Objections were raised by A. W. A. Leigh, of Highgate CC, as to the Conference's approval of the Kemp competition on commercial grounds and D. A. Lynn of Banstead CC questioned why this competition was deemed acceptable

¹⁵⁸ The scaled down division structure, was supposed to be a single division (first and second XIs) of twenty clubs. After the CCC's intervention, the Surrey Clubs Championship began life as a seventeen club league.

¹⁵⁹ CCC Minute Book, 2/12/1965.

¹⁶⁰ Hart wrote letters and attended a number of meetings and M. B. Alexander of Honor Oak, who chaired the CCC AGM of 1967, decried league cricket. CCC Minute Book, 10/3/1967.

when the Surrey League was not.¹⁶¹ Once again, the chairman defended the decisions on the flimsy basis that the Kemp Cup – a commercialised knock-out competition – did not affect long-standing friendly Saturday fixtures and was thus allowed under the amended (1950) Rule 4. The Conference were running out of excuses, as the preservation of sacrosanct Saturday fixtures now formed the foundation of any objections to leagues.

These were not the only sponsored competitions involving elite clubs at this time. *The Cricketer* had been approached in 1966 by sixteen of the leading public schools ‘to put up a cup for competition in 1967’. Although it denied any editorial bias towards the clubs of the social elites, *The Cricketer* quickly established *The Cricketer* Cup which was to be competed for by Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Charterhouse, Rugby, Westminster, Tonbridge, Malvern, Marlborough, Wellington, Uppingham, Shrewsbury, Repton, Radley, Bradfield and Sherbourne. E. W. Swanton, the magazine’s Editorial Director, perhaps suffering a semantic ‘blind-spot’ regarding what constituted ‘grass-roots’ cricket said of the competition:

In our view cricket needs to be nurtured from the roots rather than “refreshed” by all sorts of contrivances at the top. The foundations of cricket lie in the clubs, of whatever eminence, great and small, and anything that stimulates them must be beneficial to the game as a whole. This is the simple philosophy behind THE CRICKETER CUP.¹⁶²

Swanton may well have regarded the abolition of the amateur/professional distinction as a ‘contrivance’ but, yet again, his egalitarian rhetoric was not matched by actions of an equally classless nature.¹⁶³ Indeed, the formation of the Sports Council in 1965, and the government’s assertion that ‘Sport For All’ incorporated elite competitive sport as well as the provision of community opportunities for mass participation,

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² *The Cricketer*, 29/7/1966, 4.

¹⁶³ Swanton, as witnessed earlier in this chapter, was against any change, contrived or otherwise.

appeared to play into the hands of the CCC and the elite clubs.¹⁶⁴ Despite Wigglesworth's assertion that the Sports Council's 'Sport For All' campaign represented a 'message to the organisers of sport' that the exclusion of ordinary people from participation was no longer acceptable, it was clear, in the rarefied atmosphere of elite cricket, that the sport's 'democratisation' was no formality.¹⁶⁵ Such hypocrisy was not lost on Subba Row and his associates, after the Conference made clear their threat of expulsion to any club joining the new league in a statement which read: 'The Club Cricket Conference executive council has ruled that all the 17 members who compete in the new Surrey Cricket Championship Association will be contravening Rule 4'. This was countered strongly by the SCC Association in their statement:

While it is not for our association to tell the Conference how to conduct its own affairs, we cannot allow its statement to pass without saying it seems extraordinary in our view that its council has found our championship to be against its rules when it has just approved a sponsored knock-out competition [the Kemp Cup]. There appears to be some fine distinction between playing ordinary club cricket for points and playing limited-overs cricket for a commercial pot. We can only repeat that our members have not the slightest wish to leave the Club Cricket Conference, whose name is even included in our rules. If we were forced to do so, we would have no option but to protect our own interests and a second conference would start to emerge – with all the duplication of work involved. We ourselves would regard this as a necessary evil, but surely for the Conference it could be the thin end of a catastrophic wedge.¹⁶⁶

In light of such blatant duplicity the animosity between the two factions was clearly increasing and some form of compromise was required before it came to a head. The solution lay in the fact that Subba Row, Parks and their associates were affirmed club men. Many of those in opposition to their proposal were known to them, having played with or against them for various clubs including the Conference itself. From the very beginning of the enterprise, Parks and Subba Row had been

¹⁶⁴ Barrie Houlihan and Anita White, *The Politics of Sports Development: Development of Sport or Development through Sport?* (London: Routledge, 2002), 24–25.

