



(L-R) Joint winners John Blythe & James Humphries with runners up Jeremy Gibson-Harris & Mike Franklin

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## ECB and MCC announce winners of Design Competition for Bowlers' Headgear

The England and Wales Cricket Board and MCC have today announced the winners of the Design Competition for Bowlers' Headgear, and the creation of a working group from the leading three contestants to produce a bespoke design.

The focus of such a design is aimed at advancing safety provision for bowlers in their follow-through. The ECB and MCC jointly launched the competition at

the end of last year, and judging recently took place at Lord's.

The joint winners of the competition are John Blythe, a Consultant Oral and Cranio-Maxillofacial Surgeon from Barts Health NHS Hospital London, and James Humphries, a second-year Industrial Design student from Loughborough University.

Succeeding through a shortlist of six finalists, both of the winners were selected on virtue of their expertise in different areas. In addition, there was also a highly commended runner-up in the contest; the pairing of Jeremy Gibson-Harris and Mike Franklin of Crawley Creatures.

The panel agreed that the three entrants could work together and use parts of each other's designs and knowledge to collaborate and develop a potential product for bowlers to use.

Blythe's knowledge of head injuries and the clear identification of the key areas that needed to be protected were the focus of his entry which scored highly for ergonomics and functionality. Humphries was selected on the basis of his high level of innovation and design, and the pair will now work collaboratively to create a design.

Gibson-Harris and Franklin are award-winning designers, engineers and specialists in bespoke projects including robotics and models that are used in some of the most prominent feature films, museums and shows. They will support the project and advise on the practical development of a design that could be put into production in the future.

The judging panel consisted of Dr Nick Peirce, Chief Medical Officer, ECB; Fraser Stewart, Laws Manager, MCC; James Jones, Cricket Product Manager at Gunn & Moore; Professor Andy Harland, Director, Sports Technology Institute, Loughborough University; Billy Taylor, former first-class cricketer and current first-class umpire.

Dr Nick Peirce said: "The aim of the competition was to put both the ECB and MCC at the forefront of innovation in this field and we were really impressed with the strength of entries.

"The shortlist of six was especially strong and we congratulate both John and

James on winning first prize. The challenge now is for them to use their expertise and develop a design that can potentially be put into production in the future.”

Fraser Stewart said: “With the short form of the game evolving, there is an increased risk of head injuries to bowlers and this is the first step in creating a practical solution to minimise the risk of harm.

“Both John and James now have the platform to put their very different skills together with a brief that can form a new product for bowlers, and we are really excited to see their future designs.”

The two winners share a prize pot of £5,000 and the pair are now eligible for a significant investment in prototype development. The initial designs that are created will be made public in due course.

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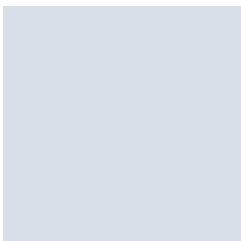
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