

## ECB Yorkshire South Premier League

### Chairman's blog – 22 May 2018

After spending much of the week indoors at the University, it was great to get outside and enjoy the sunshine on Saturday. I took my editing work into the back garden whilst Kirsty was watching the royal wedding, which was a better experience for her without my commentary. I do believe, though, that we do these things really well in this country, and this was no exception (I did see a 60-second summary of highlights!).

After that, we made our way down to the Hull Zingari ground to watch some of the game against York seconds. For those who are not aware, the former Hull Cricket Club amalgamated with Hull Zingari last close season and are now competing in the first division of the York & District Senior League. On the way to the ground, Kirsty asked me about the Zingari name, and what it meant. Zingari is from an old Italian dialect word that means gypsies, although its roots may trace back to an old Greek word meaning untouchables. One of the first cricket clubs in Britain was I Zingari, who do not have a home ground, hence the gypsy connotation.

My main reason for going to see Zingari was to see one of their most distinguished former players, Trevor Markham, and his wife, Heather, with whom I used to work. Their son, Alistair, now captains the side. Trevor was an excellent seam bowler who could move the ball both ways, a more than useful middle order batsman and an outstanding captain of the club during their great days in the 1970s. I reflected later that if he was still in his heyday, any of our clubs would be delighted to have him in their side.

After the usual reminiscing about old days, Trevor expressed his concerns about the amount of dialogue that takes place between players on the field – often erroneously described as banter, but is really sledging. He would like to see it stamped out and asked if I favoured a yellow and red card for offenders. My rather long-winded answer (which I paraphrase here) was that I would not want to take true banter out of the game – we do not want to sanitize the game – but we need umpires to be better at knowing when to step in when that banter crosses the line into sledging, and cut it out. In our league, umpires have the facility to caution players for this offence, and two cautions in a season will result in a two-week ban. So umpires already have the tools to deal with this, it is about them being used appropriately, effectively and consistently.

In addition to enjoying the lovely sunshine, good conversation and the cricket, there was the bonus of seeing some old friends in the York line-up. Former Yorkshire League stalwarts Nigel 'Doc' Durham, showing why he was one



*A familiar sight for anyone connected with the old Yorkshire League – 'Doc' Durham exhorting his fielders to greater efforts*



*York stalwart Nick Kay was unable to hide his amusement at the writer's attempts to field the ball*

of that league's finest wicket-keepers; skipper Nick Kay, employing his experience and enthusiasm for the game to the benefit of some of York's younger players; and batsman Alex Collins, the game's top scorer with 67.

Of course, I was still unable to resist regularly looking at the phone and keeping up-to-date with events in South Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire.

Collegiate's comprehensive win over Aston Hall took them two points ahead of Thornes at the top. The latter once again showed why they are champions. To come back from 25-6 to win by over 100 runs is a remarkable achievement. Elsewhere, whilst Whitley Hall were not at full strength, it was another very impressive performance by Doncaster, for whom Jimmy Stuart seems to be in the form of his life with the bat. Barnsley must be shortening the life expectancy of my good friend Mark Beardshall – after losing their last seven wickets for 16 runs, they looked dead and buried when Whiston wanted just 11 with four wickets and six overs left, but they then took the last four wickets for just four runs. Treeton's run-scoring form of last season re-emerged, although Appleby Frodingham ran them very close; and Wickersley won for the first time at Cleethorpes.

I should have learned by now to steer clear of predictions, but I will stick my neck out again

and say that I think that there will be a hell of a battle at the lower end of the table this year. In the last two seasons, we have had one club cast adrift at the bottom, and the fight has been to avoid the other place. I do not think that will happen this year, and I can envisage a battle between up to five teams to stay with us. It will be fascinating for those not involved to watch – but there is nothing fascinating for those who are.

On Sunday morning, as I went into our study at 6am, I wondered just how strong the Saturday night bottle of wine had been, when I saw a deer in a garden on the other side of the road – not that I knew it was a deer of course, but I did have the presence of mind to take a photo, and Kirsty confirmed the species. I doubt that you would associate Hull with deer, but Kirsty tells me that she has also seen one in the area.

On Monday, after dealing with a couple of cricket issues, I wrote the programme article and compiled the stats for Rovers' Friday night match with Wigan – which I suspect will bring us little much-needed cheer. After that, I headed back off to the University for the last week of the current exam sessions. Kirsty is away on her travels with work from Wednesday to Friday, so on Saturday we will remain over here and let her have a rest – there will be no rest of the wicked though, as I shall be taking advantage of my son's absence to complete some decorating at his new house. On Sunday, we have a family event in Barnsley, so we will stop over there afterwards and go to Hallam on Bank Holiday Monday. Let us hope the good weather holds for what promises to be another a very interesting weekend.

Till next week,

Roger