





ISSUE 27 FEBRUARY 2015

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Having been an umpire for many years and having been involved in and witnessed most issues regarding behaviour of players I find it most disturbing to hear noise and witness antics of young players, said to be self-encouraging themselves to perform better. While we all like to see players showing emotion/determination/effort surely there is no excuse for LOUND shouting, fist waiving and indistinguishable sounds which follow from winning a point. To be excited after a brilliant shot or an amazing rally is one thing but to raises the roof when an opponent serves into the net or loses a point is another.

What can be done to remedy this? Some umpires ask the player to stop as it is affecting play on the next table. Some umpires ask the player not to be so loud, some umpires ignore it as there appears to be no specific law to prevent it, hence inconsistency.

So what can be done? Could players' coaches tell them not to do it? Could referees tell players, via the entry form, not to do it? Could it not be included in the laws of the game? What do you think? No one wants to see bland, spiritless play however gentlemanly but please not so much noise!

SECRETARY'S REPORT

In the mid 90s I was at the Liverpool League AGM when I was approached Brian Leeson, who I discovered was the Lancashire County Umpires' Secretary. "Do you fancy becoming an umpire? You'll see good table tennis and have a better understanding of the game". After a bit more persuasion I agreed to take the CU test and the rest is history.

The role of the County Umpires' Secretary (CUS) has changed. The Technical Officials Committee (TOC) is doing a good job recruiting new umpires. The recruitment drives are successful but many of the new umpires are asking "Who do I speak to if I need help? How do I start umpiring at tournaments? What equipment/uniform do I need?"

The County Umpires Secretary is the person who should perform this role. Unfortunately some CUS are noticeable by their silence and only perform the role in County records. The role and function needs to be maintained and County Chairs and Secretaries need to encourage members to perform the role. A list of CUS is shown later in the magazine. If there is a vacancy in your County please consider taking on the role.

The TOC is considering further changes to the umpires' uniform. It is considering changing the umpires shirt from white to blue, in line with the ITTF uniform. Approximately twelve IUs travel to overseas tournaments and are required to wear blue shirts. The other two hundred or so English umpires do not need the expense of having to buy new shirts. If TOC wish to make major changes to the uniform they should canvas the umpires and seek their opinion.

Tom Purcell Secretary

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AETTU COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM SUNDAY 9TH NOVEMBER 2014 12:00hrs BULKINGTON VILLAGE CENTRE

Present: George Tyler (GT), Derek Sherratt (DS), Steve Welch (SW), Tom Purcell (TP), Stan Clarke (SC), Mike Payne (MP), Lilian Payne (LP), John Lawton (JL), Harry Jutle (HJ), Trevor Vincent (TV), Jim, Kenny (JK), Tony Chatwin (TC).

1. Apologies: John Stalker

 Minutes from Last meeting 11/05/2014: After a point of accuracy to include John Lawton as attending the meeting the minutes were accepted as a true record. Proposed: Stan Clarke.
Seconded; Lillian Payne.

3. Matters arising from Minutes of 11/05/2014

 Action 1. Secretary to contact Barry Granger re membership of AETTU Committee – BG seen by Chair. BG unable to continue as Committee member because of other commitments. Chair thanked BG for his work with the Committee.
Action 2. Secretary to advise members about international selection list – Completed.

Action 3. Secretary to notify members of AGM date and venue – Completed
Action 4. Secretary to write to TOC with recommendations over uniform – completed.

4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting in particular HJ and TV who had volunteered to be coopted to the Committee. The Chair highlighted the importance of AETTU members being involved with the Committee.

The Chair brought the attention of the Committee to the recent minutes of the Technical Officials Committee (TOC) regarding the recommendation to change the umpire's uniform; that the colour of the shirts be changed to blue and that any decision to have a badge on the blazer be deferred. The subject was discussed by the meeting and the following questions were asked. What is the present procedure? Who has the final say? Do umpires have an input?

The Chair also noted the selection of various TOC panels, including selection, and asked that now we are Table Tennis England who appoints TOC? And how does TOC appoint the panels? Do umpires have any input into the appointment of TOC and its various panels particularly those affecting the general umpiring community?

The TOC minutes also set out the terms of reference for TOC, including recommendations for uniform. Again, no reference to consultation with umpires or mention of welfare.