¹⁶⁵ Neil Wigglesworth, "A Discussion of Post-war Sport in Britain," Snape and Pusard, *Recording Leisure Lives*, 272.

¹⁶⁶ *Surrey Advertiser*, 25/2/1967.

able to sound out various quarters of the club cricket world and they were 'sounded out' themselves. In what Parks describes as a 'bit of luck', following the first unsuccessful meeting with the CCC, Parks was playing for the MCC v South Hampstead with Conference committee man and lawyer, John Slack, a future high court judge. On both being 'out', Slack seized his opportunity to 'cross-examine' the rebellious Parks on a 'turn round the ground'.¹⁶⁷ Slack heard first-hand that Parks and his associates only wanted to play competitive, non-professionalised cricket, retain the younger players, and not take over the CCC or its role within club cricket. Slack, who had suggested that Dolman and Woods have their original meeting with Subba Row and Parks, and he now spoke on behalf of the league men in November 1967. Slack proposed that clubs who wished to play in leagues 'should not be debarred for doing so' and 'there seemed but little doubt that competition cricket was desired by young players and it was far better for the Council to be "with it"'.¹⁶⁸ Slack's intervention followed a similar proposal the previous month to amend Rule 4, and, as chairman of the General Purposes Committee, he was able to push the changes through. In so doing the Conference finally realised that the original object of the Conference: 'to play amateur cricket on strictly non-competitive lines' belonged to a by-gone age. Despite a proposal to preserve it, the words 'on non-competitive lines' were deleted from Rule 2 of the Conference for the first time since 1934 and Rule 4, as it had existed since 1950, was no more.¹⁶⁹ The way was now clear for

¹⁶⁷ Norman Parks interview, 27/8/2009, Part One, 27:49.

¹⁶⁸ Slack, who was chairman of the General Purposes Committee, spoke to the Executive Council, proposing an amendment of the rules as proposed by his Committee. CCC Minute Book, 12/1/1968.

¹⁶⁹ Rule 4 was replaced with: CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Affiliated clubs wishing to participate in any league or competition may do so provided:-

- (i) The rules of such league or competition are in writing and have been approved by the Council.

league cricket to begin in the South of England, and after two years of hard work by Subba Row, Parks and their associates, the Surrey Clubs' Championship (SCC) was successfully launched in 1968 as a single division of seventeen clubs. The first recognised 'senior' cricket league in the South was underway.

Conclusion

The establishment of the SCC owed a great deal to what was an era of significant change in the national game. Although many of these changes were made reluctantly, they had been encouraged by a variety of external pressures. The ideological and somewhat *laissez faire* nature of amateur governance in British sport, particularly cricket, had undergone a significant and prolonged attack from within and outside of sport after 1945. The 1950s was a decade that witnessed the escalation of this pressure, and the MCC – still a private club – although under no official obligation to act, was able to deflect much of the criticism by commissioning 'a string of reports'.¹⁷⁰ Much the same went for the Conference, as no serious attempt to establish a league was made in the South of England during the 1950s. Consequently, nothing, other than the appointment of Len Hutton as England's first professional captain of the twentieth-century in 1952,¹⁷¹ had changed. Neither the MCC nor the CCC had the wider public interest at heart.

It was to be the early years of the 1960s where matters came to a head. By that time even the MCC were beginning to acknowledge that the game was not only losing

(ii) Where such a league or competition is to take place on Saturdays or Sundays the Council is satisfied that not less than eighteen months' notice in writing has been given to all clubs whose fixture lists may thereby be affected. CCC Minute Book, 12/1/1968.

¹⁷⁰ Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket*, 289.

