

TCC Match Reports 2005

Sunday April 24th v. Birchencliffe (Home)

' April is the cruellest month, breeding Lilacs out of the dead land. ' (TS Eliot)

Although members of the Huddersfield Central League since 1977, this was only the second time that Birchencliffe had visited Thurstonland for a fixture at first team level. The last occasion had been in 1994 and there were five survivors from that game in the opening encounter of the 2005 season. Martin Oldham, Lee Booth, Dan Peace and David Rishton were in the Thurstonland lineup whilst G Nuttall was the sole Birchencliffe player who had also been present eleven years earlier.

The ground, which had been nearly waterlogged only four days earlier, had dried remarkably well although the outfield was very soft and the wicket slow. Jack Oldham, after several promising innings in the second team in 2004, opened proceedings along with Mick Ingledow. Their combined ages of nearly sixty owed more to Mick's contribution but diplomacy suggests that matters rest there.

It was soon apparent that run scoring would not be easy although both batsmen looked relatively untroubled. Jack, the latest member of the family dynasty to play in the first team, hit two stylish boundaries and looked comfortable until low bounce defeated him when he had reached nine and he was comprehensively bowled. Mick Ingledow had been the first to go, adjudged lbw to Ashley Haywood, after the bowler had already made several appeals. The principle seemed to be if you don't ask then you don't get.

Last year's prolific scorer, John Eastwood, soon seemed to be in touch although the slow wicket was in sharp contrast to the indoor surfaces practised on during the winter. He also was undone by a shooter to be bowled for 35 just when he and Lee Booth looked to be getting a little momentum going. Lee took the initiative on John's departure and several trademark drives were a feature in an attempt to get the total moving along. His 42 was a more than worthy contribution. Late flurries from Neil Booth (10) and Dan Peace (10*) edged the total forward but 129 for 7 after the allotted 45 overs seemed a respectable rather than dominant total.

Dan Peace took the first Thurstonland wicket of the season when he trapped Darren Hinchliffe lbw as the batsman attempted a rather extravagant pull shot. The decisive partnership of the game then followed. Greg Holmes, after conceding five wickets from his first ball, bowled quite tidily, David Rishton tried all his spinning wiles but John Eaton and John Lewis played patiently and took full advantage of any loose deliveries. The former rode his luck a little and survived a sharp but catchable chance when on 20 but eventually he and his partner began to move the score along. At 95 for 1, it was something of a surprise when Lewis fell to David Rishton, bowled for 31. He quickly took three more wickets and, with Greg Holmes's second spell bringing him the wicket of Eaton for 65, a mini-collapse was in progress.

At 113 for 6 and runs coming at a slow rate, there were brief thoughts of a surprise win but a sudden flurry of shots saw Birchencliffe home in the 41st over at 130 for 6. This was the first of a series of testing fixtures in the opening weeks and prospects for the season should be clearer by the end of May in what is likely to be a stronger top section than for a year or two.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Lee Booth; Kris Thackray; Neil Booth; Dan Peace; Adam Thackray (w/k); David Rishton; Greg Holmes.

Saturday April 30th v. Cumberworth (Away) – Rained Off

**Saturday May 7th
v. Woolley (home)**

' Here's looking at you, kid.' Spoken in the film Casablanca (1942)

At last the sun shone although its power was not evident as a persistent cold wind took the edge off the temperature. Once again, it was remarkable that play was possible after further rain during the preceding week and most of the home team went into action with little or no practice behind them since the end of the indoor net sessions just after Easter.

Our visitors had run us close at home in 2004 and had won a close encounter at Woolley by one wicket in the return, a result which marked the beginning of a revival for them and assisting their eventual successful battle against relegation.

Mick Ingledow and Jack Oldham were quickly into their stride with the latter soon at home with several well played off side shots and some cultured strokes on the leg side. Tom Atkinson for Woolley was always a threat and only conceded eleven runs in his first seven overs but Paul Baranowski was a little more expensive as the total began to mount. Mick Ingledow was bowled for 15 to bring John Eastwood to the crease.

With his score on 12, John played an uppish square cut to a ball which lifted a little and gave a relatively easy catch to point. Unfortunately for Woolley, a spirit of benevolence chose that moment to ease its way into the fielder concerned who spilled the chance. What followed was a cashing in of runs which made the combined efforts of piratical seizures of doubloons, the Great Train Robbery and the Brinks Mat bullion haul look more like the withdrawal of a five pence piece from a neglected corner of an ancient piggy bank.

Boots were filled and treasure chests packed to overflowing as runs came from all corners of the ground. Jack Oldham got the faintest of touches to be caught behind for 41 when a maiden fifty in the first team seemed to beckon and the generous applause for an unflustered and commanding innings, including that from the opposition, was well deserved.

Father now took over from son at 104 for 2 and in just about 20 overs 175 runs were added. No obvious chances were given by either batsman with several huge hits for six and accomplished shots for four being complemented by routine ones and twos. The only minor disappointment was that the last ball of the innings was a dot, leaving the final total of 279 for 2 just one short of the club record set in the cup last season against Heckmondwike.

John Eastwood ended on 128 not out and Martin Oldham 73 not out. The runs added would have beaten the record stand for every wicket in the first team except the third, the one in which they were involved, which is the 205 scored against YMCA in the 1996 Allsop Cup semi-final and which also featured John in partnership with John Crosland.

Almost inevitably, a somewhat dispirited Woolley team succumbed quickly after tea for 56 after an early collapse to 13 for 6 had suggested an even lower total. Dan Peace, Greg Holmes and Lee Booth each took three wickets and the winning margin of 223 runs is the widest in the period since 1954, the year from which reliable records remain.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Lee Booth; Kristian Thackray; Neil Booth; Dan Peace; Adam Thackray (w/k); David Rishton; Greg Holmes.

**Saturday May 14 th
v. Green Moor (away)**

' Well, all I know is what I read in the papers. ' (Will Rogers, American actor and humorist 1879-1935)

For the second successive season, the fixture list took us to Green Moor in May. The day was bright with the sun making occasional appearances but the insistent wind was borrowed from a late autumn day with hints of winter around the corner. The makers of the old advert for the well clad Michelin Man would have found plenty of willing volunteers to audition for the part amongst the players, umpires and spectators.

Dan Peace and Greg Holmes began with four successive maiden overs between them suggesting that the weather had frozen everyone into immobility and, when the latter was replaced by David Rishton quite early in the proceedings, runs remained at a premium. A well timed drive for four from the experienced John Hardy was the only shot of note and nineteen had been scored in the twelfth over when Julian Bates mistimed a forcing shot from David Rishton to give an easy catch to Mark Hill who was making one of his relatively rare first team appearances.

John Hardy soon followed, bowled by Dan Peace by a ball which kept a little low and when Ian Mosley was smartly stumped by fellow keeper Adam Thackray the score of 32 for 3 from 20 overs put Thurstonland on top. Andy Howe (39), supported by David Beachill (15) and Ian Simpson (13), produced a fight back for the home team and a late flurry of hitting from the lower order, including a six from the last ball of the innings, saw a tea score of 143 for 8. David Rishton with 4 for 62 had his second four wicket haul of the still embryonic season with Dan Peace and Lee Booth taking two each.