Action 1. Secretary to write to TOC highlighting concerns about further changes to uniform without discussion with umpires

5. Secretary's report

Congratulations to Alex Mercer who was awarded the "Young Official of the Year" award at the recent Sports Official UK Awards. This follows on from John Reynolds who won the same award last year. Congratulations must also be passed to Harry Jutle, Dave Gough, Alan Thomas, Brian Jackson and Steve Smith who recently awarded their IU badge.

The subject of expenses incurred by umpires and other volunteers attending events is being reviewed. It is important that all persons attending events must, wherever possible, travel together to save on mileage costs. It used to be a regular fact that umpires travelled together but this has

reduced over the last few years. The re-branding of Table Tennis England continues and this process is impacting on the discussions about umpire's uniform. The subject, including AETTU recommendations, was discussed at the recent TOC meeting.

Thanks to Harry Jutle, John Stalker and Trevor Vincent who have volunteered to become members of the AETTU Committee.

Proposed: John Lawton Seconded: Steve Welch Carried

6. Treasurer's report

The treasurer submitted a balance sheet to the meeting which showed the current balance. There was a general discussion on the balance sheet. The AETTU 2014 Tournament made a small profit. Treasurer informed the meeting that there were 126 current members of the Association. There was a general discussion about the list of members and outstanding annual fees. It was agreed that the vast majority of outstanding fees would be collected throughout the year.

Proposed: Lillian Payne Seconded: Stan Clarke Carried Action 2. Secretary to contact identified members about continued membership of AETTU

7. Allowances

Chair reminded the meeting that TTE were carrying out a review of all expenses incurred. There was a general discussion on the subject and it was agreed that wherever possible umpires should try to travel together to tournaments. Secretary informed the meeting that at a recent Premier BL weekend at Ormesby the organiser wouldn't pay the Friday evening meal allowance. One of the umpires complained to Sara Sutcliffe, TTE CEO who was at the tournament and the allowance was paid.

AS a result of a complaint from the umpire, Secretary had been in touch with the CEO to clarify the position re Friday meal allowances. The CEO had replied to say "that if an official is travelling such a distance that we have agreed to pay for accommodation then we should also pay for a meal allowance". The meeting was reminded that the agreement regarding the meal allowance only related to TTE tournaments. Organisers of local tournaments may have different conditions re meal allowances and accommodation.

8. Correspondence

a) Letter from member re evening meal allowance. See Agenda item 7.

Letter from member about the difference between the standard IU examination and the onb) line IU examination carried out by the Youth Umpires Project. Why were Young Umpires allowed 10 minutes longer to take the examination? Secretary wrote to the Chair of TOC on behalf of the member and had received the following reply:

It is correct that YUP candidates were given more time, however there were several good reasons why this was so.

Firstly the exam was only given in English, (unlike the IU exam which can be given in any language). and for the vast majority of YUP candidates English was not their first language so they were allowed to use a dictionary if necessary. To cater for this they were allowed an extra 10 minutes. Secondly the exam was online, and when it was tested there was a delay of a minimum 10-15 seconds for the screen to refresh and present the next question. Over 50 questions this adds up to at least 10 minutes, so the system had a grace period built in. However many of the candidates didn't need the full time.

Letter from member re selection policy for international and major domestic c) tournaments. Action?

Copy of TOC Selection policy to be in next magazine.

9. Magazine.

Secretary informed the meeting that the October edition of the AETTU Magazine had been circulated. The Magazine had highlighted links to the latest ITTF training videos for umpires. It was agreed that the next magazine would be circulated in February. Articles to the editor by 3/12/14.

10. **AETTU Competition**

Secretary informed the meeting that a successful AETTU tournament had taken place at Draycott in June 2014. Secretary suggested Draycott for the 2015 tournament and would make enquiries to make sure it didn't clash with the Donnington Festival.

Action 3. Secretary to arrange date/venue for AETTU 2015 Competition

11. AOB

Trevor Vincent highlighted the need for new umpires to be able to speak with experienced a) umpires to seek advice about equipment and uniform. There was a discussion on the subject and it was

agreed the County Umpire Secretaries (CUS) should be the initial contact. The meeting agreed that the role of the CUS, in providing and marking test papers had changed with the roll-out of the recruitment drives. After further discussion it was agreed that the names and contact details of all CUS should be listed on the URC page of the TTE website.