¹⁷¹ Birley notes that the selectors regarded this measure as a 'stop-gap'. Ibid., 283.

spectators – over a million between 1950 and 1963 – and struggling to finance itself, it was actively disliked. Discriminatory social conventions originating in the Victorian era, perpetuated by a detached social elite, were no longer defensible – even among the generally supportive broadsheets. However, it was not the abolition of the amateur/professional distinction,¹⁷² but the introduction, and ‘great success’, of the Gillette Cup, which would bring the supporters back to the county grounds. Finally, the MCC had given the public what they had demanded.¹⁷³

Despite the emergence of sponsored competitions, such as *The Cricketer* and Kemp Cups, the Conference was still some way from admitting there was even a problem. Allowing member clubs to compete in the Kemp Cup only served to highlight the Conference’s duplicity, and the increasing futility of objecting to league competition; both formats which would re-invigorate the flagging club game. Many had long realised that decades of non-competitive cricket had not only reduced the game’s popularity, it had resulted in the erosion of the game’s traditional values. The club game now existed for the players and die-hard enthusiasts alone, and ties with the local community, be that as a representative club or place where all classes were welcome, had, in many cases, long since disappeared. The continued monopolising of team places by an older generation of cricketers, sympathetic to this non-competitive social form of cricket, did little to encourage young men to take up the game, and it was this above all else that Subba Row and Parks wanted to address.

The Conference of the 1960s had lost sight of the reasons why it had adopted non-competitive cricket at its inception in 1916. By 1966, men like Dolman and Woods could not use a fear of the ‘working-classes’, or even ‘professionalism’, to rationalise

¹⁷² This was the most significant cultural change in cricket since the introduction of the qualification rule 90 years previously. Ibid., 293.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 294.

the maintenance of such an ideology. Attractive as the ability to choose one's opposition may have sounded, even this 'excuse' was hard to justify, and in the end, it took an understanding and influential Conference 'insider' to break the CCC's habitual opposition to league competition. Although 'minor' leagues had existed in the South throughout the century, the SCC did not represent, as Birley suggests; 'the most significant social change ... of the South to the vulgar competitive practices of the North'.¹⁷⁴ Socially, very little would have changed; the same people played at the same clubs, and for the most part, against the same opposition. Furthermore, unlike the northern leagues where at least one professional was an established part of every team, no professionals were allowed in the SCC. However, the strict amateur ideology devised by a small group of Edwardian 'gentlemen amateurs' had been eradicated and the club game in Surrey was now able to express the values of its own age.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 307.

Epilogue and conclusions

Epilogue

The first season of the SCC, despite a very wet summer, was successfully completed with Sutton CC winning the inaugural first XI title, and Purley CC the second XI title. Elsewhere, the establishment of the SCC had created a good deal of anxiety among those Surrey clubs who had not joined the league – even those who had been vociferously against it. As Geoff Payne recalled in 1980, Wreford's Esher Group:

Proved to be a storm in a tea cup as Esher became founder members of the Surrey Cricketers' League and were involved with Wimbledon in its formation. Honor Oak joined the Surrey Championship a little later, and meanwhile the Club Cricket Conference amended the rules to allow member clubs to compete in league cricket.¹

Whereas the bigger clubs had the clout to look after themselves, Payne's club, Woking and Horsell CC, found itself somewhat isolated and, having supported Wreford and voted against participating in league cricket, it was apparent that unless this decision was reversed, the survival of smaller clubs at the existing level was uncertain. Cyril Wadley – Oxshott's first XI umpire during the transformation – explained why his club had no option but to join a league:

There was immense pressure on us. Almost all the sides we played against then were ready to join a league. It was almost a case of self-preservation. If we had not taken the plunge, we would have lost most of our fixtures and a number of our players.

Looking back I suppose there was panic in every club. The question "Do we join or do we lose our fixtures?" was asked. No one could risk [not joining a league].²

¹ Geoff Payne, "A not too serious review of the past 75 years" (1980). http://www.whcc.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55&Itemid=80 Accessed 3/12/2009. The Esher Group's activities did have positive consequences, with regard to how Conference representative matches were funded. Having proposed an expanded fixture list players expenses were now under question and sides were to be made up of more younger players 'who might be potential County Club material'. CCC Minute Book, 1/6/1967.

² Tim Cotton, *One Hundred Years of Cricket in Oxshott*, Oxshott Cricket Club, 1996, 22.