All too soon, the warmth of the tearoom had to be exchanged for the bracing elements outside as Thurstonland began their reply. A couple of fours from Mick Ingledow and a lovely cover drive for two from Jack Oldham got things moving but the latter fell to a well taken low slip catch for three with the score on 12. Wickets then fell at regular intervals, bringing back memories of a less than glorious batting performance on our first visit to Green Moor in 2003.

In quick succession Mick Ingledow was bowled for 12, Martin Oldham caught for one, Mark Hill, after his 74 not out in the seconds the previous week, was bowled second ball and when John Eastwood was bowled by Andy Matthewman for 14 in the eighteenth over, the score was an anaemic looking 41 for 5.

Kris Thackray and Lee Booth then faced an uphill struggle to rebuild the innings as our hosts sensed that they were well in the ascendancy and every run was hard earned. Kris had two fours and a two in his first 47 deliveries whilst Lee, two boundaries apart, dealt largely in singles. When his score was 18, the former gave a difficult chance to mid off who could not hold the catch as he chased the skied shot which went over his head.

With ten overs to go the score had gone up to 90. The target was still 54 away on a day when both teams had found runs hard to come by. A combination of good running and a burst of three fours and a huge six over long on from Kris Thackray reduced the tension although two overs yielding only two runs put matters in doubt again. In the end a four from Lee Booth won the game and brought up his own fifty leaving Kris undefeated on 45 in what was his most authoritative innings so far in the first team. Eight balls remained as victory was achieved with the unbroken sixth wicket stand worth 103, just 22 short of the club record.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Mark Hill; Kris Thackray; Lee Booth; Dan Peace; Adam Thackray (w/k); David Rishton; Greg Holmes.

**Saturday May 21st
v. Old Almondburians (home)**

' If one cannot catch the bird of paradise, better take a wet hen.' (Nikita Krushchev, USSR Premier 1958-1964)

If a liking of runs in abundance is your idea of cricketing heaven, then Thurstonland was the place to be on a weekend with two fixtures, a league game on Saturday followed by the first round of the Allsop Cup on the Sunday. They were in full supply and a hot day would have seen clichéd references to perspiring bowlers and fielders mopping fevered brows. Once more, however, the day was full of ominous clouds and everyone wondered yet again if the sun soaked cricket fields of fond memory were actually romantic stories told by gnarled retainers in front of a blazing fire to amuse wide eyed children along with other fairy tales.

Mick Ingledow (5) and Jack Oldham (4) both departed early and were followed, after two authoritative boundaries, by Martin Oldham (11) to leave the score at 36 for 3 with little inkling of what was to come. Lee Booth joined John Eastwood and gradually the score was built up although neither batsman was able to wrest the initiative completely from a wide range of bowlers. By the end of the innings eight had been tried in all.

Just when it seemed that John was about to go on to another big score, he mistimed a pull shot and gave a simple leg side catch to depart for 39. For the Old Boys at this stage it was the Slack family to the fore with father Steve and sons Tom and Alex all taking wickets as bowlers and Tom also taking a good catch over his shoulder.

Kris Thackray now joined Lee with memories of their century stand of the previous week still fresh in the mind. Both immediately took full toll of the opposition's attack and runs came at a rapid rate. Kris seemed to have taken great confidence from his 45* at Green Moor and some well timed strokes and excellent placement saw him quickly into his stride. Boundaries were very much in evidence and nothing the bowlers could do was able to stop them. For the second game in succession they posted a century stand, 123 in all, which was only broken when Kris, with four overs to go, attempted an ambitious drive and was bowled for an excellent 66, his maiden fifty in the first team.

There was just time for a quick fire 12* from Dan Peace before the 45 overs were completed. Lee Booth was left on 61*. The score of 226 for 5 was thought to be a winning one.

A circumspect start seemed to confirm this but both Tim Taylor and Steve Slack began to punish any wayward deliveries and no-one was able to make a breakthrough. The threatened rain began to fall in the 24 th over and conditions were unpleasant for nearly an hour although, somewhat surprisingly, play continued. Both batsmen reached 40 within a few balls of each other but then Taylor cut loose with a series of powerful drives and scarcely gave a hint of a chance. None of the Thurstonland bowlers looked to have an answer and to his credit, fifteen year old Jack Oldham produced five economical overs at a crucial time so that the required run rate remained at about eight an over although no wickets fell.

The stand was eventually broken at 145 in the 34 th over when Steve Slack was out for 47 and Dan Peace in his second spell began to make inroads into the Almondburians' innings. M Bedwell (19) fell to a vital boundary catch taken by Kris Thackray when it looked as if he might steer the visitors to what had seemed an unlikely win. Taylor was eventually lbw for an excellent 119 and it all came down to a four being needed for a tie off the last ball. In spite of a determined flourish of the bat, the ball went only for a single to backward square leg from where David Rishton ran to the wickets to prevent any mishaps and secure a three run win after a superb game played for quite a time in unpleasant conditions.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Lee Booth; Kris Thackray; Dan Peace; Neil Booth; Adam Thackray (w/k); David Rishton; Greg Holmes.

**Sunday May 22 nd
v. Penistone S & SC (home) – Allsop Cup (Rd 1)**

'Winning is everything. The only ones who remember you when you come second are your wife and your dog.' (Damon Hill, motor racing driver 1960 -).

Penistone, newly promoted to the second section for 2005, were our first round opponents once more after their giant killing act of 2003 when we were comprehensively defeated on their ground. Everyone was determined to see that there was not a repeat.

With bowlers being restricted to a maximum of twelve overs in cup matches, this can throw a burden on the less experienced members of an attack and open up a game. Mick Ingledow and Jack Oldham put on 34 for the first wicket before Jack was out for 17, once again giving glimpses of well timed shots and assurance at the crease. For the first time this season Mick established himself and was characteristically quick to punish any short deliveries. He and John Eastwood moved the score along quickly and there were hints of a huge total in the offing.

For the second game in a row there was a stand of 123 and the partnership ended with the dismissal of Mick for 61. Martin Oldham was soon adjudged lbw for 4 and Kris Thackray, in prolific form, joined John Eastwood. His batting lacked nothing in comparison to John and the pair of them began to take their toll on the bowlers who included a young leg spinner Simon Lee. His art is the most demanding of all and he stuck to his task with determination in the face of a calculated onslaught although, inevitably, the batsmen took their fill of runs.

John was bowled for 88, deceived by a slower ball from Chris Walmsley, and could have read and then written a quick summary of the new proposed EU treaty between the completion of his shot and the ball hitting the wicket. Kris then ran out in quick succession both Mark Hill, standing in for the injured Neil Booth, and Dan Peace. Neither of them troubled the scorer and it occurred to onlookers that Kris's ability to judge a run on these occasions would not put him readily in the mind of anyone in authority looking for a candidate for the judicial bench in the crown courts of England .

