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#T20WORLD CUP



ICC MEN'S T20
WORLD CUP
SUB REGIONAL
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CYPRUS | MAY 14 - 24, 2026



A JOURNEY OF FLAVOURS!



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CYPRUS TO HOST WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

2026 looks to be an incredible year for cricket in Cyprus and a highlight of the year is the hosting of 9 European countries for the sub-regional Men's World Cup qualifiers in May. Paul Francis has more.



Episkopi Ground - known as Happy Valley - will be a spectacular location for the qualifiers

Cyprus is set to return to the international cricket stage when it hosts the ICC Europe Men's T20 World Cup Sub-Regional Qualifier in May 2026 at Episkopi. A significant moment for the game on the island and a clear sign of how far Cyprus cricket has progressed.

The tournament will be played at Episkopi's cricket ground, better known to players and supporters simply as Happy Valley. For many, it is the home of cricket in Cyprus. With its well-kept green outfield, palm trees lining the boundary and the deep blue of the Mediterranean a couple of kilometers away, Happy Valley is one of the most distinctive venues in European associate cricket. Its name reflects the atmosphere it has long been known for, a place where there always seems to be a match under way, a conversation taking place or a familiar face watching on. And, on a

Sunday, an ice-cream van is a regular visitor.

This will be the first ICC event staged in Cyprus since 2009, when the island hosted the ICC Europe Division Four Championship, also at Episkopi. Seventeen years on, the return of an ICC tournament marks an important milestone and reflects the steady, often unseen work that has gone into developing the sport over many years.

The qualifier also carries wider significance. It will be the first European tournament on the pathway to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2028, placing Cyprus at the very start of the global qualification journey. Ten teams, including the Cyprus national side, will compete for progression, insuring a competitive and closely followed event.

Cricket's story in Cyprus has developed alongside the island's broader modern history. For many

years, the game was sustained through the presence of the British military, which provided continuity, organisation and access to facilities at times when cricket had limited

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If the previous picture didn't convince, another view of Happy Valley

wider infrastructure. That history forms an important part of the sport's development, but it is only one chapter in a much broader story.

Over time, cricket in Cyprus has grown into a genuinely diverse and civilian-led sport. Clubs, leagues and junior programmes now reflect the island's wider community, bringing together Cypriots, long-term residents, expatriates, students, and newcomers to the game. What began in limited spaces has matured into a sport with national reach and growing international credibility.

Behind the scenes, the continued development of cricket at Episkopi has been supported by a strong and professional working relationship with British Forces Cyprus. Over many years, successive Commanders British Forces Cyprus and Episkopi Garrison Commanders have provided consistent, enabling support that has allowed the sport to grow in a stable and sustainable way.

This support has drawn on the involvement of the British Army and the Royal Air Force, with personnel from both services contributing to the practical foundations of cricket

at Episkopi - from access to facilities and logistical support to participation in domestic cricket over time. Alongside British Forces Cyprus, its industry partners, the Cypriot civilian workforce, the expatriate community and local volunteers have all played a role in creating an environment in which cricket can develop and meet the standards required to host international competition.

Want to watch?
You can watch online by going to the website icc.tv; all the games will be streamed live. Even better, you can attend the matches at Happy Valley. You have to register online at cricket.cy beforehand, but it's free to register and attend!

The result has been a collaborative model that works. Military authorities, civilian volunteers, clubs and administrators have operated with mutual respect and shared purpose, allowing Happy Valley to remain a trusted and well-regarded venue for international cricket while continuing to support the game's growth across the island.

The Cyprus Cricket Federation has expressed its thanks to the partners whose support has made hosting the tournament possible. Particular appreciation goes to the Limassol Municipality for its backing of the event through the Lemesia 2026 Programme, underlining the city's commitment to hosting international sport.

Another important milestone came in June 2025, when the Cyprus Cricket Federation was formally confirmed as a voting member of the Cyprus National Olympic Committee. This recognition reflects the Federation's progress off the field and confirms cricket's place within Cyprus's recognised national sporting framework.

For Cyprus cricket, hosting the Sub-Regional Qualifier is about more than matches and results. It is an opportunity to welcome teams and officials from across Europe, to showcase the island's hospitality, and to underline the progress made by the game at every level, from grassroots participation to international competition.

As May 2026 approaches, Happy Valley will once again take centre stage - familiar, welcoming and ready for the next chapter in Cyprus cricket's journey.

Women's 2025 Season Review

Nadeesha Kariyawasam looks back on a remarkable 2025 for Women's cricket in Cyprus



Cyprus and Czechia Women Teams in Prague, May 2025

Women's cricket in Cyprus has enjoyed an exceptional year of development, competition, and international exposure, reflecting the steady growth of the women's cricket on the island.

In April 2025, Cyprus hosted the Women's T20 Quadrangular Series at Episkopi, featuring Jersey, the Isle of Man, and Denmark. Competing against highly skilled and experienced teams provided invaluable exposure for the national women side. Jersey won

all six matches, while the Isle of Man and Denmark recorded three wins each. The tournament proved to be a vital learning experience and a major step forward in the Cypriot Women's national team development.

In May, Cyprus toured Prague, Czechia, winning the WT20I series 5-0. The team demonstrated superior form and depth, recording dominant performances. A standout moment came when Cyprus scored 201/0 in 20 overs,

with half-centuries from Samanthi Dunukedeniya (65)* and Ayesha Dirannehelage (65)*. Captain Iresha Chathurani Withana scored 131 runs during the Czechia series and is currently amongst the top 100 batters in the ICC Women's T20I batting rankings. On the same tour Samanthi Dunukedeniya registered a scarcely believable bowling figures of 7/15 to place her in the top 5 of all time WT20I individual bowling figures. Ayesha Dirannehela's performance earned



The quad series from April, 2025 at Happy Valley. Denmark are batting and Isle of Man in the field



Ayesha Dirannehela, most valuable player in the Cyprus-Czechia WT20I series

Women's T20 International rankings.

Domestically, the women's programme featured competitive T20 and T10 matches involving Mouflons and Sri Lankan Lions. The Cyprus Cricket Federation also hosted a watch party during ICC Women's World Cup Week, bringing together players and the community. At the event, the team received cricket equipment generously donated by Shyam Bhatia's Cricket for Care initiative. Furthermore, the softball cricket events were regularly organized and special mention must go to Chandrika Wijesinghe for organizing a women's only 6 a side tournament that featured 6 teams from across the island.