Action 4. Secretary to write to Chair of TOC with recommendation re CUS. List of County Umpires to be included in next magazine.

b) Trevor Vincent also highlighted the need for new umpires to be aware of what equipment/uniform is required when taking up the role of CU. There was a general discussion on the subject and it was agreed that an article would be placed in the next magazine and on the AETTU website on the subject

Action 5. Article to be placed in Magazine and on website about umpire's equipment and uniform.

c) Chair informed the meeting that a number of umpires had complained about the conditions in the playing area during the Vetts Competition at Cosford. Umpires considered that Health and Safety at the tournament was poor. The gangways between the tables were too narrow and the quantity of bags, equipment, rubbish and people in the gangways was dangerous. There was a general discussion on the subject and it was agreed the Secretary would write to the Competition's Department highlighting umpires' concerns.

Action 6. Secretary to write to Competitions Department to highlight concerns about H&S conditions at tournaments.

12 Next Meeting TBA

CPDs for Umpires?

I have only been involved with table tennis for a few years. My son and I joined Waterside Table Tennis Club in Southampton in 2010. Before that, I had only played "ping-pong" as a child in Brazil. After we had been bitten by the bug, I ventured myself in the unknown area of umpiring and I really enjoyed it. When I volunteer my time I try (some would argue about this) to be as professional as I possibly can, including presentation and uniform. This is why it really drives me nuts when I see fellow umpires, usually at Finals Night of local leagues, non-ranked tournaments or exhibition matches, turning up with their jackets, badges and.... jeans! Or wearing a pink shirt! Nothing against a pink shirt, it does look good, but that is not our uniform! If you volunteered to umpire on an event, you are there as an umpire; you are representing your fellow umpires and Table Tennis England.

Those guilty usually are umpires who do not go on the circuit, they are happy to umpire only at local level. Sometimes, when invited to umpire in County Championships, they come with excuses like "the mileage rate won't cover for the petrol" (even when they live 5 miles from the venue)!

All this brings me to my main question: should TOC, with support to AETTU, think about some Continuous Professional Development (CPDs) for umpires? Table Tennis England requires, and rightly so, that coaches attend CPD courses every year. So why shouldn't umpires do it as well? Perhaps not necessarily attending courses but being officially evaluated by more experienced umpires at National Tournaments. And how can we monitor umpire "activity"? Should TOC request umpires to send annually a list of events they umpired or referees should send with their report the names of umpires in their tournament? If an umpire has not umpired in a single ranked tournament (2-stars or above) in three years, should their badge be removed? Similar to playing table tennis umpiring needs continuous practice. I still feel, as a group, we lack some consistency, and I am guilty as charged here! Those videos prepared by ITTF are good material to start with but they should be used as part of a process to improve the overall quality of umpires.

As I said, I've only been involved in table tennis for the last 5 years and perhaps all this has already been discussed, in which case it is me being a troublemaker (more likely). In any case, some thoughts!

Nico Caltabino

Technical Official or Jack-of-all trades?

The European Team event in Lisbon in September provided new experiences even for a fairly veteran IU. Leave your stopwatch at home and improve your touchscreen technique if you want to be part of modern umpiring.

Each table had an electronic score board. As recently as the Glasgow Commonwealth Games there were volunteers to operate these machines. Not in Lisbon. We were sent an introduction to the system in advance and offered a few minutes training before the umpires' briefing. Then it was up to the AU to press the correct bit of the screen to control the timings, the scoring, time-out displays and yellow/red cards. Everything the AU did was sent directly to the control table so it was essential to learn exactly where the 'undo' button was. [I am sure I am not the only AU who only realises who has actually called a time–out when the players come back to the table and the umpire is making frantic signals.]

But our tasks did not end there. We are accustomed to checking rackets and, often, working with the racket control equipment. In Lisbon umpires were also used to take rackets out from the call room to field of play. Instead of 3 hours strolling along the promenade in the sun, it was 3 hours in the call room checking rackets then carrying them out to the relevant court and standing waiting for a break in play to hand the rackets to the AU.