He redeemed himself with some ferocious hitting in the last couple of overs with one mighty shot towards the clubhouse falling about two inches short of a six. Greg Holmes on his first trip to the crease in the first team this year included a well hit four in 7*. Thurstonland totalled 239 for 7.

Opener Williams was out fairly early in the Penistone reply before the rain eventually arrived in earnest and interrupted play for about fifty minutes. After the resumption, Chris Walmsley joined Opener Beachill and they batted well. The former survived a fairly easy dropped catch when on ten and took full advantage. Jack Oldham took his first senior wicket when he caught and bowled Beachill for a good 51 but Walmsley pressed on to reach his own half century. He went for his shots and one six over long off was as good a shot as will be seen this season.

The required run rate was always near the ten per over mark in the late stages but the visitors, who had been struggling a little with their batting in league games, pressed on with admirable determination. It was only with the eventual dismissal of Chris Walmsley for a fine 76 that victory looked assured but the Penistone final tally of 204 for 7, still 35 short of their target, did scant justice to a more than creditable performance on their part. And so ended the second good game of the weekend with its large number of runs and with bowlers hoping for some calmer challenges and, most certainly, drier conditions in which to bowl.

Team; Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood ; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray; Mark Hill; Dan Peace; Greg Holmes; Lee Booth; Adam Thackray (w/k); David Rishton.

**Saturday May 28th
V Cawthorne (away)**

' Bless 'em all! Bless 'em all! The long and the short and the tall.' (Jimmy Hughes and Frank Lake , 1940s song).

Mick Ingledow and Jack Oldham both batted cautiously on a typically fair but low and slow Cawthorne wicket. Three fours from the former promised an increase in the scoring rate until a good low catch by David Hawley off Darren Lindley saw him out for 16.

Gareth Kilburn (5 for 46) bowled throughout from the pavilion end and his off spin proved quite a challenge for all the visiting batsmen. Jack Oldham's calm approach, allied to good footwork and cultured strokeplay, made him the ideal partner for John Eastwood who treated the spectators, on a sunny but blustery afternoon, to a glimpse of his hairstyle as he discarded his cap rather than risk it leaving his head in the persistent breeze.

Almost imperceptibly the score advanced to 90 before Jack was adjudged caught at the wicket from one of the few balls in the entire match which lifted a little. His had been a hard earned 20 but a firm foundation had been set. Two successive fours apart, Martin Oldham found it difficult to get going and the innings became a little becalmed. He eventually gave a second catch to Hawley after scoring 12 and John Eastwood soon followed, also caught, for 56 when an attempted drive off Kilburn only sent the ball to deep mid off where the catch was taken. A few balls earlier he had reached his fifty with a six which landed on the corner of the windscreen of his own car.

Dan Peace was given out caught at the wicket from his second ball to leave the total on 126/5. Hard though he tried, the in form Kris Thackray was unable to force the ball away and Greg Holmes's promotion in the order only brought him 2 before he was comprehensively bowled by the persevering Kilburn. Neil Booth tried hard to scamper a few runs, including a three, but his best scampering days are behind him so the end came with him undefeated on eight and Kris on 12 and the total 150 for 6. Only 30 runs had come from the last ten overs.

Brothers Dale and Darren Skelly, both very experienced, soon had the Cawthorne reply in full flow. The latter was dropped behind the wicket when he had scored nine and both batsmen, that false shot apart, looked in good form. David Rishton was soon in action and there was the first sight this season of Lee Booth bowling off spin as opposed to medium pace. Dale Skelly was the first out, well taken at long on by Greg Holmes off Lee's bowling for 35 with the score on 58 and Darren followed ten runs later, caught and bowled by the same bowler for 28. There now followed a brief period of Thurstonland ascendancy as young Matthew Roebuck, Philip Wiles, well known from his days at Dodworth, and big hitting Gareth Kilburn went in quick succession. Roebuck was deceived and bowled by David Rishton whilst the other two fell to Lee Booth, both from steeping catches taken by Jack Oldham and Greg Holmes.

The vastly experienced former Clayton West player Kevin Rank and David Hawley battled to re-build the innings and their valuable partnership of 37 was only broken when the returning Greg Holmes induced the latter to mistime a pull straight into the hands of Kris Thackray. At 132 for 6, 19 were required off five overs and Greg Holmes in his second spell belied his relative inexperience with some good deliveries which both Rank and new batsman Darren Lindley had to respect. The 43rd and 44th overs yielded only two runs which meant that six were needed from the last one. Three balls later victory was Cawthorne's after an absorbing game. The drying up of runs in the last overs of the Thurstonland innings had been a decisive turning point as fortunes ebbed and flowed during the afternoon. Cawthorne closed on 151/6.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray; Dan Peace; Greg Holmes; Neil Booth; Lee Booth; David Rishton; Adam Thackray (w/k).

**Saturday June 4th
V Denby Dale (home)**

'Youth would be an ideal state if it came a little later in life.' (Herbert Asquith, Liberal Prime Minister 1908-1916)

In a Premier Section where no team, after six fixtures, has yet to dominate, Denby Dale were the latest visitors. Until losing the previous week, they had reached top position for the first time for several years and their exuberance in the field in the early overs indicated a team justifiably high in confidence.

The pacy Tom Goatley and the experienced Paul Wilkinson proved quite a handful for Mick Ingledow and Jack Oldham and the former was soon dismissed to a catch at backward square leg from a mistimed hook shot when the speed of Goatley's delivery caught him unawares. Patience is not always an attribute of youth but fifteen year old Jack Oldham showed it in abundance during a testing spell. It took him the best part of an hour before he guided a single to fine leg to get off the mark from his 61 st delivery. His technique and temperament never faltered in the face of some searching bowling and his perseverance eventually earned him just reward.

John Eastwood was next to depart for 20 with the total on 28 for 2 which, for the first time, brought father and son together at the wicket as Martin joined Jack. Slowly but surely they threw off the shackles of a tight Denby Dale attack, which now featured the equally experienced Andrew Hodgson and spinner Vic Reed, and began to take the initiative. Father dealt decisively with any wayward balls whilst son was content with ones and twos and the occasional boundary. Martin reached his second fifty of the season with a six before being dismissed for an excellent 57 with the family connexion adding 91 valuable runs.

Lee Booth then enjoyed a rapidly scored innings of 30 not out with Jack Oldham (52*) reaching his fifty shortly before the end of the allocated 45 overs. Sixty-three runs came from the last ten overs to leave a target of 172 for 3 for the visitors. The measured acceleration had been well timed and gave a psychological boost after the early part of the game had belonged to the visitors.

Dan Peace made an immediate breakthrough after tea when Richard Lammyman, who had played two excellent innings against us last season, was caught behind by Adam Thackray off a thin outside edge. It was now the turn of the youth of Denby Dale to show their skills. Seventeen year old Andrew Smith reached 23 off only ten balls and he was particularly severe on some uncharacteristically short bowling from Greg Holmes whose sterling efforts at the end of the previous game had almost saved the day. Lee Booth was soon in action.

