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Roller wins prestigious young journalist award

ESPN Cricinfo's Matt Roller has been judged as the Christopher Martin-Jenkins Young Journalist of the Year.

Roller, who was highly commended for the award last year, was the unanimous choice of the judging panel as the 11th edition of the ECB Domestic Journalism Awards were decided.

The Cricketer Online maintained its grip on the Outstanding Online Coverage of Domestic Cricket award, securing a fourth-successive honour dating back

to 2018.

BBC Sport Online's coverage was highly commended alongside five-time winners ESPN Cricinfo, who were able to celebrate Roller's success in a strong field.

The judging panel rewarded Roller's "storytelling and newsgathering qualities" and highlighted his "sensitively handled piece on Rashid Khan during The Hundred set against the crisis ongoing back in Afghanistan, Khan's home country".

Wisden Cricket Monthly's Taha Hashim and Isaan Khan of the Daily Mail were highly commended.

Adrian Harms (BBC Radio Surrey) was named the Christopher Martin-Jenkins Domestic Cricket Broadcaster of the Year. The 2014 winner Richard Rae (BBC Radio Leicestershire) and Ed Seabourne (BBC Radio Bristol) were commended.

The Bolton News won the Regional Newspaper of the Year for the first time to keep the award in the north west. The Liverpool Echo were crowned the 2020 winners and were highly commended for its coverage during 2021.

The Cricket Paper won the Outstanding Newspaper Coverage of Domestic Cricket award for the first time since 2016.

The judging panel commented on its wide coverage of men's and women's cricket adding that its "domestic coverage is remarkable while also giving valuable opportunities to cricket writers young and more experienced to promote the game".

ECB Managing Director of County Cricket, Neil Snowball, said: "These awards have showcased the quality of domestic cricket journalism for over a decade and I would like to congratulate this year's winners who deserve their place on the honour roll.

"The depth and talent of entries for the Christopher Martin-Jenkins Young Journalist award was particularly striking this year. The written and broadcast media play a valuable role in the health of our game and it is pleasing to see so many impressive young journalists coming through and getting

opportunities to do that important job.

“I would also like to thank the Cricket Writers’ Club for its support and the judging panel, made up of journalists and broadcasters from across the world, for taking time out of their busy schedules to judge the awards.”

Cricket Writers’ Club chair, George Dobell, said: “The CWC would like to congratulate all those who have won and been commended. The judges tell me they were particularly struck by the diversity of cricket covered by this year’s entries and it’s great to see some new names among the winners. I’m sure we’ll be hearing a great deal from them for many years.

“Thanks to the ECB for continuing to value the work of our members. There are times, no doubt, when we disagree, but there will always be far more that unites us than divides. Thanks, too, to all the publications who continue to provide space to our great game.”

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Editor’s Notes

Award winners and judges’ comments:

CHRISTOPHER MARTIN-JENKINS YOUNG CRICKET JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

2021 winner: Matt Roller (ESPN Cricinfo). Highly commended: Taha Hashim (Wisden Cricket Monthly) and Isaan Khan (Daily Mail)

What the judges said: “The panel were unanimous in their decision to award Matt Roller the Young Cricket Journalist award in a very strong field.

Roller’s storytelling and newsgathering qualities were particularly evident from his submissions, which also included a sensitively handled piece on Rashid Khan during The Hundred set against the crisis ongoing back in Afghanistan, Khan’s home country. Wisden Cricket Monthly’s Taha Hashim and Isaan Khan of the Daily Mail were highly commended.

The panel would also like to state how impressed they were with those who entered, particularly the variety of topics across all submissions.”

CHRISTOPHER MARTIN-JENKINS BROADCASTER OF THE YEAR

2021 winner: Adrian Harms (BBC Radio Surrey). Highly commended: Richard Rae (BBC Radio Leicestershire) and Ed Seabourne (BBC Radio Bristol)

What the judges said: “Adrian combines real warmth in his commentary with a good facility for language and excellent technical insight. His knowledge of the players and their stories is exactly what you want from a county cricket commentator, and the judges were impressed by his ability to convey the big moments in a captivating manner. He celebrates the county game in the best way.”

REGIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

2021 winner: The Bolton News. Highly commended: Liverpool Echo

What the judges said: “The winning entry, the Bolton News, was a superb example of local reporters celebrating the stories that mattered to their community - ranging from engaging features on England players produced by the town to an in-depth look at the otherwise unheralded Bolton Cricket League. The judges also enjoyed the photo archive of old teams and matches. In a part of the country often dominated by football, the Bolton News is proudly flying the flag for its local cricketers.

“Highly commended are the Liverpool Echo, where Tom Evans's coverage of the sport, purely as a volunteer, impressed the judges for its breadth and depth - not least an interview with Ellie Threlkeld of nearby Rainford CC, one of the stars of the Hundred, and a well-researched feature on left-arm spin.”

OUTSTANDING ONLINE COVERAGE OF DOMESTIC CRICKET

2021 winner: The Cricketer Online. Highly commended: BBC Sport Online and ESPN Cricinfo.

What the judges said: "The BBC was highly commended for its unique real time coverage of domestic cricket via their online text and radio services, unmatched in any country in the world.

"ESPN Cricinfo was highly commended for the quality of its match reports, white ball analysis, its increasing coverage of the women's domestic game and strong contribution to reporting the unfolding events at Yorkshire CCC.

"But The Cricketer was the clear winner. It has made outstanding strides in its online offering, its tireless team of in-house journalists provide a wide and regular presence at county grounds across the country, and it covers in-depth stories about and interviews with individual players, both in the men's and women's game that appear nowhere else."

OUTSTANDING NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF DOMESTIC CRICKET

2021 winner: The Cricket Paper. Highly Commended: The Gloucestershire Echo & Gloucester Citizen, and the Liverpool Echo.

What the judges said: "The range and depth of The Cricket Paper's coverage of domestic cricket, both men's and women's and in terms of reportage and features, is unparalleled and I also like their coverage of club cricket. The paper is also extremely well-produced, design-wise, and is easy on the eye for the reader. In short, and given what is overall a relatively modest budget, the breadth of The Cricket Paper's domestic coverage is remarkable while also giving valuable opportunities to cricket writers young and more experienced to promote the game.

"The Gloucestershire Echo & Gloucester Citizen, and the Liverpool Echo, are meanwhile to be commended for their entries and for the way they both use their own limited resources to cover domestic cricket in their respective regions."

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