It was also my first experience of plastic balls – they split so often that we took 6 to the table and it was not always enough for a team match. You had to be ready to call a let whenever it appeared a ball was falling in half!

There's more to umpiring than deciding who won the point!

(Happily, we were not expected to use the proposed new hand-signals for faulty services.)

(I actually did wear a watch -just in case of a medical time-out).

Lynda Reid

HOW TO MAKE AN IMPRESSION

How to make an impression and get yourself noticed at your first IU Tournament.

At the restaurant for the evening meal, get a tray and load it up with a meal. Then whilst walking towards the seating go arse over tip, spilling everything all over the floor. Then nonchalantly get up being more embarrassed than hurt. Well I didn't say it was a good impression.

Guess Who

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

A player damaged the cover of his racket during the first game. He replaced the racket immediately with another. During the second game, his friend brought back his original racket after replacing the damaged cover with a legal covering. The player wants to use this original racket - Answer P11

damaged cover with a legal covering. The player wants to use this original racket. - Answer P11.

CONFUSED?

Which umpire travelled a long way to pick up a colleague at an agreed meeting place and travel to

a national tournament only to discover that the colleague hadn't bothered to go to the meeting place and hadn't bothered to inform the umpire?

Which umpire sent an urgent email to the colleague only to discover that the tournament was the following week?

TOC - Umpire selection policy

A number of members have asked about the selection policy used by the Technical Officials Committee to select umpires for domestic and international tournaments. The policy is documented on the "Officials" page on the Table Tennis England website. A copy of the policy is shown below.

Selection Policy

1. For English National Championships, preference will be given to new NUs and NU candidates, with lowest priority being accorded to CUs and TUs who are not interested in acquiring higher qualifications, to those who have repeatedly failed to acquire such qualifications and to any umpires whose performance has noticeably deteriorated. The selectors will then attempt to balance the need for economy with ensuring that those who live a long way from the venues are not excluded.

2. For foreign events, no-one will be precluded from consideration provided they have been assessed and found competent. However, for major competitions such as World and Continental Championships Pro-Tour tournaments, preference will be given to experienced IUs; newly qualified IUs will be considered for such events where they can be accompanied by an experienced IU. For events at which Blue Badge evaluations are to be carried out, due consideration will be given to the requirements of those working towards achieving Blue Badge status and to Blue Badge holders needing to complete a re-certification process.

3. Subject to the above conditions, the selectors will always try to ensure that umpires each have a fair and equitable allocation of events.

Procedural Guidelines

For Domestic Events the Selection Committee will advise umpires by letter or e mail of the events, dates and venues thereof and invite umpires to nominate themselves for possible selection for such events. This will usually be done separately for events up to Christmas, and for those events occurring after Christmas. The selection process will take into account individual umpires' activity and for National Championships the level of qualification will also be taken into account.

For International Events eligible umpires will be advised by letter or e mail of the invitation by a foreign Association for England to select or nominate for selection an umpire(s). The selection process will take into account an umpire's qualification, their activity both domestically and internationally, their historical attendance at foreign events and any conditions stipulated by the inviting Association.

Members of the Selection Committee who choose to make an application for consideration for selection to an International event will play no part in the selection process for that event. The Chairman of the NURC will instead co-opt an independent person(s) in replacement.

For International Events where assessments of Blue Badge umpires are to take place due consideration will be given to existing Blue Badge umpires and those umpires who are working towards acquiring the Blue Badge qualification. Where more than one Blue Badge umpire applies for an event then account will be taken of the re-certification requirements of those umpires.

In the application of these procedural guidelines consideration sometimes needs to be given to a variety of different circumstances e.g. is it appropriate to send an international umpire to their first foreign event unaccompanied by a more experienced umpire. The selection process is therefore not always 'black and white' and the Selection Committee will use their discretion as appropriate.

The Sound of Silence by Derek Sherratt

When I first attended the then National League fixtures on Sunday afternoons there seemed to be an unwritten code for the behaviour of spectators. Apart from gentle applause or even some loud exclamation following a well-earned point, there was an atmosphere more in keeping with a place of worship than a sporting arena. The opening of a packet of sweets would often result in the temporary suspension of play during which offended player would glare in disbelief at the miscreant. Attempts to enter or leave the vicinity of the playing area during play would produce similar condemnation.