Ryan Geldart, just sixteen, also gave valuable support and he looked in no trouble until being dismissed for 7 with the score on 35. Gradually the visitors were reined in after their meteoric start and both David Rishton and Lee Booth bowled tidily. The potentially dangerous Stuart Geldart departed quickly and it was a relief when Smith was eventually dismissed for a very good 68. Like Jack Oldham he had shown patience and never lost his concentration even when the early burst of runs dried up. It is good to see young players getting their chance and making the most of their opportunities.

In spite of late efforts by Dean Rickson, Andrew Hodgson and Tom Goatley the Thurstonland total remained out of reach with a seventeen over spell from David Rishton bringing him 2/33, so needing just one wicket for his 850 th in the first team. Lee Booth continued to play a captain's role after his quick fire innings and a long spell of 20 overs left him with figures of 3/66. In spite of their best efforts, Denby Dale ended fifteen runs short of their target on 157/7. This had been yet another good game where fortunes had swayed throughout.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Lee Booth; Kris Thackray; Dan Peace; Chris Bray; Adam Thackray (w/k); David Rishton; Greg Holmes.

**Saturday June 11th
V Holmbridge(home)**

'Before you let the sun in, mind it wipes its shoes.' (Dylan Thomas 1914-53, Welsh poet)

If a burst of warm sunshine ever does appear this summer then the state of its shoes will be of little consequence. Barefoot and fancy free will do nicely as long as the glowering clouds and bone-chilling winds are kept at a distance.

For only the second time this season, Thurstonland took the field first against opposition who, like their hosts, were in the leading group in the Premier Section. Dan Peace and Greg Holmes quickly found their line and length and the first four overs were all maidens. Craig Furze, one of the Holmbridge openers, was a former Thurstonland junior who had also made four appearances in our first team in the late 1990s as well as being a second team regular for two or three years. His partner, D Clough, was the first to go, followed quickly by D Holroyd caught behind for a duck in the same over from Dan Peace. Two more quick wickets, those of Craig himself for 8 and Andy Haigh for 11, after already having survived two fairly straightforward catching chances, soon followed to leave the visitors struggling after 15 overs on 31 for 4.

Lee Booth bowled in both his medium pace and off spinning styles in place of Greg Holmes who had to be rested after six overs in accordance with bowling guidelines for a sixteen year old. David Rishton, relieving Dan Peace (4/28), also proved difficult to score from although Robert Preston (34) led something of a mid innings fight back for the visitors. He had sterling support from R Cooke but the damage had been done in the opening phase of the innings and, when the former was bowled by David Rishton with the total just into the seventies, the rest of the batsmen were never really able to suggest that a full scale recovery was possible in spite of a few lusty blows from Mark Beaumont (23) batting at number 7. The total was 112. David's wicket was his 850 th in the first team. Other highlights included three late wickets for Greg Holmes in his second spell and four catches behind the wicket for Adam Thackray who had a good afternoon in spite of spilling possibly the easiest chance to come his way.

An evocative photo on the club website captures a seated Mick Ingledow making his final relatively relaxed preparations as a 'veteran' to go out to bat and Jack Oldham standing alongside him in deep concentration, very much as modern parlance has it, ' in the zone '. It encapsulates the essence of sport, even at village level, and is well worth a look.

With a main bowler unavailable, Preston and Holroyd opened the attack for the visitors. A single to Mick Ingledow got things moving from the first ball and a glance for four from the next got Jack underway in marked contrast to the last game where he showed great patience in waiting for almost an hour for his first run. The two of them compiled 55 for the first wicket with the former being severe on short deliveries with several boundaries coming from trademark pulls and hooks. Mick was eventually out for 32 to the best of the Holmbridge bowlers, J Moore, and John Eastwood followed just three balls later, caught one handed in the gully by Beaumont from a delivery which lifted a little, for a comparatively rare duck.

Once again, Oldham senior joined 'junior' and the score steadily mounted to 99 when, with just about his first error, Jack was bowled by Craig Furze for 41. Once more he had shown great concentration and played some cultured shots all round the wicket and his efforts were recognised appropriately by members of both teams. Kris Thackray replaced him but Martin Oldham quickly brought the scores level and his own tally to 30 when he was caught at mid wicket by Cooke off the persevering Moore . The winning run came via a leg bye in the next over with both Kris and Lee Booth, who faced just two balls, on nought not out as Thurstonland claimed all six points for a complete win to leave us in third place in the table behind Birchencliffe and Cawthorne, the only teams to beat us so far this season.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray; Lee Booth; Jordan Halliday; Dan Peace; Adam Thackray (w/k); David Rishton; Greg Holmes.

**Saturday June 18th
V Hoylandswaine (away)**

**'Summer time an' the livin' is easy'
'Fish are jumpin' an' the cotton is high.'
Du Bose Heyward and Ira Gershwin (song *Summertime* , 1935)**

At long last, and as the Beatles had it in the 1960s, here comes the sun. This was probably the best weather for cricket for twelve months and such a sensation was caused that before play started it was agreed that drinks would be available for the players after fifteen and thirty overs. That is always a reliable indicator of the temperature and one to rival that of the professional forecasters.

The Hoylandswaine ground looked in good condition as the Thurstonalnd innings was opened by Mick Ingledow and Jack Oldham against Wayne Storey and Richard Brocklehurst. Runs were accumulated steadily in the face of an accurate attack as the high temperatures soon took their effect. Jack was as patient as ever and three well timed fours were included in his 13 runs before he was beaten and bowled by a yorker from Brocklehurst. Mick Ingledow had a long wait before he was adjudged lbw to Storey for 23 after he had unleashed more of his short armed pulls to the boundary to start to get some momentum in the innings.

John Eastwood and Martin Oldham were now together and the former, after facing eleven balls without scoring, launched a massive six off Storey which cleared the roof of one of the houses on the bottom boundary. Having got into gear, he promptly followed with 4,6,4 as his next scoring shots. It seemed that running was not a favoured course of action on such a sultry afternoon. Martin Oldham also hit a couple of magisterial boundaries but just when it looked as if John had booked himself in for a Falstaffian feast of runs he did not quite get to the pitch of a delivery from spinner Greenwood and he was well caught on the long on boundary by Robertson for 36.

Martin Oldham was dismissed for 27 and then, after a circumspect start, similar to that made by John Eastwood, Kris Thackray rode into town. His first scoring shot was a six back over Greenwood 's head but a few overs later he produced the shot of the game, and possibly the season, when he sent a back foot off drive soaring over the long off fence from the bowling of Brocklehurst. Lee Booth (14) and first team debutant Gareth Howell (16) both gave valuable support with the latter also joining in the six hitting with two mighty blows of his own. Kris was eventually run out with just a few balls of the innings remaining for 52 in what is becoming a very productive season. Adam Thackray, on a rare trip to the crease, was 2* and Dan Peace 1* as the innings closed on 195 for 7 after the allotted 45 overs.