Leagues such as the Three Counties League (1970),³ the Surrey County League (1972), and the Wey Valley Cricket League (1973) were established, and clubs such as Oatlands Park CC; ‘the side that said no to league cricket’,⁴ joined Wimbledon and Esher in founding the Surrey Cricketers’ League in 1971. SACC/West Surrey Association of Cricket Clubs’ committee member, and secretary of the FDC competition for more than fifty years,⁵ Ray Cotton recalls how: ‘It may have panicked a few ... clubs to begin with, but eventually it stabilised itself and [now] everybody plays in a league and they play within their own standard’.⁶

Once the dust had settled and league competition had become the norm, it was questionable whether the fears raised by the Conference were ever realised, as many clubs with long-standing fixtures joined the same leagues. Writing on thirty years of the SCC in 1999 (by then called the Surrey Championship), David Morgan of Cheam CC, recalled the ‘outcast’ status placed upon the founders of the Surrey Championship Association by the ‘Old Guard’ at the CCC. On club cricket and the legacy of the SCC, he stated:

There is no doubt in my mind that the pitches are not as good as they were. Groundsmen are expensive. The main improvement has been in the fielding – the ‘slide’ was not known, and many teams had three or four non-fielders. Field placing has become an art: in the ‘good old days,’ a field was set for a bowler without any regard to the way a batsman played. I am told that standards have fallen. In behaviour, I have to agree; as for players, this comment I find strange, as in the early years when a chocolate sweater appeared the wearer usually scored 50 or took five cheap wickets. Now we only really worry when we play against current Test stars.⁷

League cricket had clearly improved standards of play and introduced better timekeeping.

Although a deterioration in the behaviour of players was commonly cited, the *laissez faire*

³ Roland Woods was integral in the establishment of this league, which covered Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire.

⁴ *Surrey Advertiser*, 30/5/1969.

⁵ “LEAGUES AND BOARDS – RAY COTTON – FLORA DORA COMPETITION”, <http://www.kiaoval.com/surrey-oscas-celebrated/> Accessed, 21/4/2013.

⁶ Ray Cotton interview, 27/8/2008, Part One, 25:00.

⁷ A ‘chocolate sweater’ refers to a Surrey player wearing the club’s brown colours. *Surrey Championship Year Book* 1999, No. 27 (April, 1999), 107.

attitudes that had blighted club cricket for generations were largely forgotten. By 1973, twenty three leagues were operating in London, and other 'official' county leagues followed in Hertfordshire, Essex, Kent, Middlesex and Sussex. By 1975, inter-league competitions were in full swing and, by 1985, the Conference was, somewhat ironically, overseeing fifty leagues. Today almost all of the CCC's power is related to its inter-league competitions.⁸

As they had for almost a century in the North, the new leagues encouraged a genuine meritocracy absent in Surrey club cricket for generations, and Cotton notes how club cricket has become increasingly 'classless' since 1968.

There was a lot of class clubs and that is mainly probably because a lot of them came from public school and you was that type of player and you mix in that social circle. So you play for that school [or club] but nowadays the clubs - now [what] you could say were "toffy nose" clubs are no longer, they've gone. If you are good enough, you can go and play for them. (Short pause) Providing you could afford the subscription of course (laughs).⁹

The culture which had ensured club cricket in Surrey and the South of England became non-competitive and socially divided for approximately fifty years was over. However, it had certainly left its mark, for the severance of what had been very strong ties with local communities appear to have proved permanent.

Conclusions

The development of an industrial capitalist society during the nineteenth-century transformed cricket. New social, economic, environmental and cultural circumstances enabled the game to develop into an international sport. Much of this change emanated from the urban middle-classes who developed a different social purpose and cultural meaning for cricket. Under the façade of amateurism, the values the middle-classes introduced, consciously disassociated sport from its previously close links with the game's

⁸ Club Cricket Conference, "competitions", <http://www.club-cricket.co.uk/competitions> Accessed, 21/4/2013.

⁹ Ray Cotton interview, 27/8/2008, Part Two, 8:10.

popular pre-modern culture and structure. Gambling, sport as entertainment, competition that reflected communal identities, and professionalism; cultural norms previously shared by eighteenth-century aristocracy (a group now seen as wasteful and profligate) and common man alike, was replaced by 'fair play' and 'sport for sport's sake'. Professionalism and overt competition were viewed with disdain as cricket became the exemplary amateur sport. Maxim's such as 'it's not cricket', or 'playing with a straight bat' combined the sport with the values of amateurism, and both became global shorthand for a particularly English form of 'gentlemanly' behaviour.