Perhaps my memory is playing tricks with me but I do not recall the players creating excessive noises either. Of course there must have been some expression of delight or dismay from time to time that is in the nature of things but everything was conducted in sedate and orderly way. Yes we had a few colourful characters whose behaviour might be regarded as somewhat bizarre in the 21st Century.

The strange thing is that these same players would face a totally different set of conditions in the Open Tournaments without any concern whatsoever. The space around some of the courts would resemble the concourse at Euston Station; they had just to get on with it.

To return to my theme, which is silence? Even when the game became more commercial, more professional with more sponsorship, I did not detect a significant change. One would certainly hear some loud shouts but by and large this did not appear to pose a problem. Then around ten years ago a new phenomena appeared, particularly with younger players. I recall Mick Strode highlighting the problem in his briefings to players. "No monkey noises please"; instructing umpires 'to bear this in mind. This rather odd behaviour then passed out of fashion to be replaced with the utterance of some nonsensical word that I for one do not understand. More recently a further change has crept in which the exponents of this art, apparently based on the writings of Edgar Rice Burrows or Rudyard Kipling, make deep throated guttural noises which last for several seconds.

A disturbing trend is also the increase in the number of times the offenders feel it necessary to partake in this primeval exercise. One could argue that showing some elation is to be welcomed in competitive sport, such as the winning of a point following a great rally or a suburb example of their art. There have however been cases where the display has followed an opponent failing to make a good service or some other instance where it could be said the opponent had gifted them a point.

An umpire can of course take unilateral action, speak to offenders then warn and so on. I have occasionally even had cause to halt play because I felt my players were disadvantaged by a Tarzan tribute display on an adjoining court. I believe this demonstration of misplaced bravado to be undesirable and unnecessary and suspect that many share this belief and believe that table tennis is the worse for it.

It does surprise me therefore that reference to shouting does not figure more prominently in the standard Briefing by Referees. Spitting and the kicking of barriers often get a mention but Referees seem ambivalent to Jungle Book noises with suggestions that taking punitive action is somehow removing the passion from the game. Additional advice instructs the umpire to take action if the noise appears to be having an adverse effect on the innocent party. This presupposes that umpires possess a degree in psychology.

This reluctance to take appropriate action is at variance with advice contained in the ITTF Handbook for Match Officials indicating the recommended procedure for action by the umpire. Unfortunately the text is not very helpful in defining the degree of behaviour that should prompt action by the umpire. In this respect I imagine that many of our colleagues are unwilling to take action suspecting that they will not get the wholehearted support from the Referee's bench.

I would like to see more emphasis given to dealing with problems concerning behaviour at briefings augmented with more time allocated at seminars. This might consolidate opinion among umpires giving them a greater feeling of confidence that they are not acting alone.

Fifty shades of grey?

Many umpires have spent many hours discussing our uniform (s?).

Looking at the legs of my colleagues at a recent national event, it is obvious that *grey* is a state of mind, not a description of a colour. I would like to offer a small contribution to decrease the general messiness.

Let us start with the smallest things. Some, but not all, umpires know that we should wear grey socks with grey trousers. Why was this ever suggested? We wear black shoes. Black socks come in one colour and are available from every good supermarket, department store or gentlemen's outfitter. Grey socks come in more shades than grey trousers and are never the same shade as the trousers above them.

I would like to put in a plea to TOC to change the rule/ regulation/ requirement so that black socks are part of the English uniform. Can anyone out there give me an argument against this?

Lynda Reid

COUNTY UMPIRES' SECRETARY

When I started out in the world of umpiring in the very early 80s the County Umpires' Secretary (CUS) was a big wheel. A CUS was active!

They:

• -sought out likely umpires and got them on the road via the test paper and experience. A CU was virtually a qualified umpire before getting their first badge and was deemed proficient at all levels even at this stage.

- -took requests for umpires from tournament organisers and filled the slots
- -travelled with new umpires and mentored them through all the stages up to IU

I know because I did it for few years after Arthur Morgan passed it on to me in Derbyshire. However after a time I noticed that the CUS job was a classic case of studying your shoes when the job came up at the AGM and most counties had difficulties getting active people. There were various unkind reviews of the performance of some CUS at this stage – some of whom are still in post! It is a soul destroying task.

