

ECB Yorkshire South Premier League

Chairman's blog – 26 June 2018

When I retired from full-time (paid) work six years ago I bought a membership to a local gym – thinking that it would be unhealthy just to sit at home writing most days. I persevered for best part of four years – until a third leg injury led to me packing it in and taking up walking instead. I should never have bothered with the gym in the first place – an hour's walk, that takes me along a long stretch of riverbank behind my house, is so much more enjoyable – summer or winter! I am sure that the fresh air is much healthier than the air-con in the gym too! I got back into the habit after our holiday last week, with walks on five days.

I arranged to take Kirsty's dad to a meeting on Thursday morning, and he came over to stay for a couple of days. After the meeting, I took him for lunch in one of those lovely little independent coffee houses that you can find in so many places if you take the trouble, after which we had a potter round Hull's old town. Hull is an underrated city – it certainly did not deserve that 'Crap Towns' accolade a few years back, and the City of Culture money has been invested well to improve it further.

In between our trip into the town, cooking, and walking, I managed to find the time to compile last week's newsletter – although I had to leave out the details of the KO cup games because P-C would not let me access them.

After our walk and late breakfast on Saturday, Kirsty and I set off for Aston Hall. Green Lane is a lovely ground on a nice day, and Saturday was certainly that. We were well entertained by Harpreet Singh and Beck Frostick in their stand of 190 (although I can understand that the home supporters would not have enjoyed it so much) and Barnsley set a new second highest YSPL score for the second week running. Harpreet's 154 was also the third highest individual score in the YSPL. Rob Ward brought himself on for the last three or four overs from the pavilion end when the ball was flying all over the place – not all skippers would have – and was rewarded with three more wickets.

The home side started positively, but it was Harpreet himself who took the key wicket of Awais Zia to make the score 86-4. Some teams might have crumbled at that point, but the home side battled to two vital batting bonus points with an unbroken stand of 82 between Ward and Johannes Bothma – a new league record for the eighth wicket. Ali Jahangir was again the pick of the Barnsley bowlers with his 3-50 from 15 overs.

During the second innings, I had a good discussion about league matters with Mark Beardshall and Chris Marples, including on the final team selections for next week's Yorkshire t20 warm-up game at Abbeydale on Monday. I am very pleased that Chris has agreed to do some coaching for us at our representative games, including our forthcoming under 23s game against MCC and any others that we are able to arrange. As I have said before, I am keen to maximize any opportunities for such representative fixtures and hope to confirm more shortly.



Harpreet Singh Bhatia in full cry at Green Lane



Awais Zia is another quality overseas addition to our league

We had to leave Green Lane before the end to fulfil a baby-sitting engagement with my grand-daughter – from whom we heard not a peep, which gave me time to compile our results bulletin, despite a couple of cricket calls resulting from the day's games.

I had suspected that the Wickersley game would be a tricky one for Collegiate, and the visitors put in probably their best performance of the season to end Collegiate's unbeaten start to the campaign. Thornes duly capitalised with a hard-earned win that Chris Froggett described as a 'triumph for resilience' – a necessary quality of champions.

Appleby Frodingham recorded a much-needed win at Whiston, and there are now just ten points covering the bottom five clubs.

Sunday brought the very pleasing news that Doncaster Town had carried forward our League banner into the last 16 of the National Knock-Out competition. It was a very impressive performance against a very good Woodhouse Grange side, all the more so as local men James Ward and Luke Townsend played such an important role. Doncaster have put in some excellent performances this season and there is no doubt that they are a match for anyone on their day. The now play Richmondshire of the North Yorks & South Durham league in the next round, and we wish them all the very best for the rest of the competition.

On Monday, the final places in the League team to play Yorkshire Vikings next week were confirmed, so I issued letters to the players and posted the team on the website; I concluded my Chairman's Letter, which is now also on our website; and sent the draft proposals for the Club of the Year award around our committee. The responses to the latter have been constructive and favourable, but there is now some fine-tuning to be done before I issue more widely next week.

Yesterday, I went to Scarborough with my old friend Richard. Those of you who know me well may wonder why I went to watch Yorkshire v Surrey – but Richard's old cricket watching partner is emigrating to Manchester, and I thought the weather was going to be very good, so I volunteered to take his place. I was wrong on the weather – there was a cool breeze and a sea fret threatened all day – but there was some interest. Apart from the usual people-watching, always so fascinating at cricket matches, I thought Rory Burns that played an excellent openers' innings until he reached his 50, when he became becalmed (as an aside, I was disappointed at the number of spectators who did not applaud his half-century); I concluded that umpire Paul Pollard is an 'outer'; and I saw something I had never seen before when, after tea, the umpires held up play for a few minutes on several occasions, with everyone remaining in their positions, whilst the sea-fret rolled across the ground – it was sensible umpiring by the umpires, who had a difficult situation to deal with, but that did not stop some idiots giving them the slow handclap.

Unfortunately, I had a minor mishap on the way home, which is why this blog is a little late, but no bones are broken and it did not detract from the day! Needless to say, Kirsty looked after me very well, as she always does!

Over the coming week, I shall do the newsletter this afternoon before I go down to Craven Park to host a Q&A session with a couple of former players from our glory years; I will be at Wickersley on Saturday and Cleethorpes on Sunday; and then I will be at Abbeydale to support our team in the Yorkshire Vikings game on Monday teatime – 5.30 start.

Till next week,

Roger