The historiography has long regarded the 'amateur' middle-classes prejudicial control of professionalism as their primary tool for the control of the working-class sportsman, and the preservation of their own status. Cricket, with its separate dressing rooms, entrances to the ground, scorecard designations, and travel and hotel arrangements, was the premier example of this method of control. That the amateur/professional distinction remained within the 'first-class' game until 1962 reveals much regarding the levels of control those who ran cricket retained, their insecurities, and why the MCC was so slow in reforming. The professionalisation of football in 1885 had proved a valuable lesson to the administrators of cricket at all levels of the game but, contrary to the historiography, for many within cricket it was not professionalism *per se*, but the formal competitions, that generated a demand for more professionals, which were to be feared.

Competition, in its 'natural' state, being based upon meritocracy quickly witnessed the success of working-class teams and individual players. Sport had become the 'great leveller', and the increasingly competitive and commercialised ECC not only represented continuity with popular values, the rise in status of the highly skilled working-class professional increasingly came to challenge the lines of social class and social superiority the middle-classes were working hard to defend. Whereas amateurism within elite sport

has been well documented, how amateurism impacted upon recreational cricket is a subject that has been largely overlooked in the sport's historiography, which chooses to prioritise or hypothesise what amateurism 'was' as opposed to how it was utilised in practice. Numerous authors, including Holt, Baker and Hargreaves,¹⁰ have discussed how amateurism dominated British sport for over a century, but amateurism represented not only the cultural uniformity and respectable ambitions of an economically diverse 'middle-class', but also their social insecurities beyond elite sport.

Unsurprisingly, this insecurity is seldom mentioned within the cricket literature, which largely reflects the views of key nineteenth and twentieth-century 'gentleman amateurs'. The writers themselves, as Hill points out, thus became key agents in disseminating amateur values.¹¹ However, recent academic work, particularly that of Light, has focused on the way traditional sporting values and communal identities continued to thrive in the urban communities of the North.¹² This study has similarly highlighted the longevity of traditional sporting culture in a geographical area where the working-classes were less numerous and had much less influence. This evidence thus challenges the assumed idea that 'gentlemanly' amateur cricket dominated the South-East of England long before the First World War.

Contrary to the historiography this thesis has found evidence that the discriminatory use of amateurism was not unique to elite level sport. Indeed, the non-competitive ethos of the Conference was almost certainly established by a small group of elite gentlemen in order to marginalise the working-class cricketer. Thus, after 1918, cricket leagues involving member clubs were essentially outlawed in London, so that no rise in working-class professionalism, similar to that witnessed in football and rugby league, would occur. Such

¹⁰ Holt, *Sport and the British*; Wagg, "Time gentlemen Please"; Holt, "Batsman as Hero"; Baker, "Whose Hegemony?"; Hargreaves, *Sport Power and Culture*.

¹¹ Jeff Hill, "'First Class' Cricket and the Leagues", 69.

¹² Light, *Cricket's Forgotten Past*.

a move was clearly deemed necessary, for leagues had been a common, and popular, phenomenon in rural and urban parts of the South-East of England prior to 1914. These leagues were promoted locally by established gentlemen, often with close associations with the 'first-class' game, not simply for the benefit of all members of the local community but for the game's future health and development. Despite the concerns relating to competition expressed nationally, it was clear that the vast majority of middle-class cricketers had no serious issues with competition *per se* at this time; indeed they thought it natural and necessary. The creation of leagues such as the West Surrey Village Cup Competition in 1896, not only demonstrates how the 'Great Sports Craze' was not confined to large towns and cities,¹³ but that the popular values associated with leagues in the North were contemporaneous throughout the South. However, the cultural changes wrought by the Conference after 1918 represented not simply a distinct change in attitude among the cricketing middle-classes, but a social change within Surrey itself.

Within a post-war Britain where 'class' had become the basis of political and social conflict, the Victorian and Edwardian concerns of 'gentlemanly' status now went far beyond commercialised sport.¹⁴ The men who founded the Conference thus sought to reverse the national trend by rejecting competition in a realm of cricket they could control at both the administrative and club level. These elites, as Lowerson suggests, were able to wield power where they were numerically dominant, and metropolitan London was the place their power was first forged. While the hiatus created by the First World War provided those who wished to separate themselves from other sections of society with the opportunity to do so, the values and influence of the Conference took some time to establish itself beyond London.