Greg Holmes opened the bowling with Gareth Howell and the former took two wickets in his first spell. Gareth Howell bowled at a lively pace with some testing deliveries although one or two others suggested that his radar needed a slight adjustment. The potentially dangerous Adie Birkinshaw became his first victim in the senior side when he miscued a pull and was well caught on the bottom boundary by Jack Oldham who covered quite a bit of ground to complete the catch.

Dan Peace relieved Greg and Lee Booth took over from Gareth with four Hoylandswaine wickets gone, including Ryan Copley who had had several big scores against us in the last two or three seasons. Steve Hardwick, however, was in residence at the crease and that is always a potential danger and he soon began scoring in his favoured midwicket to long on area. Supported by the lower middle order the total began to rise but hopes rose for Thurstonland when Lee Booth bowled him for 51 scored in his usual redoubtable fashion.

Greg Holmes then returned for a second spell and picked up three more wickets in a fine spell of bowling to finish with the excellent figures of 5 for 15. Hoylandswaine succumbed for 141 in the 43 rd over.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray; Lee Booth; Gareth Howell; Adam Thackray (w/k); Dan Peace; David Rishton; Greg Holmes;

**Sunday June 19 th & June 26 th
v. Flockton (home) – Allsop Cup, Round 2**

'The surest way to make a monkey out of a man is to quote him.' (Robert Benchley, American humorist 1889-1945)

The game actually began on the first Sunday but was interrupted by a violent thunderstorm during the tea interval which temporarily turned parts of the ground into rivers and mini-lakes. It was also the background to a visit from BBC's Radio 4 no less who did a feature for the programme *Open Country* which is broadcast on a Saturday morning and then repeated on the following Thursday afternoon. Many people were interviewed with the general theme being the relationship between the club and the local community and the part it has played in local affairs during the 131 years of its existence.

There was plenty of action on the field to give material for the visiting interviewer and the sound recordist. Chief amongst this was the excellent 81 scored by Jack Oldham who scarcely played a false shot during his innings, scoring all round the wicket. It took an excellent catch by Gary Marsden at midwicket to stop Jack nineteen short of what had seemed likely to be a maiden century in the first team.

When he departed the total was 165 for 4 in the 39 th over. He had put on 50 for the opening stand with Mick Ingledow (18), 45 with his father Martin (10) for the third wicket and then 69 in just over 13 overs with Kris Thackray. The latter continued from where he had left off the previous day at Hoylandswaine. Just a single off his first sixteen balls gave little hint of what was to come but five fours and three sixes kept things moving along and his 60* was another fine knock in what is becoming a productive season. The No. 5 slot in the order looks in good hands if he can maintain this form.

Dan Peace weighed in with a rapid 21, leaving John Eastwood as the only batsman to miss out when he was the second wicket to fall off a slightly tentative forward push to short mid off for just a single. The score of 218 for 5 looked a good one but fullcredit has to be given to the visitors. Although playing three sections below the first team, and having been beaten by our second eleven in a low scoring game just a week or two earlier, their bowlers stuck to the task and the fielding was always enthusiastic. This ensured that they kept matters reasonably in hand.

The visitors agreed to finish the game starting at 10am the following Sunday so that an Under 17 representative game could go ahead on our ground in the afternoon. Your correspondent only saw the last nine overs on returning from duties with the Under 13s so the brief account of the Flockton reply comes from scorebook details and comments from those playing or spectating. N Appleyard (45) and R Smith (42) saw the score to 60 for 2 and the latter was helped by G Hirst (21) to keep the visitors well in the hunt, with a giant killing act possible, at 113/2 in the 31 st over.

Gary Marsden's 30 also kept things moving and it was as well that David Rishton bowled his cup allocation of 12 overs for only 22 runs and one wicket to keep things in check. The absence of Greg Holmes through injury meant that Kris Thackray had to bowl with Lee Booth keeping wicket for a spell. Perhaps the early start meant the biorhythms were out of gear but some of the bowling lacked its usual consistency. Ashley Armitage made his first appearance in the senior side a substitute fielder and chased down several potential boundaries in the later stages of the Flockton innings. In the end, the run rate got a little too high and three run outs bear testimony to this but 190 for 9 did not flatter our visitors and any complacency about matters had vanished long before a hard earned win was achieved.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray ; Dan Peace; Greg Holmes; Lee Booth; Jordan Halliday; Adam Thackray; David Rishton. Sub fielders: Mark Hill; Sam Oldham; Ashley Armitage.

Saturday June 25 th
v. Crossbank Methodists (home)

'I had always thought that once you grew up you could do anything you wanted – stay up all night or eat ice cream straight out of the container.' (Bill Bryson, American writer 1951 -)

Our visitors from Birstall had adopted an attritional approach in their ultimately successful attempt to stay in the Premier Section in 2004. Memories of the 49/8 in 45 overs scored by them in the away fixture last year still lingered but fears of a repeat were unfounded in yet another good game of cricket in what is still a competitive top division just a week short of the season's halfway stage.

Messrs Hall and Colbourn opened the bowling for Crossbank and with the total on 12, the last ball of the fifth over bowled Jack Oldham without him playing a shot. The left arm over bowler brought one back just enough to clip the very top of the off bail. The levelling powers of cricket were well illustrated by Jack's fate after his excellent 81 against Flockton in the cup game.

David Hall was replaced by Neil James for two overs before he in turn gave way to Phil Wilson's off spin. Along with Mark Colbourn, who bowled unchanged, these two carried the attack for the visitors for the rest of the innings. Mick Ingledow and John Eastwood built a firm foundation for the Thurstonland team and neither looked troubled although Colbourn maintained a good line throughout and never faltered, bowling few loose deliveries. Just when it seemed a second fifty of the season was there for the taking, Mick Ingledow mistimed an attacking shot off Wilson and was well caught by Ian Chambers for 49. John Eastwood, after hitting six of his trademark fours, followed in the next over, bowled by Colbourn for 43.

91/2 on the departure of Mick became 98/3 and Martin Oldham and Kris Thackray had to start to rebuild the innings. They raised the total to 123 when Martin was adjudged lbw and Mark Hill followed two balls later without troubling the scorers to bring Lee Booth to the crease. Almost inevitably the early momentum had been lost and Kris Thackray, one huge six hit apart, succumbed to the increasing pressure and was stumped for 16 going down the wicket to Wilson .

Gareth Howell started quickly and soon reached 8 before he was caught inches from the boundary at long on. Lee Booth tried to keep things going and ended on 24* and the score of 175 for 8 was not unworthy but was probably thirty or so short of what had seemed the likely total at around the thirty over mark. Colbourn's figures of 4/56 were well deserved.

Alan Firth and Ian Chambers began the reply. Lee Booth, in the absence of Greg Holmes, opened the bowling with Dan Peace. Firth must have worn his lucky charm as he survived five chances in all, two before he reached twenty, as he and his partner began to take control. David Rishton replaced Dan Peace but Lee kept going throughout. Firth made the most of his opportunities and played some forceful shots with Chambers offering steady support. For the second time this season a century opening stand was conceded by Thurstonland. Chambers was eventually caught behind by Kris Thackray off a mistimed pull for 40 with the score on 118. Firth (80) was soon caught and bowled by David Rishton and Wilson gave John Eastwood his first catch of the season before A Master was run out. Four quick wickets was in marked contrast to what had gone before and with five overs left 138/4 meant that 38 were required from five overs.