Looking ahead, the Cyprus women's programme warmly invites players from across Cyprus to join the national setup. The federation continues to seek permanent ground facilities, a stable long-term coaching structure, and welcomes

government support to further grow women's cricket.

The 2026 season will begin in March with a fixture against the Royal Air Force Women's Cricket Team, followed by bilateral T20I games against Greece and Croatia in April.



Author Nadeesha Warauwangodage is heavily involved in Cyprus cricket. She is a national team player and the wife, sister and sister-in-law to national team players. Finally, her daughter (Sanudhi Shaakya) is a player for Mouflons CC Women

her the award of the most valuable player of the tournament.

These achievements have helped Cyprus rise to 41st place in the ICC

Men's 2025 Season Review

2025 was a pivotal year for Cyprus Cricket with expansion into state schools and the growth of women's cricket. Meanwhile, men's cricket still continues apace and Richard Boxall looks back on a busy year for the men's domestic teams



Sri Lanka Lions after Winning the Autumn T10 Competition

Moufflons, Al Fatah, Sri Lankan Lions and Markhor are the year's winners

In a very busy 2025 for men's cricket in Cyprus - including plenty of action for the national team and visits by 7 touring teams - there was still time for four tournaments for the increasing number of enthusiastic teams on the island.

With no one team dominating, there was a competitive feel to the cricket and titles were shared between Moufflons, Al Fatah, Sri Lankan Lions and Markhor. All teams are to be commended for regularly making the journey to Episkopi for matches in the idyllic surroundings of Happy Valley cricket ground.

Spring 40 Over Cup

The year's first competition, running from February to April, attracted only 10 entries as

matches were to be played on both Saturdays and Sundays. Cyprus entered its national team to allow the players to gain experience of playing together and they, along with Moufflons and Napa Kings, won 3 of their 4 matches in the group stage. The top performance was captain Scott Burdekin's 138 against Moufflons, rescuing his team from 66-5 in partnership with team coach Ruel Brathwaite to reach a match-winning score of 291-5.



In the Spring T20 Cup, Limassol Moufflons qualified for the knockout stages for the first time

Penalties for failing to fulfill umpiring duties meant that the Cyprus team did not progress to the knockout phase. In the other group Telugu 11 recovered from a tense defeat by Sri Lankan Lions in a low-scoring match to win the next three and join the Lankans in the semi finals.

Despite the all-round efforts of Takdeer, Telugu were beaten by Moufflons in the first semi final, while in the other Nalin and Kamal Raiz helped Sri Lankan Lions thrash Napa Kings, setting up what turned out to be a memorable final.

Moufflons, led by Waqas Akhtar's 70, made 237, and the Lankans were struggling at 127-7 until the tail wagged, so that the last over began with the score on 236-9 - just 2 runs required. The over was entrusted to Abubakar who had not bowled throughout the competition, and with his first ball he trapped the last man LBW to give Moufflons the narrowest of victories.

Spring T20 Cup

Played from March to June and featuring 19 teams, this was the main tournament of the year, and featured some extraordinary results.

Limassol Moufflons qualified for the knockout stages for the first time, and in doing so they eliminated Moufflons, who failed to win a single game in group D, as well as previous champions Markhor. In group C, rising teams Telugu 11 and Cyprus Knight Riders eliminated a strong-looking Sri Lankan Lions.

Amdocs was another team celebrating after qualifying from group B, while in group A the natural order was preserved as Al Fatah and Punjab Lions finished at the top.

In the quarter finals Knight Riders continued their remarkable journey with victory over Telugu, before giving Al Fatah a scare in

the semi final. Chasing Al Fatah's 109, the Riders slipped to 72-9 before a spirited last wicket stand took them to 95 at the start of the last over, with 15 required. A run out ended the innings at 98 but for a



Roman Mazumder of Nicosia Tigers scored the most runs in domestic cricket in 2025



Subareddy Alavala of up and coming team Telugu 11 took the most wickets in 2025 Men's Domestic Cricket

Akila of course!), but the final was a bit more low-key. Nicosia Tigers managed 68-9 before Markhor knocked the runs off on side 7 overs, with their captain Malik to the fore with ball and bat.

Autumn T10 Cup

The most heavily subscribed tournament of the year, this event attracted 21 entries, including 4Scots, the current regiment at Dhekelia, where they played their matches. Running from September to November the

restricted Punjab Lions to 67-6, before finding themselves 56-7 with one over left. Vihan settled matters with three consecutive boundaries and the trophy was theirs.

Top performers in the competition were all-rounders Miraj Ul Islam of Cyprus Knight Riders and Karan Singh of Black Caps.

Cyprus Cricket Federation is grateful to all the players who have done umpiring and scoring duties and to Mark Duffy who has brought his umpiring experience and expertise to our cricket. We look forward eagerly to season 2026.

while a shock had seemed possible.

Al Fatah made 118 in the final, and Punjab Lions seemed well placed to win at 105-7 after 17 overs with Taranjit in full flow. But Osama's two wickets in the 18th over made sure of success for Al Fatah, whose all-rounder Waqas Akhtar was the tournament's outstanding player, with honourable mention for Punjab Lions' Zeeshan Mehmood.

Summer T10

This short competition was held in June and July and gave teams a last chance for some cricket before the summer break. Markhor were successful, with their wicketkeeper-batsman Rasab Sher particularly enjoying this short format.

The highest score was a remarkable 160-1 from 10 overs by Sri Lankan Lions (Mangala and

competition was played in the usual format of four groups, followed by knockout matches for the group winners and runners-up.

There were a couple of surprises in the group stage, Cyprus Knight Riders finishing joint top of group D ahead of Markhor and Moufflons, Gujrat Lions beating Telugu 11 to runners-up spot in group B by winning their vital match by one run, and Nicosia Capitals achieving second place in group A.

The quarter finals went according to form, apart from Nicosia Capitals' 7-wicket win over Al Fatah, inspired by their captain Iftekar Jaman. Capitals were beaten however in the semi final, at the hands of Punjab Lions' Taranjit and Zeeshan.

