



Sandy Scotland

Cricket Umpire & Administrator

CSMOA Life Member

1948 – 2022

When Sandy Scotland passed away last week, cricket in Scotland lost one of its most respected umpires, a highly efficient administrator and a great servant to our game.

Cricket was one of Sandy's passions from very early in his life, despite, as he said himself, being quite useless at it. His short-lived playing career in Scotland started at Newhaven Cricket Club before joining Leith Franklin, where he was encouraged to become an umpire.

He started umpiring in the early 1980s, quickly demonstrating an aptitude for that aspect of the game and, even through his recent declining health, he was still donning the (off) white jacket and hat this season, mainly for Carlton teams at Grange Loan.

In the first half of his umpiring career, he continued to watch cricket all over Scotland and England, often with his great friend and fellow umpire Andrew Wood. Sandy would drive the length and breadth of England to watch County cricket, particularly enjoying some of the out grounds and festival matches.

Progressing to the highest level in Scotland afforded Sandy the opportunity to be involved in top level cricket, something he loved and never took for granted. At his peak, he would relish the thought of a top-of-the-table clash or a cup semi-final and he was, justifiably, proud when he had what he called a "good day" in these matches. No one stood in more matches in a season than Sandy, but he approached every match in the same way, from U13s to Scottish Cup Final.

Sandy had many, many "good days" on-field, but he was honest enough with himself to know when he made a mistake and it bothered him greatly that he may have had a detrimental effect on the match and, possibly, ruined someone's week! One area where Sandy was never caught out, was the Laws. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the Laws of Cricket and was the go-to man on the Laws for many years. Not surprising, perhaps, for a graduate of Cambridge University.

He was delighted to be asked, on a few occasions, to third umpire international matches in Scotland. He quickly understood what was required and was, undoubtedly, an asset to the

umpires and Match Referee. Again, he loved being involved in cricket and with cricketers at the highest level of the game.

Sandy's hard work, dedication and skill as an umpire were recognised in 2009 when he was awarded the accolade of umpire of the year at the Lloyds TSB Cricket Scotland Awards.

For many years Sandy delivered Winter training courses to new, and sometimes not so new, umpires, often at the Edinburgh Accies pavilion, sometimes at Cricket Scotland HQ. He also took his training courses on the road, delivering in the North East and North. He very much enjoyed imparting his knowledge and experience and loved the discussions on the Laws and scenarios that arose. He was always keen to recruit new umpires from these courses and many umpires, at all levels, started their careers on Sandy's courses. He took great pleasure from seeing umpires progress through the ranks and, Sandy being Sandy, was even delighted when the pupil surpassed the teacher.

As if umpiring so many matches and running training courses wasn't enough, Sandy, along with Mac Wylie, for many years, handled umpire appointments, all the associated match administration and an umpires' annual conference. Sandy brought his own brand of organisation to this thankless task, eschewing the use of any technology, preferring to use reams of 16 column analysis paper and countless pens of various shapes, sizes and colours. Remarkably, his system worked 99.9% of the time. Underneath the, sometimes, disheveled exterior, there was a very sharp and organised brain and a great desire to get things right.

Sandy and Mac were very different individuals with very different ideas and approaches, yet somehow, they got the job done, got on really well and enjoyed each other's company. They also enjoyed many a glass of wine together, one white and one red, of course. When they stepped down from running the officials' association and went their separate ways, they both remained involved with the Cricket Scotland Domestic Officials Committee, thus continuing to make a contribution to umpiring. The massive contributions they both made were recognised when they, jointly, received special recognition from Cricket Scotland in the form of the Eve Maudsley Trophy at the 2019 Annual Awards Dinner. Both Sandy and Mac were, rightly, very proud of this.

As a Chartered Accountant, Sandy could have pursued a lucrative career in finance, but that would have got in the way of his cricket. By his own admission, he was never financially well off, but he was more than happy with his lot, servicing his accounts and tax clients each winter and umpiring, almost full-time, each summer. He didn't have expensive tastes, but allowed himself to hold debentures for Murrayfield and spend many evenings at the opera. Sandy wasn't one to splash out on clothes, which was ironic as the reverse seemed often to be true.

Sandy's contribution to cricket in Scotland cannot be underestimated, it's hard to imagine anyone has given more. He will be sorely missed, not just by umpires and umpiring, but by everyone associated with Scottish cricket. If he wasn't Mr Cricket, he was certainly Mr Umpiring.

Rest in peace, Sandy, in the knowledge you gave such a lot to so many people over a very long time.

Ian Ramage, former International Umpire & CSMOA Life Member