¹³ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes 1870-1914*, 7.

¹⁴ McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951*.

The proliferation and origins of leagues in Surrey before 1914 and the apparent lag in the adoption of non-competitive cricket in the rural west and east of Surrey after 1918, suggests that a migrant middle-class, which shared the same values, were absent. These ‘commuters’, so crucial to Lowerson’s ideas of social and cultural influence, had not reached the requisite critical mass in rural Surrey until much later than previously suggested.¹⁵ Their increasing presence however, did mean deterioration in social relations. Whereas social relations appear to have been most cordial in the years prior to 1914, relations between the classes in Surrey during the inter-wars were far from smooth, including those between groups who reputedly constituted the ‘solid middle-class’. And yet, when it came to sport – especially cricket – Trainor’s suggestion that the middle-classes were ‘characterized less by division than by unity’ would appear to be borne out.¹⁶ As the rural villages of Surrey were increasingly populated by affluent migrants from London during the late-1920s and 1930s, the intra-class sociability identified by McKibbin gradually became more important than the sport itself.¹⁷ That ‘everything was done by the sporting elites to promote social harmony by the exclusion of those whose background was not “quite right” and who might not “fit in”’,¹⁸ was undeniably the conscious exclusion of the working-classes, and lower status clubs or players now found themselves increasingly isolated by socially ambitious clubs. This development strongly suggests that the inter-war social unity suggested by Williams is no more than a myth created by the elites themselves.¹⁹

Club cricket had now been transformed from a sport based in the heart of a community into a pastime that existed, particularly at the elite level, for the players alone. The game’s meaning was now firmly located within the ideological dogma of amateurism, and the

¹⁵ Lowerson, *Sport and the English Middle Classes 1870-1914*, 10.

¹⁶ Trainor, “Neither Metropolitan Nor Provincial”, 204.

¹⁷ Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951*.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 381.

¹⁹ Jack Williams, *Cricket and England*.

mythological association of cricket as a 'religion' or 'more than a game' in national terms now applied to sections of club cricket in Surrey.²⁰ Such contentious analogies aside, the marginalisation of talented working-class sportsmen was but one element of inter-war society that many in post-Second World War Britain sought to abolish. The Conference's insistence that club cricket remained self-contained and non-competitive had led to a decline in playing standards and the discouragement of youth. The latter was a cause at the heart of the new associations, and their progressive attitudes harked back to the early leagues, which aimed to develop and improve the game.

The new county cricket associations reflected the meritocratic aims of the age, but the desire they shared with other reformers to establish leagues and encourage young players, came up against a resilient Conference. While Baker suggests that the continuity of voluntarism within the administration of sport, 'provides a basic key to understanding why there was no major infusion of radically new ideas into the administration or playing of sport during or immediately after the Second World War', the evidence suggests otherwise at the lower levels of cricket.²¹ The organisations which wished to either preserve or reform club cricket were both voluntary, and although the new associations had a more professional outlook we must conclude that the social and cultural status of those at the Conference was central to the extended period of non-competitive cricket following the Second World War.

The three post-war challenges were defeated due to this status and a residual pre-war deference, which even affected some reformists within the Press. 1949 proved too early to change the sport and break cricket's established hierarchy in national and regional terms. But, in defeating attempts to form leagues in Essex, Sussex and Surrey, the Conference had also revealed its inherent weakness. Despite non-competitive cricket being damaging

²⁰ Derek Birley, *The Willow Wand: Some Cricket Myths Explored* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 11.

²¹ Baker, "A More Even Playing Field?", 154.

to the game, and a number of senior Conference clubs actively seeking out competitive fixtures, it would appear that change was needed at the national level by the MCC before the Conference would consider sacrificing its ideological and administrative power.²²

Cricket, as played in the South, had become an anachronism and, like the 'first-class' game, it had suffered a significant decline in public interest in the decades after the war. Cricket was no longer simply ignored by those who did not follow the game; many now chose to openly attack the game's conservatism and out-dated ideals such as the amateur/professional distinction. Even those within the MCC had realised something had to change, but it appears that financial pragmatism, rather than a genuine desire to modernise, may have informed the reluctant decisions to abolish the amateur/professional distinction and establish the Gillette Cup. In doing so, the MCC had inadvertently given the public what it had wanted for generations. The end of the frequent and irrational harking back to the 'golden age of leisured amateurism', heralded a new dawn for 'first-class' cricket, and only just in time.²³ And yet, change was still some years away in the club game, despite the Conference's endorsement of three high-profile cup competitions (two of which had commercial sponsors) between 1965 and 1967.