The number of umpires declined. In parallel with this came the internet and the idea that playing was better than umpiring.

Thus:

- -recruitment of umpires was by a regional contact not necessarily in contact with the CUS.
- -using email the tournament organisers went straight to the umpire again bypassing the CUS
- -the newly qualified umpires then had to gain experience on their own

As far as I know neither the NURC nor TOC had any contact with the CUS in either scenario.

If this trend of non-involvement continues it will be another area where the county loses influence. The CUS scene needs a good shake up but led by TOC who have the responsibility in this area. This will be long term noting that the job of CUS is not universally admired.

Currently the TOC organise Umpire Recruitment Seminars around the Country. A large number of umpires are being recruited, which is good for statistics, but how many of the new umpires are actually going on the circuit and umpiring at tournament?

The TOC is arranging the recruitment seminars but do not necessarily inform the relevant CUS about the seminars or invite then to attend.

Additionally the TOC is not always informing CUS about newly qualified umpires in their county when they have passed the CU tests and assessments.

TOC should gather CUS together and determine who could be useful recruiters. Ask the current CUS for their opinions. Get the Counties to recruit some able CUS (on the surface at least). Link these CUS with the regional co-ordinators and set up a plan of attack.

The CUS of all people need the full volunteer treatment including praise and even mementoes.

Mike Payne

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ITTF AUTHORISATION OF TABLE TENNIS RUBBERS

One of the functions of an umpire, before a match starts, is to ensure that the rubber covering the player's bat is authorised by the ITTF and is on the current ITTF List of Authorised Racket Coverings (LARC). Have you ever wondered how that testing and authorisation takes place? The ITTF document detailing how rubbers are authorised is a lengthy document. It's too long for this magazine but if you wish to read about the process you can find it on the ITTF website under the Equipment tab or you can go directly to the document at: http://www.ittf.com/stories/pictures/T4_Racket_Coverings_forBoD42014_final.pdf

TABLE TENNIS WORDSEARCH

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WHAT WOULD YOU DO? - ANSWER

The player is not permitted to change back to the original racket. The current racket was not accidentally damaged.

ITTF Handbook for Match OfficialS

7.3.3 A player is not allowed to change a racket during a match unless it is accidentally damaged so badly that it cannot be used. If it is discovered that a player has changed an undamaged racket the umpire should immediately suspend play and report to the referee, who may disqualify the player

<u>COUNTY</u>	SECRETARY	<u>COUNTY</u>	SECRETARY
AVON	M. KINLOCKE	LEICESTERSHIRE	Mrs. E. SHALER
BEFORDHSIRE	MRS. V. MURDOCH	LINCOLNSHIRE	D. BROWN
BERKSHIRE	J. FREEMAN	MIDDLESEX	R. SUTCLIFFE
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	T. GREENHAM	NORFOLK	MR. M. CALVER
CAMBRIDGESHIRE	B. FREER	NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	VACANT
CHESHIRE	J. APPLETON	NORTHUMBERLAND	N. COE
CLEVELAND	G. WHYMAN	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE	B. RIMMER
CORNWALL	K. FUDGE	OXFORDSHIRE	MRS. J. CROMPTON
DERBYSHIRE	N. HOUGHTON	SHROPSHIRE	J. O'KEEFE
DEVONSHIRE	VACANT	SOMERSET	B. GIBBS
DORSET	VACANT	SOUTH YORKSHIRE	S. WAINWRIGHT
DURHAM	R. DOUGLAS	STAFFORDSHIRE	B. WATKINS
ESSEX	VACANT	SUFFOLK	R. WATTS
GLOUCESTERSHIRE	L. SMITH	SURREY	MISS. M. FRASER
HAMPSHIRE	D. WILES	SUSSEX	A. WHITE
HEREFORDSHIRE	H. JUTLE	WARWICKSHIRE	I. MOSS
HERTFORDSHIRE	D. EDWARDS	WILTSHIRE	R. ERSKINE
ISLE OF WIGHT	VACANT	WORCESTERSHIRE	MRS. L. REID
KENT	D. CUE	YORKSHIRE	S. WELCH
LANCASHIRE	T. PURCELL		

COUNTY UMPIRE SECRETARIES