



All Stars Cricket kids practice catching - credit Jonathan Cherry

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ECB and Sky partner for The Participation Test during the third Specsavers Ashes Test

For the second year in a row, England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is delighted to join forces with broadcast partner Sky, to theme the upcoming Specsavers Ashes Test at the Emerald Headingley, *The Participation Test*.

Throughout the third Specsavers Ashes Test, Sky will highlight ECB initiatives helping to make the game more accessible, and shine a light on diversity and inclusion within the sport.

Day one of the Test will focus on the impact of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup. Over one million young people aged between five and twelve connected with the tournament through programmes designed to engage schools, clubs and cities. Managing Director of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup, Steve Elworthy, and ECB Director of Participation & Growth, Nick Pryde, will reflect on the World Cup and discuss how ECB is capitalising on its success to inspire the next generation.

Day two of the Test will focus on ECB's award-winning South Asian Action Plan, one year on from its launch. This 11-point strategy is designed to better engage South Asian communities at every level of the sport. ECB's Senior Independent Non-Executive Board Member Lord Patel and Shruti Saujani, City Programme Manager will reveal how better access to cricket facilities in urban areas and how recruiting South Asian female activators is making a difference.

Day three of the Test will concentrate on disability cricket as Sky go behind the scenes with the England Physical Disability team who finished runners-up in the inaugural, five team World Series last week. England's disability squads are also in action later this year, with the Learning Disability team travelling to Australia in October and the Visually Impaired team playing against Pakistan in the UAE. Ian Martin, ECB's Head of Disability Cricket hopes to inspire more people, both disabled and able-bodied, to pick up a bat and ball and discover that cricket is a game for them.

Talking about the Participation Test, ECB's **Nick Pryde** said:

"The Participation Test was a fantastic part of the Headingley Test fixture last year and we are delighted it's back. Sky's coverage is a brilliant opportunity to highlight how cricket embraces diversity and inclusivity, and how we are proactively expanding the reach of the game. Our new strategy for 2020-2024, *Inspiring Generations*, will continue to build on the momentum of this landmark year for cricket."

Sky's Head of Cricket **Bryan Henderson** added: "Everyone at Sky Sports is looking forward to an even closer partnership with the ECB, it will give us the chance to tell the stories of inspiring even more people to engage with the game.

"The profile and interest of an Ashes series also gives us a great opportunity

to shine a light on the great work on inclusion and diversity at all levels.”

Visit ecb.co.uk/play for participation opportunities and ecb.co.uk/be-involved to explore wider roles.

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ECB CORPORATE PARTNERS

Contacts



Kate Miller

Press Contact

Director of Communications

media@ecb.co.uk



Jonathan Reed

Press Contact

Head of Media & Publications

media@ecb.co.uk

+44 (0) 7525 596 621



Danny Reuben

Press Contact

Head of Team Communications

England Men's team

danny.reuben@ecb.co.uk

+44 (0)7825 723 620



Matt Somerford

Press Contact

Communications Manager - Domestic Cricket

media@ecb.co.uk

+44 (0)7551 134 716



Hen Cowen

Press Contact

Senior Communications Manager (they/them)

hen.cowen@ecb.co.uk

+44 (0)7585 987 302



Chris Tuttlebee

Press Contact

Corporate Communications Lead

chris.tuttlebee@ecb.co.uk

+44 (0)7824 551713



Emily Liles

Press Contact

Communications Manager - Performance (England Women)

emily.liles@ecb.co.uk