

## ECB Yorkshire South Premier League

### Chairman's blog – 5 June 2018

It took me all day on Wednesday to finally complete it, but I was able to hand over a fully edited book manuscript to my friend on the Rovers Heritage Group on Wednesday night.

He is a local man who wanted to write his life story. Without reaching the very top, he had a varied and interesting playing and coaching career in rugby league both in the UK and in Australia, and later worked all over the world. He is never shy of an opinion, the chapter on the death of his son, a week after his 41<sup>st</sup> birthday, is poignant and moving, and it is an interesting tale. But I think editing someone else's work is probably harder than writing from scratch!



*Siddarth Peepat found form for Appleby Frodingham with 3-25*

Friday's Rovers game was the polar opposite of the Wigan game the previous week – Castleford looked a far better unit, and made us look very poor. There was no consolation after the game either – we tried out an old pub that has been refurbished and reopened – but I can safely say we will not return.

On Saturday morning, I was needed in Barnsley on family business. My father-in-law, Stuart, lost his partner in February, which led to other difficulties that he was ill-equipped to deal with in his time of grieving and could well have done without. I shall say no more, other than that, however young you are, and however far away death may seem, please make a will that reflects your true wishes. The only positive of the whole affair is that Stuart has since come along to a couple of matches with us, and has developed an interest in our league.

After a quick (as much as it can be) trip to Meadowhall for lunch and a bit of holiday shopping, we made our way to Appleby Frodingham, arriving in time for the second innings. As ever, we had a warm welcome from our old friends at Brumby Hall. It was good to see Ian Armiger fit and well after his operation, whilst the club's veteran scorer, Dennis Wadd, told me that he was still plying his trade with the third team – I am sure that he is going for a record and is now closing in on an amazing sixty years in the box!

I also had an interesting chat with Wickersley's new chairman, Andy Harrison, and senior player Mark Cummins. I know that they would not have been happy with their team's efforts to score 140 in 40 overs for victory, but I always try to refrain from criticising players – they can all do far better than I could ever have done! I prefer instead to just give praise where I think it is deserved. The one area that did impress me was the home side's fielding, which was much sharper than most of what I have seen this season, and I reflected on the importance of putting pressure on the batsmen and making them work for their runs.



*The anguish is real – another batsman plays and misses*

I was also pleased for Siddarth Peepat – it was good to see him taking wickets. It must be very difficult for a player at a new club, thousands of miles from home, when he is struggling for form. At the other end of the spectrum, I enjoyed seeing my old friend Paul Hilton, recalled from his role as second XI captain, running in with all his old enthusiasm!

On the way home, we passed through a torrential rainstorm. Had we not opted to use the oft-maligned DLS system and provided the flexibility for captains to reduce overs, we might not have achieved a result on the day.

On this subject, I have been copied

into some correspondence amongst some of our senior umpires, who were questioning the need for the 'hour's grace' before overs must be lost. My personal point of view is that rules must have enough flexibility to get as much cricket played as possible, and for results to be achieved. But this is, above all, an issue for players. If I receive feedback that the players would like to see our rules on this issue changed, I will be very happy to look at proposals.

When I got home on Saturday night, I saw an email from Rob Richtering advising that, due to a change in his circumstances, he would be standing down from all his voluntary cricket roles. Rob has subsequently been persuaded to continue as secretary of the Premier Leagues Management Board – news that I am very relieved to hear. Rob has been an integral part of the introduction of the new premier leagues structure in Yorkshire, and has worked tirelessly on behalf of both Yorkshire Premier League North and the York & District Senior Cricket League – he will be very badly missed by both. You cannot do jobs like these without attracting some critics along the way, but I know that Rob has always done what he believes is right, and that he always strives to be fair to all. I thank Rob for the help he has extended to me over the last three or four years. Once again, I reflect that league cricket is so very dependent on a small band of volunteers who do so much. We cannot afford to lose them and must be wary of overloading them.

Another matter upon which I have had a couple of queries over the past couple of days, is the eligibility of overseas and county-contracted players for the national knock-out and t20 competitions. The fact that overseas players are not allowed to play in these two competitions is something that I feel very strongly about. Good overseas players (and we have been fortunate enough to have had several in our league) enrich the game. They become an integral part of their teams, and I think it is totally unfair that players who are first team regulars on a Saturday are not allowed to play in these competitions – particularly given that there is no bar to playing ex-first class players, who also, it can be argued, are taking the place of young English players. There are, however, restrictions on playing players of 23 or over who are contracted to their counties – which does not appear to me to provide an incentive to clubs to encourage their players towards the first class game. I have raised these issues before, and have every intention of raising them again at the ECB Premier Leagues chairmen's meeting in July.

I shall not be able to attend a game this weekend, and next week's blog will be written by our esteemed secretary, Steve Ward, who will, no doubt, relish the opportunity of making some jest at my expense!

Till two weeks' time,

Roger