Twenty-two were pumelled off the next two and a game which had seemed to be turning Thurstonland's way was worthily won by the visitors with eight ball to spare. The below par performance had led to a slightly unexpected defeat and a rather chastened home side left the field at the end of the match with the Crossbank side delighted with their first ever victory over us at first team level.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray (w/k); Mark Hill; Lee Booth; Gareth Howell ; Jordan Halliday; Dan Peace; David Rishton.

**Saturday July 2 nd
v. Edgerton (away)**

' On a clear day (you can see forever).' Title of a song by American songwriter Alan Jay Lerner 1918-86.

The view from the scoreboard at Dalton , one of the oldest grounds in Huddersfield and now the home of Edgerton, takes in the tops of the buildings in the centre of town and a view of the Colne Valley area as well as the road leading to Halifax and other exotic West Yorkshire destinations. The weighty tins used to show the score would have been a useful substitute for the guillotine at the height of Robespierre's blood letting in the French revolution had they fallen on an unsuspecting neck. Putting them in the appropriate position to be seen is also an art which at times would tax the patience of a follower of Zen Buddhism.

Cousins Sam and Jack Oldham opened the innings with Mick Ingledow unavailable. Sam was making his second appearance of the season in the senior side and in the early overs was a little disconcerted by the lift engendered by the Edgerton opening bowlers Faisal Rehman and Javed Ahmed. It seemed that he could be out at any moment as he played and just missed at several deliveries but slowly but surely he came to terms with the challenge and made some good shots on both sides of the wicket.

Jack was the first to go, caught off a mistimed shot to leg after he had shown signs of settling in for another innings to delight the onlookers. He made 10. John Eastwood and Sam then patiently set about giving some stability to the scoreline and by the 25 th over the total had reached 78/1. Just when it seemed that Sam might get his maiden half century in the first team, to follow his 71 in the seconds the week before, he guided a wide ball into the hands of Shah at slip and departed for a hard-working 38.

Martin Oldham was quickly into his stride and had four boundaries and a six in his first seven scoring shots. For once John Eastwood was content with a supporting role until, with his score on 31, he departed to a catch at the wicket with the total on 116. In form Kris Thackray soon followed with a rather tame caught and bowled offering having made just two but Dan Peace offered good support as Martin Oldham forged on to yet another fifty before being bowled by the returning Javed Ahmed for 53. There was the usual late order flurry of runs and the first appearance at the crease in a league or cup game this time for David Rishton. He was, however, at the non-striker's end for the final over and so did not face a ball. At tea the Thurstonland score was 182 for 8.

Seekers after closer religious harmony would have been given hope by the Edgerton openers Mohammed Ali and Roger Massiah and they set out in determined fashion against Dan Peace and Greg Holmes with 33 in ten overs for the Premier Section's current basement club. Both fell at that score in successive overs, Ali (16) to a catch in the deep by Dan Peace off Greg and Massiah (13) to a slip catch by Sam Oldham off David Rishton. Javed Ahmed looked a good batsman but he could find no-one to stay with him. He eventually departed for 19, caught behind by Adam Thackray off Damien Pawson making his seasonal debut on return from his university studies. His eight over spell yielded 3/13 and was largely responsible for the collapse of the Edgerton middle order.

The anticipated early finish, with our hosts on 63/6, did not materialise as A.Rehman (18), S.Malik (27*) and I.Hussain (27) combined some watchful defence with a few mighty sixes and some well intentioned although unproductive heaves. Had some of these connected then cars on Leeds Road away down the hill at the far side of the ground might have had a few dents in their roofs. It was left to Moin Ansari to play out the last over to earn his side one point at 136/9. David Rishton also ended with 3 wickets at a cost of 58 runs in a 14 over spell.

Team: Sam Oldham; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray; Dan Peace; Adam Thackray (w/k); Greg Holmes; David Rishton; Damien Pawson; Lee Booth.

**Sunday July 3 rd
v. Mirfield (away) – Allsop Cup, Round 3**

**'It's a well known fact that, when I'm on 99, I'm the best judge of a run in the whole bloody world.'
(Alan Wharton, Lancashire and Leicestershire County cricketer in the fifties and sixties.)**

Newcomers to the league, Mirfield, are former members of both the Central Yorkshire and Bradford Leagues. Changed circumstances meant that they had to become an all amateur club and their excellent ground and good off the field facilities mean that fixtures with them will be something to look forward to. Although being placed in the Central League's third section for their initial campaign, it will surely not be long before they reach the top division.

If, as a spectator, you enjoy a run feast then this was the place to be on a pleasantly sunny afternoon. Oddly, the first seven overs of the Mirfield innings gave little indication of what was to follow as tidy bowling from both Dan Peace and Greg Holmes restricted openers Bolt and Kirkby to just ten runs. The former was dropped twice, with his score on two, in the same over off Greg and, as is often the case, this was to prove costly. Both batsmen seemed to gain confidence from this and suddenly they were both out of the traps and running as greyhound enthusiasts have it.

The next eleven overs brought fifty runs and the third century opening partnership against Thurstonland this season came up in the 27 th over. Visiting supporters who began the afternoon without furrowed brows soon joined those who had come ready prepared. David Rishton worked hard to restrict the scoring as he and Lee Booth and then Damien Pawson joined the attack. One or two more catches were spilled until, out of the blue, Kirkby was bowled for 46 by Damien. It was in the thirtieth over and anxious watch was posted for signs of relief in the form of the US Cavalry or its local equivalent.

Bolt soon followed, stumped by Adam Thackray off David Rishton, for 68. He had made the most of his lives but with C.Kellett bowled by David for 2 and the Mirfield score on 144 there were brief hopes of a major comeback. The last eleven overs saw Mirfield add 92 with P.Neal (39) hitting four successive boundaries at one stage and G.Whitworth weighing in with a quick fire 33. A total of 236 for 8 looked a big challenge.

A large target can often undermine even the strongest batting lineup. Sam Oldham went for 4, Jack Oldham for his second successive score of 10, Martin Oldham was bowled by one that kept cruelly low for 4. When Kris Thackray departed for just one, caught and bowled for the second day in a row, the total of 40/4 promised damage limitation at best. As they say 'cometh the hour, cometh the man' and here he came in the form of Dan Peace, promoted in the order with Lee Booth nursing the finger injury sustained in the late stages of the Flockton match.

