



ECB Yorkshire South Premier League

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Chairman's blog – 30 May

After an 11-day break on the lovely Greek island of Kefalonia, I returned to the UK on Saturday lunchtime. Thanks to the wonders of modern technology, I was able to keep up-to-date with happenings in the league, and dealt with league emails on most days. I can also confirm that TCS actually works in Greece!

It was our eighth visit to the island, each time to the same resort. There are some excellent restaurants nearby and we love the local cuisine (you can keep the French and Italian for me – I much prefer Kefallinian) and we spend much of our time



Emailing Matt Dixon whilst waiting for the coach to the airport

just walking, reading and eating. I suspect some of you wonder how I get on without real ale, and that is the only drawback I can think of! I don't really drink very much over there – just a local lager with my evening meal, and maybe a small nightcap later – I am rather partial to seven-star Metaxa!

Whilst I was away, Terry Bentham stepped down from our committee. Terry has devoted 43 years to administering and umpiring cricket in South Yorkshire, and he is now well into his seventies, so he has certainly earned a bit of rest. He played a big part in the setting up of our league, and his support at that time was invaluable. It will not be goodbye, because I am sure that I will see him on our grounds – and will share an occasional pint or two of real ale! In the meantime, I have agreed with my fellow committee members that, as there are now only two committee meetings before the AGM, we will run with the vacancy until then.

On the drive back from Gatwick, Kirsty kept me up-to-date with the scores from Saturday's games. I think that it is good for our league that, like last year at this stage, two clubs are setting the pace with unbeaten records, but they are different ones from last year. That must be a sign of the strength of the league. Whilst I understand that the clubs may not, I personally hope that the title race goes right down to the wire! I am very pleased to see Treeton up there with the leaders too – they are a much-improved side from last year. I well remember the scenes of jubilation at their ground last September, when they won their key relegation battle with Doncaster.

As league chairman, I need to keep a neutral head when dealing with league business. This is not difficult because I get a very good welcome at all our clubs – there are people at them all whose company I look forward to, and for whom I am pleased when they do well. It is just unfortunate that for there to be winners, there have to be losers!

We had hoped to see my son, daughter-in-law and grand-daughter on Sunday, but unfortunately they all had a very unpleasant stomach virus last week, so our usual Sunday afternoon was cancelled. On Monday I took Kirsty across to Barnsley to see her sister's four-day old baby for the first time. Unfortunately the little boy had to be taken back into hospital and this, and the need to run some errands for them, meant that I did not get to Abbeydale as planned. I therefore missed Andy Tipple and Pieter Swanepoel, who I understand successfully completed their sponsored walk to the game in aid of club funds – the cheque is in the post lads!!



The intrepid walkers – Andy Tipple and Pieter Swanepoel

I was alarmed to hear that our results secretary, Kevin Motley, had collapsed and been taken to hospital whilst at Appleby Frodingham. He was released later in the afternoon and is now recovering at home. He has not been well for a few weeks and came back too soon, so Steve Ward and I are going to take over his duties as results secretary for the time being. It would help enormously if any results correspondence is copied to us both please! Meanwhile, put your feet up Kevin, and just concentrate on getting better!

I had a long conversation with Mark Beardshall whilst at Kirsty's sisters. I sat outside in the car and talked on the car bluetooth system. At one point the language was getting a bit fruity and Mark said, "no-one can hear me can they?" I reassured him

that I was on my own. It was not until later that Kirsty told me that her niece had asked what that noise was outside – she could hear our voices from inside the house.

Mark was a bit despondent with Barnsley's form – but at least his team was one of just two to beat the miserable Bank Holiday weather and pick up 12 valuable points yesterday. Our champions, Thornes, were the other, and they bounced back from Saturday's defeat at Abbeydale with a win over Wickersley. They are not out of the race yet! Looking ahead to next Saturday's fixtures, there is a lot at stake in every game.

This morning I had a chat with our treasurer Paul McFarlane, who gave me a list of things in need to do over the next couple of days. I have also conducted some committee business, finalised the notes of our last committee meeting, promoted fundraising activities at Barnsley and Hallam on our website, and exchanged emails with Kevin Motley exhorting him to rest.

Tomorrow it is the Hull KR Heritage Group, so I have some preparation to do for that – we are getting one of our most illustrious former players in for a Q&A session, which should be good fun. There is no real ale session this week – but I think I will make up for that next week!

Next Saturday, Kirsty has asked if we can be in the Barnsley area, so she can go to her sister's – so I will go down to Barnsley for the Treeton game. I anticipate a keenly fought game with both sides needing the points for different reasons. Afterwards, I'm looking forward to a trip down to Woolley for my first pint there. I shall report back – hopefully with some cricket to talk about too!

See you next week,

Roger