When 'senior' league cricket did come, Raman Subba Row and Norman Parks' Surrey Clubs' Championship broke the spell of a Conference that had led a sleepwalking club game in the South towards a cliff edge that threatened the game's future. Whereas the 'criminalisation' of leagues after 1918 represented the increasing influence of metropolitan values and the migration of affluent middle-class commuters to Surrey, their re-introduction did not signal a decline in this influence, but an end of the irrational fear of competition and perhaps the prospect of social mixing beyond the elite club's own narrow social circle. A

²² Both the CCC and the NCCA operated in 'loyal conformity to the authority of the M.C.C.' *The Cricketer Annual*, 1947, 70.

²³ Birley, *The Willow Wand*, 3.

more honest approach to competitiveness also re-introduced, as Ray Cotton points out, a genuine, 'classless', meritocracy. No longer would talented players be denied access to a club on social grounds, nor the 'illogical attitude of caring only for the game and not the result' dominate.²⁴

²⁴ *Evening Standard*, 17/8/1948.

Appendix: Significant Cricket 'Historians'

Author and Y.O.B	School	University	Position in Cricket
Rev. James Pycroft (1813)*	N/A	Oxford	N/A
Arthur Haygarth (1825)	Harrow	N/A	N/A
Charles W. Alcock (1842)	Harrow	N/A	Secretary of SCCC
Robert A. Fitzgerald (1834)*	Harrow	Cambridge	Secretary of MCC
Frederick Gale (1823)	Winchester	N/A	N/A
Rev. Robert S. Holmes (1850)	N/A	N/A	Played for Northamptonshire
Charles B. Fry (1872)*	Repton	Oxford	England Captain
Frederick S. Ashley-Cooper (1877)	N/A	N/A	Secretary of Nottinghamshire CCC
Lord Alverstone QC (1842)	Charterhouse	Cambridge	Secretary of SCCC and MCC
Sir Home Gordon (1871)	Eton	N/A	President of the LaSCCCC and Sussex CCC
Sir H. D. G. Leveson-Gower (1873)*	Winchester	Oxford	England Captain
Sir P. F. Warner MBE (1873)*	Rugby	Oxford	England Captain
Andrew Lang (1844)	Edinburgh Academy	Oxford	N/A
A.W. Pullin – 'Old Ebor' (1860)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lord Harris (1851)*	Eton	Oxford	Captain and President of KCCC
Arthur W. T. Langford (1896)	N/A	N/A	Editor of <i>The Cricketer</i>
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859)	Stonyhurst College	Edinburgh	N/A
Harry S. Altham CBE, DSO, MC (1888)*	Repton	Oxford	Chairman of MCC and England selector
R. C Robertson-Glasgow (1901)*	Charterhouse	Oxford	Amateur for Somerset CCC
E. W. 'Jim' Swanton CBE (1907)	Cranleigh	N/A	Amateur for Middlesex CCC
Sir Neville Cardus (1888)	N/A	N/A	President of Lancashire CCC
Eric Parker (1870)	Eton	Oxford	N/A
Roy Webber (1914)	N/A	N/A	Founder of the 'Cricket Book Society'
Col. R. S. Raitt-Kerr (1891)	Rugby	RMC Woowich	Secretary of MCC
J. M. Kilburn (1909)	Holgate Grammar	Sheffield	N/A
G. D. Martineau (1897)	Charterhouse	RMC Sandhurst	N/A
John Kay (1909)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Roy Genders (1913)	N/A	N/A	Played for Derbyshire, Worcestershire and Somerset
Major Rowland Bowen (1916)	Westminster	N/A	N/A
Gerald Brodribb (1915)	Eastbourne	Oxford	Played for MCC
Sir Derek Birley (1926)	N/A	Cambridge	N/A
Sir John Major (1943)	N/A	N/A	President of SCCC

* Denotes a 'Blue' at Cricket. A much coveted 'colour' for representing either Oxford or Cambridge at a given sport.

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