But Sri Lankan Lions were not to be stopped. In the semi- final they demolished Black Caps by 10 wickets, and in the final they

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International Game Plan

Richard Cox, the Cyprus Men's National Team Manager, is also an ICC Master Coach Educator and hosted two weeks of coaching for ICC level 1 and level 2 candidates from across Europe. Richard tells us the story.



October 2025 brought an unusual buzz to the sun-washed shores of **Cyprus** — not just the typical autumn warmth and Mediterranean calm, but the eager chatter of cricket coaches from around Europe and many locals too. For the first time in years, the Cyprus Cricket Federation had the honour of hosting both the *ICC Level 1* and *ICC Level 2* coaching courses back-to-back, creating a vibrant fortnight that blended learning, culture, and the shared passion for the sport.

The program featured the *ICC Level 1* course in the city of Nicosia.

Early mornings at the school playground saw participants stretching and warming up as the olive trees cast long shadows across the dew-covered playing area.

Over the weekend, the Level 1 candidates immersed themselves in modules covering batting mechanics, bowling basics, fielding drills, and, most importantly, how to nurture young talent. Classroom sessions were animated, punctuated by laughter and the constant scribble of notes. On the practice pitch, participants demonstrated drills under the gentle supervision of expert facilitators. At sunset, debates about coaching philosophies continued over local foods and mint tea, the glow of learning reflected in every conversation.

The *ICC Level 2* cohort arrived earlier than the *ICC Level 1* with all



Swiss Youth coach, Jonty Acton (in red) demonstrates for the ICC level 2 candidates at Happy Valley

the coaches ready for a deeper dive. These were coaches with experience under their belts — some leading regional teams, others national age-group sides. Their course took place in Happy Valley Limassol, combining technical excellence with strategic acumen. Advanced biomechanics, session planning, performance analysis, and mental conditioning were just the beginning. Real-world case studies challenged coaches to rethink established norms and innovate. Coaches from far-flung countries — Serbia, The Netherlands, Italy, and Austria, and beyond — exchanged greetings in a medley of accents. Many were new to formal coaching, but all shared a hunger to deepen their understanding of cricket's fundamentals.

Field sessions were intense. Candidates spent hours refining bowling variations, designing dynamic field placements, and simulating high-pressure scenarios. Evenings were dedicated to reflective discussions that stretched late into the night, with the glow of laptops and notebooks illuminating passionate faces.

When the courses ended, the closing ceremonies brought everyone together once more. Coaches from both Level 1 and Level 2 stood shoulder-to-shoulder, exchanging contact details and gifts.

Speeches spoke of personal growth, new friendships, and a shared promise: to take back to their communities not just certification, but renewed commitment to growing the game.

Under the Cypriot sun — the same one that had welcomed them all days earlier — they parted with laughter, plans for future collaboration, and hearts full of the spirit of cricket. My heartfelt thanks go to the Cyprus Olympic Committee, ICC Europe, Cyprus Cricket Federation, and particularly Muhammad Husain (Chair) as well as my fellow coach educators – Lee Booth, Carsten Pedersen, Anu Doddaballapur and guest coach Ruel Braithwaite from the Cyprus Men's National Team for their dedication, passion, and skill in supporting the delivery of the courses.

Beyond the Boundary

Parents of young cricketers might expect to have to taxi their offspring to games, but for Xenia and Louis Senn their dedication to the game included some long haul flights. Xenia Senn, mother of Alex and Adam Senn, tells the story of their sons journey from North London and Australia to Croatia via Cyprus



Our story begins with an article written in Parikiaki, a Greek Cypriot community newspaper in London, where we live, which was read by my nephew Charlie Perdios. The article explained how the Cyprus Cricket Federation would like to hear from cricketers who play at a high level of league cricket and who would qualify to obtain a Cyprus passport. As soon as Charlie saw the article, he sent it to his cousins Alexander and Adam. Almost immediately, my phone rang, "Hello Mum, can you help Adam and I to get Cyprus Passports?"

"Hello son! Yes, I am fine, thank you." I replied and then he proceeded to relay all the information to me. It was an incredible opportunity and "Yes, of course I will help", I confirmed. To be honest at that point, I did not know if I could help but I had to remain positive for I could not dampen the excitement felt by both of my sons. One complication is that while Alex was in England, Adam was in Australia and we were advised to apply for passports in Cyprus as it would be quicker than from the UK. I contacted a friend in Cyprus who could help and before we knew it, we were all in Cyprus to start the process. It was an arduous process but made less so by our friend, Efthimoulla, who tackled all the Cyprus formalities and various offices. While we were in Cyprus to begin the applications, the boys also had trials for the Cyprus Cricket team, which went well for both. Importantly, they met the players and the management who were all so very welcoming, making the boys even more determined to play well. When the news filtered through to us that they had made the team for the Croatia tour, this was the point that as parents, my

husband Louis and I, could finally dare to dream.

The big day had finally arrived. The temperature was 35 degrees and two T20I games were to be played on that day. Both boys making their international debut for the Cyprus national team and as chance would have it, on their Dad's birthday! Birthday presents do not really get much better than that, or do they? We won both matches and with Adam even making his first T20I fifty; what a fabulous day! Liza, our daughter in law, had organised a surprise dinner for all the family at a lovely restaurant as a birthday celebration. It was wonderful to have the whole family for dinner on such a fantastic day. Both boys making their debut for Cyprus and the team winning both matches. As an old friend, from his days playing cricket in the Kent Premier League with Alexander, it was lovely that Ruel, our coach, also joined us for dinner. The surprises were not over as the Cyprus team walked into the restaurant and sang happy birthday to Louis. He looked totally embarrassed but was absolutely delighted that the team had cared to take the time to come and wish him. From the moment our boys met the players and management they have been wholeheartedly accepted and integrated into the playing set up and team. The same level of care and consideration has also been extended to us as parents!

Croatia was our first experience of international cricket with the team and it was a wonderful eye opener for us. The players genuine happiness and support of each other's successes and in turn the team's success was fantastic to witness and especially when things were not going well for an individual, there was always support. From a personal perspective, when our son Adam injured his leg fielding on the boundary our captain, Scott Burdekin, who was also carrying an injury walked right around the boundary to Adam and escorted him to the players enclosure. Coach Ruel would prowl the boundary during play offering support and encouragement when needed. Our president Muhammad, who was also manager for the tour, on top of his many other duties was also making sure the players were well hydrated and looked after as these games were played in 35+ degrees.



