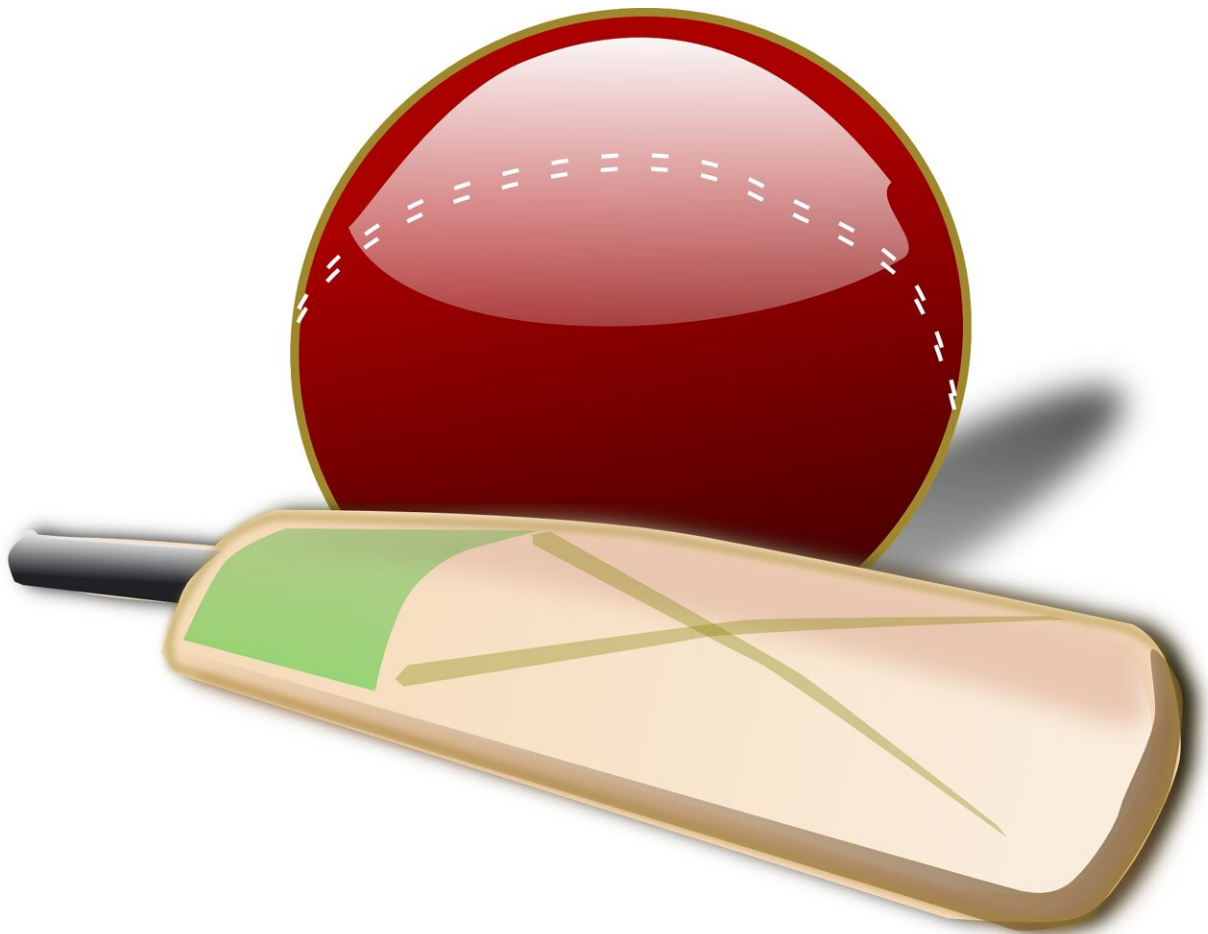


Classism, racism and misogyny widespread in cricket, finds report

June 28 2023



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

A new report recommending ways to address the ongoing and historic

racism, elitism and sexism prevalent in English and Welsh cricket was co-led by a UCL researcher.

Titled "[Holding Up a Mirror to Cricket](#)," the report was written by the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket, a committee established by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), the sport's official governing body, to assess evidence of inequalities and [discrimination](#), and recommend actions to address these issues.

The commission found a culture in which overt discrimination often goes without serious challenge, and prevailing attitudes of interpersonal racism, sexism and other discriminatory practices are commonplace.

The report contains 44 recommendations to make the sport of [cricket](#) more inclusive. Among these include calling for a public apology for all who have experienced discrimination in the sport, an apology for the historical neglect and discrimination against women's cricket and black Caribbean cricket in England and Wales, the establishment of a new Black Cricket Action Plan to invest in grassroots black cricket and talent development, and the recognition that there are few avenues for people of lower economic status to advance within the sport.

Other recommendations include changes to the ECB governance, pay equity for women, creating a new regulator, improved funding for state schools, and changes to the talent pathway for young athletes to advance within the sport.

Dr. Michael Collins (UCL History), one of four commissioners, working alongside commission chair Cindy Butts, said, "We conclude that elitism, alongside deeply rooted and widespread forms of structural and institutional racism, sexism and class-based discrimination are pervasive across the game of cricket in England and Wales. Class prejudice is pervasive. Racism is still entrenched in cricket. Women are marginalized

and routinely experience sexism and misogyny."

In contributing to the report, Dr. Collins drew upon his "Windrush Cricket" project at UCL which looks at the role of cricket in the black experience of migration and settlement in Britain after World War 2. This research will be published separately as a book next year.

Dr. Collins said, "The historical injustices suffered within the game of cricket by black Britons in the postwar period—so many lives ruined—may be acknowledged, but can never be fully compensated for. Even so, we must build a better future for the current and next generations."

The report also found that there is an elitist and exclusionary culture within the sport that favors private school networks within cricket's talent pathways. Professional players are overwhelmingly privately educated, and there are far fewer opportunities for state school attendees and people of other backgrounds to become professional players. Drawing in players from broader backgrounds would benefit the sport directly, as it would widen the talent pool to draw players from.

One recommendation to address this includes ending the long-established Eton v. Harrow and Oxford v. Cambridge matches at Lord's Cricket Grounds and replacing them with a more meritocratic scheme for state school and universities to qualify across national competitions. In addition, Lord's Cricket Grounds, considered the most prestigious of the sport, should find time to host the national England women's test match team as well.

Dr. Collins said, "I believe these games are untenable. They portray the worst possible image of elitism in cricket, and arguably have no place in modern Britain. Replacing these events with open state school competitions will make a material difference, but the symbolism of

switching one with the other is important too."

The commission surveyed more than 4,000 people involved in the sport of cricket over the course of two years, including players, leaders, staff, and volunteers, 50% of whom said they experienced some form of discrimination.

The report goes on to say that while there are serious issues embedded within cricket, they are not unique to the sport, and reflect deeply rooted societal problems that are prevalent throughout the U.K. more broadly.

Provided by University College London

Citation: Classism, racism and misogyny widespread in cricket, finds report (2023, June 28)
retrieved 3 May 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2023-06-classism-racism-misogyny-widespread-cricket.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.