John Eastwood had remained as the wickets fell and, growing in assurance as Dan kept him company, he began to take charge and an understandably confident Mirfield began to back pedal a little. Veteran slow bowler E.Gill came in for some savage punishment and eventually conceded 61 in 9 overs. Sixty-nine were added in fifteen overs in just short of an hour when Dan Peace was bowled after a stalwart innings of 21 when he curbed his usual attacking instincts. Lee Booth now entered the fray. As John plundered fours and sixes, Lee hit only one boundary but the chase was on with singles and twos being scampered at every opportunity. The run rate required was always in the 7 or 8 runs an over area and five wickets were down. Forty-eight were needed from five overs when Lee was bowled for an excellent 36 and John went to an outstanding century before being caught on the midwicket boundary for 102. He left to a deserved ovation and even then Adam Thackray hit two fours in a quick 17 before a gallant effort fell just eight short, all out on the last ball of the game for 228.

Team: Sam Oldham; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray; Dan Peace; Lee Booth; Greg Holmes; Adam Thackray (w/k); David Rishton; Damien Pawson

**Saturday July 9th
v. Birchencliffe (away)**

'Children are dumb to say how hot the day is, How hot the scent is of a summer rose.' (Robert Graves, 1895-1985, English poet)

The visit to Birchencliffe was only the second at first team level, the previous one having been in 1994. An opening day defeat had set our hosts on track for a challenge for the league title and they began the game just behind Cawthorne after losing to them the week before.

A hot day and high humidity meant that a day of perspiring toil looked on the cards for the bowlers as our hosts batted first. Drinks were served at nine over intervals to slake the thirst but occasional immersion in an ice bath might also have been a useful aid to keeping cool.

Darren Hinchliffe and John Eaton wasted no time in getting the remote controlled scoreboard moving along and 48 runs came from the opening ten overs and already visions began to form of a total in excess of 200. Anything short from Dan Peace and Greg Holmes was quickly dispatched to the close leg side boundary and Gareth Howell, relieving Greg, found no joy in his first over but made an important breakthrough in his second when Darren Hinchliffe was caught low down at point for 22 when a score well above that was beginning to threaten.

C. Eaton joined his cousin and scored quickly but became the first of Dan Peace's five victims. Lee Booth and David Rishton took up the attack and the early departure of James Howson renewed Thurstonland hopes although John Eaton had an air of permanence before being dismissed for a good 74 by David Rishton. Kris Thackray was kept busy with shuttle runs along the top boundary, trying to cut off potential shots for four and it seemed at times as if he was magnetised to the ball. The thirtieth over saw 126/3 on the board and it is to the credit of David Rishton in particular that matters did not get out of hand. A final return of 3/30 off 15 overs was an excellent effort in the context of the innings as a whole whilst Dan Peace had 5/75. This was a tribute to his increasingly glowing faced persistence as he came back for a second spell although his run concession was, by his own admission, a little on the high side. Ashley Haywood (32) batted well in the latter part of the Birchencliffe innings which closed on 193 for 9.

Sam and Jack Oldham began the Thurstonland reply and the former could have departed to the second ball of the innings when a hard snick eluded wicketkeeper and slip and raced away for four. An authentic and forthright pull for four from his fifth ball saw eight on the board before praise for the excellent strawberry topped scones served at tea had finished. Jack departed quite early, caught behind off a thin edge from Barry Veasey, for just two and the same bowler induced a leading edge from John Eastwood (3) to bring Martin Oldham to the crease to join his nephew. Sam had scored 25 of the first 31 runs and, after his early escape, looked in fine form.

Martin was also quickly into his stride and the total mounted steadily. The second drinks interval proved Sam's undoing, however, as from Darren Hinchliffe's first delivery he got the second leading edge of the afternoon and was caught for 34. Jason Lockwood, formerly of Thurstonland, had also joined the home attack and the rest on the innings was a battle between these two bowlers' persistence and the efforts of the visiting batsmen. Kris Thackray (8) was never able to get the ball away and his first really aggressive shot saw him sky a catch to mid off to bring Lee Booth in to join Martin. The scoring rate remained at around the nine runs per over mark. Martin Oldham (90) mixed boundaries with scampered singles and twos which tested to the full the powers of any elixir of youth taken by him. In the end it came down to 18 from the last over when the first ball was sent by him soaring to the long off boundary only to be wonderfully caught inches from being a six. Lee Booth ended on 32 not out with the team, ending on 177/5, once again just missing out on a sustained run chase.

Team: Sam Oldham; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray; Lee Booth; Dan Peace; Gareth Howell; Adam Thackray (w/k); David Rishton; Greg Holmes.

**Saturday July 16th
v. Cumberworth (home)**

'What is the victory of a cat on a hot tin roof? I wish I knew....Just staying on it, I guess, for as long as she can.' (Tennessee Williams, American dramatist, 1911-1983).

The visit of Cumberworth saw the first game this season against the current champions as the reverse fixture at the end of April had been, so far, the only complete washout of the campaign. After dominating matters in the Premier Section for three successive years, a slow start to the year had seen them in the lower reaches of the table early on although a recent better run of results, including victory the previous Saturday over leaders Birchenciffe, had seen them rise to mid table.

Returning from the delights of Menorca, Mick Ingledow opened with Sam Oldham with cousin Jack enjoying a family trip to Las Vegas. Richard Greaves, as ever, soon had the batsman playing circumspectly and he began to add to his hoard of maidens with the same fixed purpose as that of a gold prospector guarding his precious grains in the remote rivers of nineteenth century Yukon. Martin Kilner bowled just three overs which conceded 15 runs. Mick Ingledow hit three boundaries with characteristic pull shots before being adjudged lbw for 13 with a total of 17 on the board.

John Eastwood joined Sam and both of them had to eke out runs with care as Richard Parkes, formerly of Denby, bowled briskly in place of M Kilner. He probably should have had John caught in the gully before he was in double figures but fortune was on the batsman's side. Sam never looked in any trouble in spite of finding it hard to get the ball away and he also went lbw for 14 after a patient innings whose true value was seen later.

The in form captain, Lee Booth, joined John and gradually they began to get the measure of the Cumberworth attack. Ashley Littlewood's spin came in for some punishment as the latter reached his fifty from 90 balls and then proceeded to add another 33 from the next seventeen. Just when it seemed another century was about to be reached, an attempted six was caught on the long on boundary to leave him on 83.

Dan Peace lasted two balls and Mark Hill one fewer than that as Richard Parkes gave himself the chance of a hat trick. Although currently leading the second team batting averages, Mark's four innings in the first team have lasted nine balls in total and, as the saying has it, he is yet to trouble the scorers. Lee Booth hit only one boundary in his 33 not out, dealing exclusively in ones and twos and Kris Thackray hit successive deliveries for four with great power before being spectacularly bowled for twelve from the last ball of the innings, his off stump catapulting towards the slip area. The total of 201 for 6 was the final outcome, boosted by 46 extras.