At the restaurant, Alex, Liza Senn (Alex's wife), Louis, Xenia and Adam alongside coach Ruel. Front row (in the push chair) is Sebastian Senn (Alex and Liza's son) and an unnamed panda.

We played four T20I in the first two days and won them all which was the main goal for the tour. On day three, Croatia brought in few fresh players and won all four of the T10s. Although some of the games were very close, we just did not get over the line. True to form, cricket the great leveller was at play once again. The team had given everything to achieve our amazing success in the stifling heat in the first two days, winning all four games and were exhausted. No doubt lessons can be learned from these experiences. However, on day four, the last day of the tour, we were nursing injuries, exhausted and humbled by the losses on the previous day but our team were not prepared to just lie down. Once more unto the breach, they came out fighting and won two of the three T10 games that day. There were many notable performances with bat and ball, some totally destructive batting that took your breath away while others were cautious and calculated to fit the situation and often many inspired bowling spells to get us the win. On a personal note, Adam had a debut to savour but in that blistering heat there were some exceptional moments of fielding and catching and let us not forget the old adage 'catches win matches'. It was a truly wonderful and memorable debut for our sons and for us to see them represent Cyprus was an indescribable joy.

Croatia came and went with so many emotions. Both of our sons were playing International Cricket for Cyprus and we were there to feel the ups, the downs, the tension, the apprehension and a lot of sweat! However, the triumph belonged to the Cyprus team and all the management. All the hard work and effort to get this tour organized was rewarded with a 4-0 win over Croatia and a leap of 10 places in the world rankings. It was a fantastic tour for the Cyprus team, players, management and fans alike. For the Cyprus players, I would hope that the elation of the wins overcame the exhaustion that they must have felt.

Suddenly, from this great high, due to a change in Indian Real Money Gaming laws, Dream11 withdrew their sponsorship of the European Cricket Network (ECN). This was calamitous for European Cricket as all tournaments run by the ECN were immediately suspended. Thankfully, behind the scenes the Cyprus Cricket Federation were hard at work to ensure the tri-series against Serbia and Bulgaria at the end of October went ahead.

October soon arrived and we were driving through the beautiful landscapes of Cyprus to arrive in Episkopi where the tension was no less than the first game in Croatia.

Again, we hoped for one win to settle the nerves. Our captain Scott Burdekin, had not fully recovered from his injury and our son Alexander was given the honour of being captain of the Cyprus national team for this Tri-series. An exceptionally proud moment. We played Serbia twice on our first day and won both games. This was followed by two games against Bulgaria. We won the first game with our players stepping up with bat, ball and in the field. There would always be someone to get us through the difficult moments in our games.

If we could win the second game, we would win the Tri-series cup. We were batting first and hoping to put a good score on the board. Our son Alexander had been batting for a while and Louis and I were sitting in the shade under the olive trees when Muhammad came past us with the Cyprus Olympic Committee party. The Board Member of the Cyprus Olympic Committee, Efthymios Polydorou and his wife were there to make the cup presentation to the



Adam (left) and Alex (right) aside proud parents Louis and Xenia at Happy Valley

winners. It was such a pleasure for us to meet them on such a wonderful day. I must mention that they were walking in a clockwise direction around the boundary. As the saying goes, walk clockwise around the boundary for your team to get wickets and anticlockwise to get runs. Muhammad stopped and said would you like to join us as we chat and tour the ground but if you prefer to watch the game please do. We walked with the party despite going in the wrong direction for runs. Although we did not have his exact score, we estimated Alexander was near his first T20I fifty and while trying his best to engineer a good total that the team could defend and win this tri-series, we knew how important his first T20I fifty would be. The tension evaporated and was replaced by pure elation, as we won the game and received the cup from Efthymios Polydorou. Alexander scored a fifty and we were delighted that they won all the games in this series with him as stand-in Captain. Clearly there is no such thing as superstition in cricket! We played another two



National honours; The Cyprus squad in Croatia. Adam standing on the far left, Alex sitting with white sleeves. Photo Diana Oros

T20I games against Bulgaria the next day and won both games, bringing a magnificent series to an end. After the conclusion of the games, it got dark very quickly and sadly the time came to say our goodbyes. It had been an emotional roller coaster of a ride and which could only be celebrated with a delicious meze, of course!

Winning these games has taken the Cyprus team up 20 places in the world rankings to 64th. Richard Boxall, Cyprus Cricket Federation Board Member, has written a detailed report of these games for a local paper. As is the norm, he is also seen checking that the pitch and boundaries are in order and whatever needs doing to keep things on track and games running smoothly. Muhammad can be seen helping and teaching the scorers and even tidying up chairs at the end of games besides all his other work promoting Cyprus cricket in any way possible. While Ruel Brathwaite, our coach, and Richard Cox, who has taken over as the team manager, are confidants,

physios, psychologists and oh yes, coaches and managers too. We are riding the crest of a wave at the moment. Winning is great and a good habit to develop but there are hard challenges ahead. There is no shortage of talent in the players we possess but as our coach said, a lot of cricket is won using your head. Understanding and recognising the different nuances as the game progresses and responding swiftly and appropriately to the change is paramount and we know our coach is already working on these points with the players.

We are essentially an amateur body and as such must work within the constraints of a challenging budget, with a lot of goodwill and volunteer support. Cyprus Cricket Federation are doing their best to promote and develop the game of cricket in the country and with much perseverance, they have managed to introduce cricket into schools, with approval from the Ministry of Education. A program has been set up to train the

teachers to coach cricket in schools and they have provided the schools with cricket kits for children to play at school. Hopefully within a decade or so we could have some home-grown players coming into the national team through these programs. We are hugely grateful to the support the British military gives Cyprus cricket in allowing us to use their grounds for our international and club cricket without which, developing the game in Cyprus would be almost impossible.

Richard Boxall in his newspaper article describes proud parents sitting under the trees watching the boys playing for the Cyprus national team. Indeed, we are proud, to see our sons playing for the country where I was born and where my parents rest in peace. It makes me immensely happy and proud, as would be their grandparents. Thank you to the Cyprus Cricket Federation, the whole team and to our two sons for providing us with this wonderful view from beyond the boundary.

