

East Surrey Association of Cricket Umpires & Scorers

Level 1 Course at Caterham School on February 14/15, 2009

The course attracted a great deal of attention and the number of applicants exceeded the number of places. As a result, and following discussions with Instructors from the Croydon Association who were agreeable to assisting us, we decided to run two courses concurrently. We eventually had 41 people on the two courses representing 39 new members and two who had taken GL6 the year before but failed to gain the qualification.

A number of the course members lived outside the county with residents of Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, Suffolk, Sussex, Kent, London postal districts normally associated with other counties and one from Australia. Part of this was due to a group on the course who are attempting to break the record for the highest team sport match by playing a 20/20 match 17 000 feet up Everest.

We were pleased to introduce John Moulton, one of our members, into the role of Instructor which now gives East Surrey four Instructors. His contribution was greatly appreciated by both colleagues and course members. We were also extremely grateful for the contributions of Colin Wilson, Brian Hurn and Matt Johnson from Croydon which enabled us to run the second course. It was decided at our planning meeting that we work as two teams with Andrew Etherington, Jeremy Beckwith and John Moulton in one team and Colin Wilson, Brian Hurn and John Smith forming the other team which Matt Johnson joined on the Sunday. The feedback we had showed a very high level of satisfaction with the Instructors.

Caterham School again proved an excellent venue although it does have the drawback that we have to arrange for the provision of refreshments ourselves. Again the feedback was very positive about the venue. We are grateful for the efforts on our behalf of Pat Lavery (Director of Sport) and Brian Dunphy (Caretaker) at the School. The only problem is the lighting for the evening examination which is far from ideal.

The course itself went very well. The materials provided by the ECB were excellent (even allowing for the absence of the CD that should have been in the pack provided). There was good interaction between the Instructors and course members. There had been some difficulties acquiring copies of Tom Smith for the extended numbers but this was collectively achieved to the extent we ended up with 10 spare copies. At least half the course members took the trouble to tell us how much they had enjoyed the course and benefited from it.

The weekend course does have some disadvantages over the weekly 2.5 hour sessions in that there is too little time for reflection on the various topics nor time for additional work (homework). This weakness, we believe was a contributory factor to the disappointing results of the examination. It is also quite stressful for those presenting the course as several presentations have to be made on the same day. On the other hand the format is popular with

those who wish to take the course and attendance has been 100% over the two years we have used this format. From those that responded to the survey, two consecutive Sundays had some support as an alternative but was very much a second choice. Respondents were equally divided between the exam being within one or two weeks following the examination. Only one suggested that the exam should be on the second day of the course and he lived in Suffolk!

A further problem with the weekend format is that the Instructors do not get to know most of the course members even to the point of recognition.

26 of the course members passed the examination and 12 failed with 3 still to take the examination on March 16th at Croydon. Of those that failed most have opted to re-take the examination on April 21st.

There were some lessons for us to learn from the experience. Firstly, that it is ideal to have at least a second Instructor present when a presentation is being made, particularly if the presenter is relatively inexperienced. Secondly, it is unreasonable to expect an Instructor to undertake other duties such as ensuring refreshments are ready and CRB verification completed when such large numbers are involved. A third aspect came from the feedback that the pace of the course was a little on the slow side. There was one person who found cause to criticise the administration but it was self-centred and not particularly constructive.

The course leaders were grateful for the support of Graham Cooper, Lorraine Elgar, Steve Hodge and John Flatley who all contributed effectively to the running of the course. We were also pleased to welcome Nick Cousins (ECB ACO) who visited us on the Sunday.

John Smith

Andrew Etherington

Training Administrator

Training Officer