



Monday 13 June

“Cric-art”: England cricketers unveil first ever painting on a giant canvas of cricket bats for Brit Insurance National Cricket Day

The worlds of cricket and art collided at Lord's today (13 June). Former England wicket keeper turned professional artist **Jack Russell** unveiled the first ever oil painting created on a canvas of cricket bats at the Home of Cricket.

The Chance to Shine charity commissioned Russell to create the unique piece of 'Cric-art' to celebrate its flagship event, 'Brit Insurance National Cricket Day', on 23 June where thousands of schoolchildren will take part in cricket-themed activity.

'Chance to Shine supported by Brit Insurance' is the biggest grass-roots sport development programmes ever undertaken in Britain. The scheme, run by the Cricket Foundation charity, helps link cricket clubs to local state schools and aims, initially, to reach two million children in a third of state schools by 2015.

Working on a giant canvas of 36 full-size Slazenger bats, joined together in two rows of 18 - measuring 6ft 4in by 5ft 5in and weighing 130lbs - Russell has painted a quintessentially English village cricket scene, celebrating the sport that he loves. The painting took Russell around 100 hours to complete over a three week period, using a dozen tubes of paint. It is an amalgamation of the many local cricket grounds he has seen over his 25 years of professional painting.

A 'speeded up' video of Jack Russell painting 'Cric-art' can be viewed at www.youtube.com/thecricketfoundation

After Brit Insurance National Cricket Day, the aim is to exhibit the painting at venues like Lord's during the summer before auctioning it off to raise funds for Chance to Shine.

Speaking at the launch of Brit Insurance National Cricket Day where the painting was officially unveiled, Russell said: "Painting on a canvas of cricket bats was certainly different, but I enjoyed the challenge and it's a great way to celebrate Chance to Shine's day of cricket in schools. I hope the painting can also raise some money for the charity which is bringing cricket to thousands of children in state schools every year."

Joining Russell at the launch was England's strapping 6ft 7ins fast bowler **Chris Tremlett**, an ambassador for Chance to Shine. He said: "Brit Insurance National Cricket Day is a fantastic idea to get kids playing and learning through cricket. Schools across the country are gearing up for the cricket-themed school day on 23 June. It's good for Chance to Shine and good for cricket in general."



23 June - A Festival of Cricket

Schoolchildren across the country will unite for a day of cricket on Thursday 23 June. Nearly 4,000 schools have registered for Brit Insurance National Cricket Day and are planning cricket-themed lessons in class, coaching in the playground and competitions at local cricket clubs.

Jack Russell will himself be involved as one of the celebrities taking part in Chance to Shine's 'Dream Cricket School', assisting in a cricket-themed Art class at Johanna Primary School in London.

Governor of the Bank of England **Mervyn King**, Chance to Shine's President, will assist in a cricketing maths lesson, while a member of the **England Cricket Team** takes a P.E. class. Minister of Sport and The Olympics, **Hugh Robertson**, will speak at a cricket-themed school assembly and other celebrity cricket fans, including cricket broadcaster **Mark Nicholas** and Barmy Army musician **Billy "The Trumpet" Cooper**, will cover cross-curricular cricket classes at the inner-city primary school near Waterloo.

Chance to Shine has devised special cricket-themed lessons to give the Curriculum a cricketing twist. For example, children will learn the difference between acute and obtuse angles in Maths through a range of cricket shots, or identify the cricket playing counties in Geography. The charity's web-based resource covers citizenship, humanities, literacy and numeracy.

There will be a series of flagship events at schools nationwide*, from Cardiff to Durham, where high profile cricket ambassadors will be going back to school for the day. Abroad, the Afghan Connection charity in partnership with MCC Spirit of Cricket will help give the day an international feel by organising a girls' cricket camp in Mazar-i-sharif, North Afghanistan on 23 June; while Willmott Park Primary School in Victoria, South Australia is also getting involved with indoor cricket and classroom activity despite it being the football season Down Under.

Over in Japan, the Japan Cricket Association will be working with young groups of children on cricket skills in Sano, the home of cricket in Japan, on Brit Insurance National Cricket Day. The JCA runs an initiative called 'Cricket for Smiles' which, like Chance to Shine, encourages more youngsters to play cricket. One of their aims is to go into areas of Japan worst affected by the March earthquake and deliver cricket equipment and resources to those who have lost everything.

Back home, Chance to Shine will once again receive support from the England and Wales Cricket Board, Marylebone Cricket Club and the Professional Cricketers' Association, as the cricket community gets behind the day.

Further details of the event can be found at www.ncd.chancetoshine.org

- Ends -



For more information please contact:

Fabian Devlin, Head of Communications, the Cricket Foundation
T. 07920 502 152 E. fabian.devlin@cricketfoundation.org.uk

Rosalie Birch, Communications Manager, the Cricket Foundation
T. 07901 102 533 E. rosalie.birch@cricketfoundation.org.uk

Notes to editors

* Flagship Brit Insurance National Cricket Day events on Thursday 23 June:

| Area | Name of school/venue | Address of school/venue | Timing |
|------------|---|---|------------|
| Birmingham | Hollywood Primary School | Pickenham Road, Birmingham, B14 4TG | 10am-12pm |
| Brighton | St. Margarets, Patcham, St Luke's and Mile Oak schools/ Beach cricket @ Yellowave Beach Sports Venue | 299 Madeira Drive, Brighton, BN2 1EN | 10am-2pm |
| Bristol | Two Mile Hill Primary School | The Kingsway, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 8AA | 10am-12pm |
| Cardiff | Tyn Y Wern School | Heol y Ysgol, Trethomas, Caerphilly, CF83 8FL | 10am-12pm |
| Chelmsford | Chelmer Valley High @ The Ford County Ground | New Writtle Street, Chelmsford, CM2 0PG | 3pm-5pm |
| Cornwall | Schools beach competition @ Perranporth Beach | Beach Road, Perranporth, Cornwall TR6 0JL | 2pm-5pm |
| Durham | Neville's Cross Primary School | Relly Path, Durham, DH1 4JG | 10am-12pm |
| Leeds | Greenside Primary School | Chapelton Greenside, Pudsey, LS28 8NZ | 10am-12pm |
| London | Dream Cricket School @ Johanna Primary School | Johanna Street, Lower Marsh, London, SE1 7RH | 10am - 2pm |
| Manchester | The Heys Primary | Whiteacre Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside OL6 9NS | 10am-12pm |