Star Maker!

That's not Nicholas Chimmunchlam's official job title, but it feels like it should be! Nick tells us of his journey from the southern hemisphere to the schools of Cyprus



When I was growing up cricket was always been more than just a game to me. Watching Allan Donald, Jonty Rhodes and Lance Klusener most weekends and then playing in the back garden with my cousin and brother, really helped shape the love I have for the game.

Throughout my youth and into early adulthood I played but something was always missing, I felt like I needed to bring something different to the game I love. After a short break from cricket and a move to Cyprus, my coaching journey began.

Cyprus is a country where cricket is still developing and after a meeting with the President of the Cyprus Cricket Federation, and great discussions with other coaches and local players, I could feel and see the passion and vision Cyprus Cricket Federation has for cricket in Cyprus and that is where I found my purpose.

My work with Cyprus Cricket so far has focused mainly on two aspects: 1) Introducing cricket to schools and 2) Coaching youth cricket (U15 & U13).

Introducing cricket to schools in Cyprus has been both beautiful and difficult. There are days when progress feels slow, when facilities are lacking and when cricket feels invisible compared to other sports. But there are also days when a child stays behind after a session just to ask one more question, or when a group of students runs toward the



Nick during his Level 2 Coaching Course (front row, third from right)

equipment instead of away from it. Those moments matter. They remind me why this work is worth doing. For many children, it is their first ever experience of cricket and watching their curiosity turn into excitement, and then into real skill, is one of the most rewarding parts of what I do. Cricket teaches much more than batting, bowling and fielding; it teaches discipline, teamwork, respect, confidence and most importantly community.

Working with the U13 and U15 age groups has been a key part of my coaching journey in Cyprus and a very important stage in developing the game properly.

With the U13s, the priority is enjoyment and basic skills. Sessions are designed to be engaging and simple, helping players understand the fundamentals of batting, bowling, and fielding while developing coordination and confidence. At this age, it's about encouraging participation, teamwork, and curiosity about the game. When cricket feels fun, learning happens naturally.

The U15 level brings a shift in mindset. Players start to take the game more seriously and are ready for more structure, discipline, and tactical understanding. Training focuses on improving technique,

match awareness, and fitness, while also introducing the responsibilities that come with being part of a team. This is often the stage where players begin to set goals for themselves and consider future pathways in cricket.

To improve myself as a coach and better serve the players I work with, I completed the ICC Level 1 and Level 2 coaching

courses. Completing the ICC Level 2 course was an important step in my development as a coach. It helped me move beyond basic instruction and think more deeply about long-term player development, session planning, and individual needs. The course placed strong emphasis on creating purposeful training environments, understanding different learning styles, and adapting coaching methods to suit age and ability.

It also reinforced the importance of reflection and continuous improvement as a coach. Through practical assessments and theory, I gained tools to better analyse technique, communicate more clearly, and support players in a structured but flexible way. The Level 2 course strengthened my confidence and provided a clearer framework for delivering quality coaching sessions.

Cricket in Cyprus has great potential. The passion is there, especially among the youth. With continued effort at the grassroots level, proper coaching, and strong support from the cricket community, the game can continue to grow and reach new heights. I am proud to play my part in this journey and remain committed to helping cricket develop, one player at a time.

A New Chapter

When Mark and Janet Duffy retired to Cyprus they didn't even know that cricket was a "thing" in Cyprus, a few months later Mark was umpiring his first game on the island. Mark tells the story.



My wife Janet and I moved over to Cyprus in October 2024 to start a new chapter in our lives following retirement in the UK.

I had been involved in cricket from school, playing at a reasonable standard as an average all-rounder. When I got a bit older I stopped playing but went into umpiring as I live the game and wanted to stay involved.

I umpired at a decent standard in the UK after achieving Stage 3 accreditation and stood for over 5 years in the north-west of England.

When we moved to Cyprus I had no idea what cricket took place and in all honesty did not expect to be involved in cricket. However, after a few months I noticed a post on the Cyprus Cricket facebook page and contacted Richard Boxall through this and was invited to stand in a friendly in March 2025.

I was welcomed with open arms by the Cyprus Cricket Federation and was asked to officiate in the Women's Quadrangular tournament in April with representing sides from Denmark, Isle of Man, Jersey and Cyprus.

The tournament was really well organised by Cyprus Cricket and this also gave me a tremendous opportunity to umpire 4 international matches with some excellent cricket on display.

The Cyprus Women's cricket team performed well against higher ranked teams and whilst the sport is still quite new to the women in



Mark is on the left at the Umpire of the Year competition - only joking! - it was the Women's T20I Quadrangular series in April 2025

Cyprus the signs are good for the future.

Following the Women's tournament, I had the chance to umpire in the Men's domestic tournaments and stood in the finals days of the T20 and T10 competitions. The men's game in Cyprus is quite strong and all the sides in the competitions play with enthusiasm and passion, the quality of cricket on show is also of a really good standard.

At the end of October 2024 Cyprus hosted a Men's T20I triangular tournament with Bulgaria and Serbia and again I was privileged to be involved in umpiring 7 of the 8 internationals played. Cyprus won the tournament winning all their games over the 4 days also

improving their T20I ranking at the same time.

At the end of November, I attended a 3-day course in Malmo, Sweden after being put forward by the Cyprus Cricket Federation. This course was an Umpire training course to enable me to train prospective umpires in Cyprus, so the quality of umpiring in the country can improve and run alongside the development of the game as a whole in Cyprus.

With Cyprus also hosting regional T20I World Cup qualifiers in May 2026 these are extremely exciting times for cricket in Cyprus and I can honestly say it has been a real privilege to play a small part in this.

Cricket without Boundaries and the Cyprus Cricket Federation



A partnership enabling positive youth development and capacity building in Cyprus. Muhammad Hussain has the details



Lee Booth leading an ICC Level 2 Coaching course at Happy Valley

inclusive cricket sessions, introducing the sport to a new generation and strengthening its presence within the education system. In addition, Lee supported the delivery of an ICC Foundation Coaching Course for nine female participants in Limassol.

