



Sky Dynamos Intros in action

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ECB AND SKY SPORTS ANNOUNCE EXTENDED PARTNERSHIP TO EXPAND COVERAGE AND INVESTMENT IN GROWING THE GAME

ECB and Sky Sports partnership extended through to the end of 2028, with more live cricket to be shown than ever before.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and Sky Sports have today announced a new extension to their strategic partnership – a partnership

now surpassing 30 years – which will see more live cricket on Sky Sports, more on free-to-air TV and further increased investment to help grow the game and get more people playing.

The four-year extension, which represents an increase in investment on the previous agreement, runs from the start of 2025 until the end of 2028, and includes:

- 90 extra hours of live cricket guaranteed on TV each year.
- More women's cricket than ever before.
- Coverage of The Hundred extended to 2028.
- Increased prominence for the Vitality Blast, including more live games.
- Continued investment in grassroots cricket including through the Dynamos Cricket programme. Sky's investment also funds initiatives for children of all backgrounds to pick up a bat and ball, growing women and girls' cricket and reducing barriers to participation, as well as supporting a thriving domestic game and successful England teams.

The new agreement extends the partnership between the ECB and Sky Sports to more than 30 years and covers home international and domestic cricket. The current five-year deal, which started in 2020, has seen huge growth in cricket viewing on Sky Sports, with the recent Men's Test series against New Zealand and the 2020 series against the West Indies being the two most watched series on record, outside of the 2019 Ashes. It also saw live cricket back on free-to-air TV and enabled the ECB and counties to provide fans with digital content and match streaming.

Overall, 134m more hours of ECB cricket were watched in 2021 compared to 2017, while a new high of 14 million people played, attended or followed cricket in 2021 - an increase of three million since 2019.

As English cricket's key strategic partner, Sky Sports has demonstrated a deep commitment to the ECB's Inspiring Generations vision to grow cricket and inspire more children to pick up a bat and ball. This has included funding 10,000 free places for children who might not otherwise get chance to try the game through the Sky Dynamos Intros scheme. Sky Sports has also played a key part in the development of The Hundred, working hand-in-hand with the ECB to engage millions of people in cricket for the first time last year – many

of whom, broadcast data now shows, have gone on to sample other forms of the game.

Since 2017, Sky's investment has enabled nearly £250m to be invested into recreational cricket, with 300,000 children having taken part in ECB national programmes, more than 4,500 grants awarded to clubs for new or improved facilities, and more than 400 new girls' teams and 300 new women's teams being set up since 2019.

Investment from Sky, whose coverage has led to 17 major broadcast industry awards including 3 BAFTAs, has also been vital in allowing for professional contracts for domestic women's cricket for the first time, supporting grassroots initiatives to make cricket more inclusive, ensuring the financial survival of the game through the pandemic and enabling successful England teams. It has been critical to many improvements in playing standards over the years, from the introduction of central contracts for both men's and women's players to putting in place the right support set-ups to build winning teams.

As part of the partnership extension, for the first time England Women's cricket will have a defined commitment, including two free-to-air IT20s. This represents a step forward in the commercialisation of women's cricket and laying the foundation for future growth of the game.

The partnership will provide a greater profile for Vitality Blast than ever before, with at least 50% more group games being broadcast each season and one game per round being live-streamed for free on Sky Sports Cricket YouTube. There will also be rights for counties to stream every group game on their own platforms and a brand-new weekly highlights show to be broadcast on terrestrial television.

The deal also extends coverage of The Hundred until 2028, with a minimum of eight women's matches confirmed to be shown on terrestrial TV, up from a minimum two in the previous agreement.

Announcing the extension, **Clare Connor, ECB Interim Chief Executive Officer**, said: "Sky have been fantastic partners for cricket for over 30 years. Their broadcast coverage is rightly lauded as the best in the world, but more significantly than that we have a shared commitment to growing the sport and investing in more opportunities not only for people to watch and follow

cricket in all its forms, but also to pick up a bat and ball.

“Thanks to Sky and the support of other partners, we saw a record 14 million people playing, attending or following cricket in 2021. This year alone, 10,000 children will get the chance to have a free taste of cricket through Sky Dynamos Intros, while many, many more will benefit from facilities and opportunities to play which are only possible because of Sky’s investment. It shows this media rights model is working, and we are very grateful for Sky’s ongoing support.

“We have worked closely with the wider game and our First-Class Counties to agree this new deal with Sky, which will see not only more live women’s and men’s cricket on Sky, but also more on free to air TV as well. I would like to place on record our thanks to the First Class County Chairs, to all of the Sky teams involved and to ECB colleagues including Tony Singh and Tom Harrison, who have played the central role in delivering this outstanding result for cricket.

“Our shared values and vision with Sky will make cricket accessible to even more people over the coming years and will use the power of sport to inspire the next generation, while safeguarding the wonderful traditions which are such a key part of our game.”

Stephen van Rooyen, EVP and CEO UK and Europe added: “This is an exciting time for English cricket and we’re thrilled to be furthering our long and successful partnership with the ECB. Together we will continue to help grow the game while boosting participation in the sport by children from all backgrounds through initiatives like our Dynamos Cricket Intros.

“On screen, we will continue to push boundaries in our BAFTA-winning coverage, bringing Sky Sports viewers even more live action from 2025 - including more women’s cricket than ever before - with men’s and women’s England internationals and domestic cricket. Sky’s investment over the last 30 years has contributed to a great deal of success on the pitch, and we hope to be at the forefront of much more to come.”

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Notes to editors:

- The partnership extension with Sky will run from the start of 2025 until the end of 2028.
 - Since the current partnership (which runs from 2020-24) was agreed in 2017 there has been:
 - A 134m increase in total viewing hours of cricket on TV – up from 141m in 2017 to 275m in 2021.
 - A more than 50% increase in the number of people watching at least some cricket on TV – up from 15m in 2017 to 24m in 2021.
 - Under the current media partnerships, a new high of *14 million* people played, attended or followed *cricket* in 2021, an increase of *3 million* since 2019.
 - The existing partnership with the BBC for free-to-air TV coverage runs until the end of 2024. Free-to-air arrangements for 2025-28 will be agreed at a later date.
 - Sky Sports' innovation and storytelling has led to 17 major broadcast industry awards including 3 BAFTAs.
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