The partnership reached a new milestone in 2025, when Cricket Without Boundaries coaches Ed Lamb and Stan Dey spent 6–8 weeks in Cyprus delivering cricket coaching sessions at public schools across the country. This extended

The partnership between the Cyprus Cricket Federation and Cricket Without Boundaries (CWB) has played an important role in the growth of cricket across the island, particularly in youth development and education.

It all started nearly a decade ago in 2016, when Muhammad Husain (at that time Chairman of Cyprus Cricket) met with Andy Hobbs (at that time Senior Manager - Development Services at ICC and Co-Founder and Trustee of Cricket Without Boundaries) at ICC Europe Conference in London. The two discussed the idea of a collaboration between the two organizations and to support the growth of the game through coach education program and also by running sessions with local schools.

In 2017, Lee Booth, Head of Delivery at Cricket Without Boundaries, visited Cyprus, contributing to coaching at youth cricket sessions and participated in Cyprus Cricket's annual youth cricket festival involving boys and girls from different schools.

In 2024, during the ICC Europe Conference in Athens, Muhammad Husain (now President of Cyprus Cricket) "coincidentally" met Lee Booth on the bus to the Panathenaic Stadium. A 15-minute conversation was enough to secure Lee's return visit to Cyprus the following week.

Lee was back in Cyprus for a week in April 2024, with a focus on expanding cricket in primary schools. During the visit, Lee worked closely with schools in Limassol and Paphos to deliver fun,

program allowed for consistent engagement with students and helped embed cricket within school sports programs.

In March, Ed and Stan supported the teachers' training programme through a two-day ICC Level 1 Cricket Coaching Course organised by the Cyprus Cricket Federation, enabling local teachers to confidently deliver cricket in schools.

Further strengthening coaching capacity in Cyprus, Lee Booth also played a key role in delivering the ICC Level 2 Coach Course in October 2025. This advanced qualification helped develop high-quality coaches, ensuring long-term sustainability and growth of cricket in Cyprus and in Europe. Additionally, Lee was part of the ICC Level 1 Coach Course in Nicosia, organized by Cyprus

Cricket Federation in cooperation with the Cyprus Olympic Committee and within the framework of the Olympic Solidarity program of the International Olympic Committee

Lee Booth from Cricket Without Boundaries on the partnership with Cyprus Cricket Federation "It was fantastic to be back in Cyprus once again, catching up with old friends and seeing first-hand how they continue to grow the game of cricket across the island. One of

the real highlights was the ICC Level 2 course, with participants from all around Europe, and it was great to see Cyprus given the honour of hosting the very first version of this course in Europe.

Visiting Nicosia for the first time was another special experience, meeting so many passionate teachers and players who are eager to learn and develop as cricket coaches — something that will no doubt give a big boost to the game in Cyprus. I'm already

looking forward to returning soon to catch up again and see how all the newly trained coaches are progressing."

Together, the Cyprus Cricket Federation and Cricket Without Boundaries have built a lasting partnership focused on education, inclusivity, and the sustainable development of cricket at grassroots and coaching levels across the island.

Fielding Questions



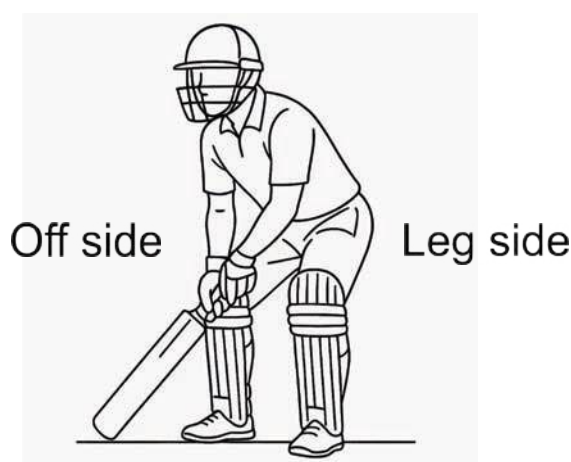
In an attempt to take his mind off the Ashes, Andrew Pepper takes a look at fielding positions and how they got their names

It has to be admitted that people who are yet to discover the joys of cricket can be confused by the names of fielding positions. In defense of the game, I'd argue that the positions aren't deliberately confusing, that's just a happy accident. I'd also argue that, for a certain type of reader, the origins of the names might be of interest.

Some positions actually are well named - the wicket keeper "keeps" - or guards - the wicket. A long stop will stand a long way from the stumps and stop the ball.

Slips are there to catch "slips" (mistakes) by the batter.

Alas, these are exceptions - most fielding positions have names whose origins are lost to history and although some cricketers might claim that the naming system (system!) is logical, that claim is on pretty shaky ground. With that said, I'll try and explain some of the conventions.



It couldn't be easier - "leg" is the side near the legs

Most positions are named, in part, for the side of the batter that the fielder is standing. The side *furthest* from the batter's legs is simply¹ called the "off" side.

The side closest to the batter's legs is called the "leg" side and gives its name to square leg, leg slip, long leg and so on - except! - if the position is in front of the batter, it's called the "on" side, this gives the name to "mid-on" - which is roughly halfway between the

¹ I love the "simply" in this sentence.

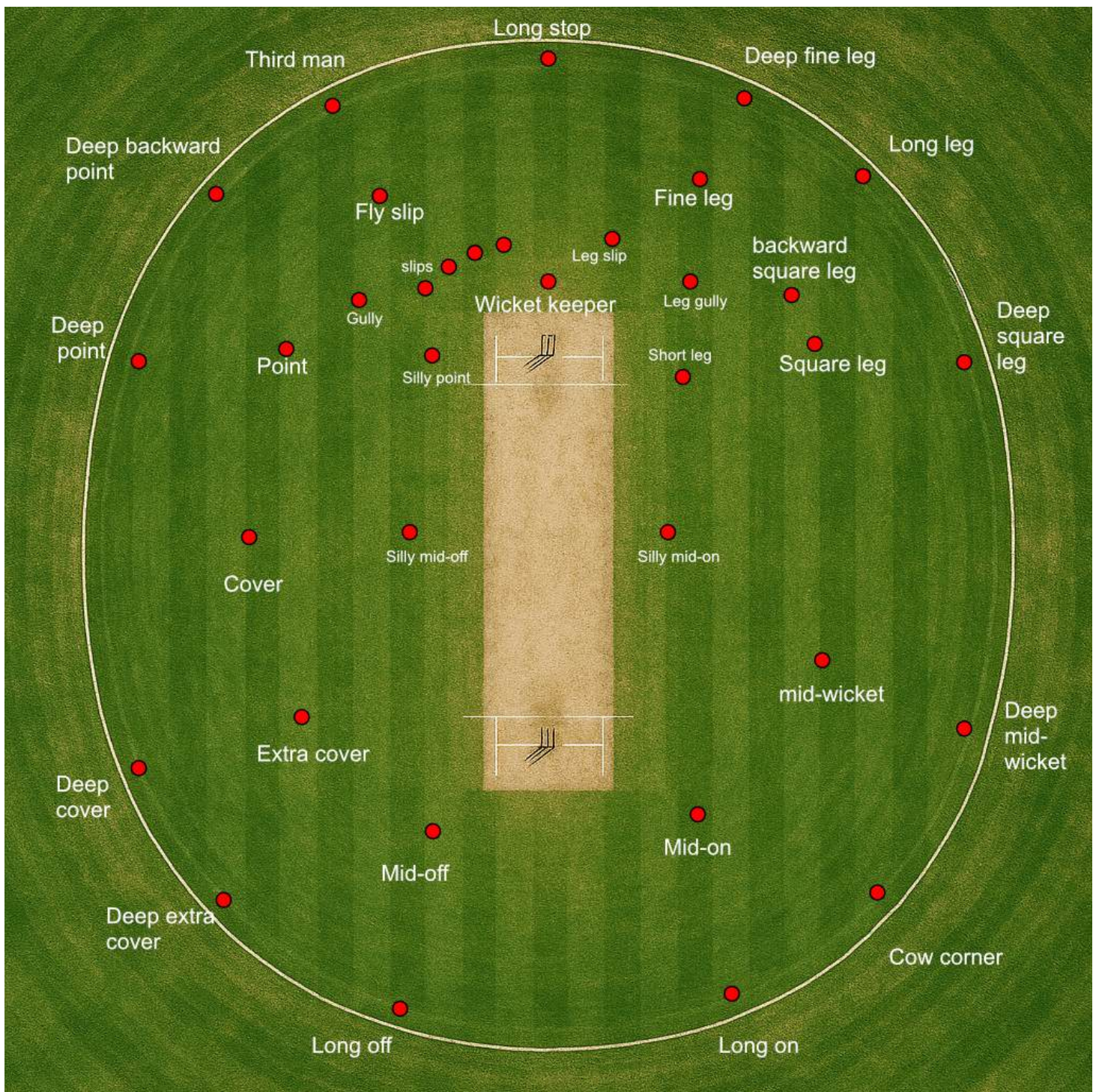
bowler's end wicket and the boundary so, in a rare display of logical naming, the position is in the middle of the "on" side.

Fielding positions on the boundary are described as "long" or "deep" - and there doesn't seem to be much of a reason why one is used over the other.

If a fielder stands close to the batter, that's a *silly* thing to do as it's more likely they'll get hit by the ball and that's reflected

in the names - the "silly" is inserted at the front of the name. So, silly mid-on is like "normal" mid-on, except the fielder stands much closer to the batter. There's corresponding silly mid-off and silly point. But, again, just as you think things are consistent, there's no such position as "silly square-leg" - it's just "short-leg".

Perhaps hard to believe, we're now going to look at less sensibly named positions.



There is some method to the madness, just not very much. Remember, this is for a right-handed batter, if a left-hander is facing "simply" swap over the positions

There never seems to have been a time where "third man" makes a lot of sense. Probably, the name comes from the days when there were usually two slip fielders and a third fielder would be placed behind the slips to stop balls that evaded the slips. This does presuppose there were only ever two slips.

An alternative explanation I've heard is that there was *one* slip and the third man was the one

after the wicket keeper and the slip.

Whichever story is true, the name has stuck - and trying to explain to someone during a women's match why a fielder is called "third man" when none of the players are men and the other fielding positions aren't numbered is quite the challenge. This has become a bit easier as "fielding positions" is a living language and in recent years commentators have started calling

the position "third" so it's, very slightly, less ridiculous.

"Gully" is, I think, unique in fielding positions in that its invention is credited to a single cricketer - Arthur Jones who played for England and Nottinghamshire in the 1900s. Arthur's Test averages aren't all that impressive but he was regarded as the best fielder of his time and he realised that a lot of balls were going between point and the slips. With the genius of the true inventor, he placed a

fielder there to stop that happening. The position was called "gully" because it was imagined that a valley, or *gully*, was between the slips and point.

Having the imagination to envisage an invisible valley on the field might be useful for the next position - "cow corner".

Cow corner requires one to imagine a field of cows grazing in an area because there aren't any fielders there. That position is between long-on and deep mid-wicket. There is an alternative theory about the name; it's where a

slog by an "agricultural" batter - strong but unskilled - is likely to end up. There is a bit of a leap to assume that every "agricultural" player worked with cows.

When I was first introduced to "cow corner" I was so bamboozled that I wouldn't have been surprised if there was a "here be dragons" position. A Cypriot aside; former coach Andrew Crook has retired to a house built on a former cricket ground and he's called it "Cow Corner".

To add to a confusing situation, there can be local positions.

However, in practise, they actually seem to make things a bit clearer. I've played in games where "green door" was a position - it was actually close to cow corner but as there wasn't a cow there but there was a green door, it felt an eminently sensible change.

The names do, over the years, become built-in to cricketers' brains and, one day, that might happen to me. In the meantime, I'm happy to field at second slip - as there's not much running around - or if that's not available, I'll stand at Green Door.

Cricket in 2026

He may not know about red ball cricket or white ball cricket, but Andrew Pepper tries crystal ball cricket for the year ahead



Although the world cup qualifiers are going to dominate cricket here for the summer, there is still plenty going on for the rest of the year and it looks like being a classic year for the game in Cyprus.

Men's Touring Sides	
Apr 17-19	Swinbrook
Sep 18-20	Petersfield CC

Men's Domestic Cricket	
Mar 29	Spring T20 Starts
Sep	40 over starts
Sep	T10 starts
Sep 27	EWS Six-a-Side

Women's Domestic Cricket	
May 3	Spring T20 Starts
Sep	T10 Starts
Sep 27	EWS Six-a-Side

Women's National Team	
Apr 3-5	Bilateral vs Greece
June 18-20	Bilateral vs Malta
Oct 17-18	Bilateral vs Austria

Men's National Team	
Mar 14-16	Bilateral vs Austria
May 8-9	Bilateral vs Finland
May 16-23	ICC World T20 Europe Sub-regional qualifiers

ICC World T20 Cup Europe SR Qualifier A Timetable		
	Happy Valley 1	Happy Valley 2
May 16	10:30 Guernsay vs Sweden 15:30 Austria vs Malta	10:30 France vs Cyprus 15:30 Jersey vs Switzerland
May 17	10:30 Croatia vs France 15:30 Cyprus vs Jersey	10:30 Malta vs Guernsey 15:30 Slovenia vs Austria
May 19	10:30 Sweden vs Slovenia 15:30 Guernsey vs Austria	10:30 Jersey vs France 15:30 Switzerland vs Croatia
May 20	10:30 Switzerland vs Cyprus 15:30 Croatia vs Jersey	10:30 Slovenia vs Guernsey 15:30 Sweden vs Malta
May 22	10:30 Austria vs Sweden 15:30 Malta vs Slovenia	10:30 France vs Switzerland 15:30 Cyprus vs Croatia
May 23	10:30 7 th Play-Off 15:30 5 th Play-Off	10:30 3 rd Play-Off 15:30 FINAL

History of Cricket in Cyprus book launched



Something extraordinary happened in February 2026 and it wasn't the USA nearly beating India in the T20 World Cup, it was Andrew Pepper looking relatively smartly dressed at the launch of his book, *Oranges on the Outfield*



Left to right, Muhammad Husain, Andrew Pepper, Daniel Mangis and Efthymiou Polydorou.

It all started when Cyprus Cricket Federation president, Muhammad Husain, noticed that the 25th anniversary of the Cyprus joining the European Cricketing Council was approaching and at a committee meeting he said "wouldn't it be great to have a book about the history of the game in Cyprus?"

He said the last part staring pointedly at me. As it happened, he didn't need to stare that much - my batting average of below 1 had suggested that it was unlikely that would get picked for the national team which meant I had plenty of time on my hands. Along with that, the history of the game has always been an interest of mine, so an excuse to chat with former players and officials wasn't really work in my mind and finding such nuggets as the first scorecard was for a match that took place in February

or that as well as cricket, a British Major tried to start the "Nicosia Hunt" but no-one turned up (he blamed poor advertising) made the research a joy. However, one old adage of computer programming is "the last 10% of development takes 90% of the time" and, it turns out, that's true of book writing as well and by the time of publication, we'd slightly gone passed the anniversary. Nevertheless, on 7 February 2026, the Cyprus Olympic Building hosted the launch of *Oranges on the Outfield, a history of cricket in Cyprus*.

As well as many current members of the national teams, the launch was attended by Daniel Mangis (Chargé d' Affaires ad interim - US Embassy in Cyprus) and Efthymiou Polydorou (board member of the Cyprus Olympic Committee) and, most importantly, staff from Hurry Curry were there to provide food.

One piece of serendipitous timing was that the USA was playing India in the T20 World Cup during the launch and (of course) the match was being live streamed when Daniel Mangis arrived, even more serendipitous was that the USA played out of their skins and looked like they might beat India in India (alas for Daniel, India recovered to a rather shaky win).

The book title raised some questions, but it's quite simple; alongside the main ground at Happy Valley, there is a row of orange trees and, depending on the season, there really are oranges on the outfield.

The orange trees are close to the nets so you might be concerned that an unsuspecting batter might be bowled the occasional orange. There's no need to worry; of course that happens.



Oranges on the Outfield

A history of cricket in Cyprus

ANDREW PEPPER



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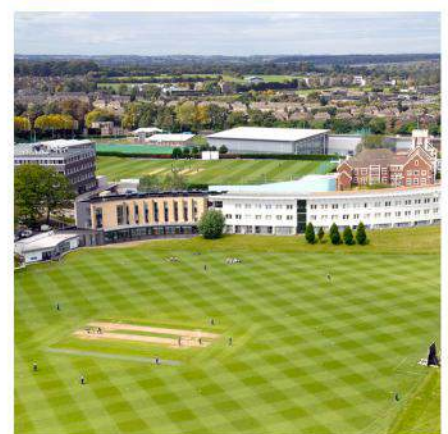
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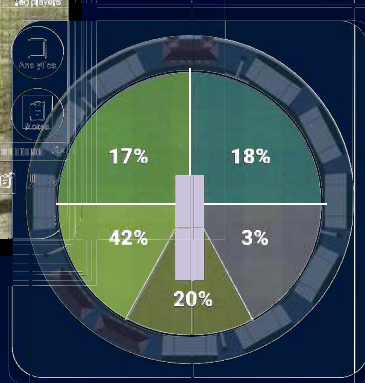
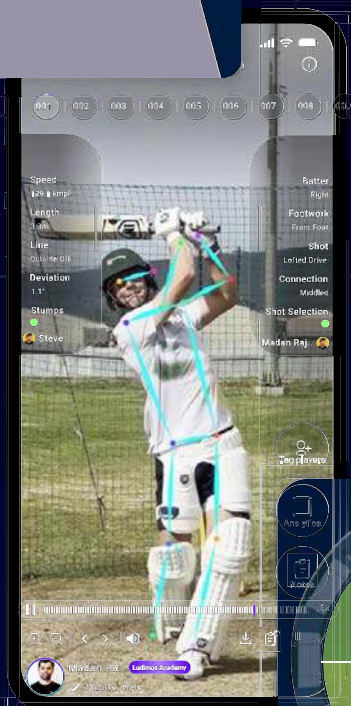
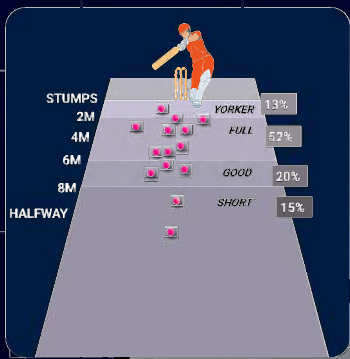
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