Ashley Littlewood and Matthew Dolley headed a potentially powerful opposition batting line up and both had made big scores against us in recent seasons. Dan Peace dismissed the former for 9 thanks to a catch at mid on by Damien Pawson and soon after Greg Holmes bowled James Senior for 2. The introduction of David Rishton saw the opposition batsmen restricted in their run scoring opportunities. Damien Pawson took a wicket as Matthew Dolley provided the only real hint of permanence before the spinmeister began to work his way through the batting order to record figures of 6 for 25. Dolley eventually went for 30 and at 75 for 8 the end seemed in sight. Martin Kilner was then dropped off a relatively easy chance at long on and Richard Parkes struck some defiant blows in scoring a quick fire 22 to bring Richard Greaves to the crease with ten overs to go and the score on 99. In spite of Thurstonland's best efforts, including three overs from Kris Thackray, the last pair survived, Kilner (28*) and Greaves (7*), to salvage a point with the visitors on 126/9.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Sam Oldham; John Eastwood ; Lee Booth; Dan Peace; Mark Hill; Kris Thackray; Adam Thackray (w/k); David Rishton; Greg Holmes; Damien Pawson.

**Saturday July 23rd
v. Woolley (away)**

' VLADIMIR : That passed the time.

ESTRAGON: It would have passed in any case.

VLADIMIR : Yes, but not so rapidly.' (from *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett, Irish dramatist,1906-89).

Wasps 2004, Flying Ants 2005. Before readers worry unduly, let me assure them that this is not the score from a fantasy sporting encounter but rather a report on the prevalent form of insect life which favoured Woolley CC in those particular years. The creatures in question certainly believed in arriving in numbers and were undaunted by either feeble flaps or rather stronger language. Compilers of the nature columns in the press would have found material for several weeks had they been spectators at the latest Premier Section fixture in the Central League.

Damien Pawson opened the Thurstonland attack as Dan Peace was at a wedding and both he and Greg Holmes gave little away early on. Indeed John Utley was so determined that there would not be a collapse of the kind which reduced Woolley to 13 for 6 and an eventual all out total of 56 that he faced 105 balls for just 14 before becoming a victim for Lee Booth well after the 30 over mark. Greg's last ball before he had to be taken off under the bowling directives for 16 year olds made the breakthrough when he bowled Utley's opening partner J. Crowcroft.

One Thackray absentee, Kris, was replaced by younger brother Jordan who was making his first team debut at fifteen and he bowled in place of Greg. He performed creditably and conceded 24 from his 5 overs which contained some tidy deliveries although over pitched balls were seized on eagerly by Woolley batsmen who knew they had to increase the scoring rate. Paul Baranowski (30) was promoted in the order. After three or four balls as sighters he then launched into David Rishton's ninth over and helped himself to 24 runs rather like Billy Bunter scoffing the tuck before anyone else could have a share. The end result for David was removal from the attack with the curious figures of 9-7-29-0! The returning Damien Pawson's third ball induced another mighty blow towards long on but Jack Oldham moved quickly under the ball and took a good catch to end the brief but potentially dangerous flurry. The rest of the innings saw the score mount towards respectability but Damien took 3/37 from 14 good overs and Lee Booth returned 3/44, his initial wicket being his first for 47 overs spread over five games after it had seemed that he might spend the rest of the season on the career landmark figure of 400.

The interval total of 158 for 7 was a reasonable one and certainly a far greater challenge than that posed in early May at Thurstonland. Neither Mick Ingledow nor Jack Oldham found the opening overs from Richard Baranowski and Tom Atkinson easy to deal with. Both bowlers, particularly the latter, are quite pacy and lifting deliveries caused problems. Jack played and missed more than in all his previous innings this season and three boundaries from Mick were the only significant rewards in a testing beginning to the visitor's reply.

It took a bowling change for Woolley to get the breakthrough when Steve Norton dismissed Mick Ingledow for 13 and, fairly soon afterwards, John Eastwood, caught behind, for 11. Meanwhile Jack found his touch following a lovely shot through mid wicket and soon provided great entertainment to the spectators and frustration to the Woolley attack. His timing was now spot on and the ball was eased away for several boundaries as he went to his 50 with his early struggles well behind him. In company with his dad, Martin, runs came in abundance with the latter enjoying his most productive season for several years. They came together at 82/2 and scored the 77 required for victory in just 40 minutes after some delightful strokeplay. Jack was undefeated on 68 and Martin finished on 43.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Sam Oldham; Lee Booth; Adam Thackray (w/k); Greg Holmes; David Rishton; Jordan Thackray; Damien Pawson.

**Saturday July 30th
v. Green Moor (home)**

The first team game was called off just before the scheduled start time of two o'clock with puddles visible on the wicket ends so both teams had to be content with one point. Reports that the second team was in action, after a delay when four overs had been bowled, gave a chance for your correspondent to watch them in action along with a few others anxious not to be deprived of their cricket fix.

**Thurstonland 2nds v. Denby Dale 2nds
'Singin' in the rain.' (Arthur Freed 1894-1973, title of a song).**

Nine overs had been bowled on arrival with the Denby Dale score on 32 for 2. The breakthrough had been made by a wicket each for both David Johnson, just 19 and whose 35th victim of the season this was, and fifteen year old Angus Cox who is beginning to stake a claim for regular inclusion in an already very youthful second team. Although overcast the rain just about managed to hold off but periods of drizzle did not make playing conditions conducive to cricket.

David Oldham has to work round the bowling quotas for his young attack and Mark Rishton, making a relatively rare appearance this season because of work commitments took over from David Johnson whilst another fifteen year old, Joe Law, replaced Angus. Joe bowled five very tidy overs and managed to make the swing. He took two quick wickets, both bowled, and bowled very tidily and eventually ended with excellent figures of 3/7. Our hosts had had a fairly easy win earlier in the season but were finding matters much harder with one or two players missing on holiday.

A briefly threatening stand was halted in its tracks when Tom Sykes took a slightly off target throw with great efficiency to bring off a good run out and reduce Denby Dale to 64 for 5. Off spinner Ashley Armitage, still only 16 but in his second season as a regular in the side, came into the attack. Conditions, to say the least, were not helpful for this type of bowling but he was not afraid to vary his deliveries, trying to use flight and change of pace to keep the batsmen on their toes. He was a little fortunate, after conceding an early four, to take a wicket with a short delivery which was pulled by the batsman straight to David Johnson on the leg side. This was a signal for him to run through the lower order to end with 3/8 from 3.3 overs and, with Mark Rishton taking a wicket in his second spell, the home team were all out for 88 in the 26th over.

The rain began again in earnest during the tea interval but, to general surprise, play resumed more or less on time. James Adler and Mark Hill were sent in to get things moving in view of the conditions and the former got matters going with an early square cut for four. Although he departed quite quickly after totalling nine, the desired momentum had been achieved. Mark Hill hit three trademark boundaries with fierce blows and David Howarth showed why he had been such a good batsman in first team cricket for so long by offering support with watchful defence whilst picking up ones and twos where possible.

The rain did eventually ease and Mark Hill departed for 19 when he was caught off another attempted big hit which went a great distance skywards but came down in the hands of mid on. He had, however, done his job with the visitors nearly half way to their target. Jordan Halliday then played some pleasing shots, particularly square on the off side, and the total mounted steadily into the seventies. Having reached 24, he played a good cover drive but as he set off for the run he slipped and suffered the relatively rare dismissal of hit wicket. There was a short delay before he was able to walk off rather gingerly as he aggravated a knee injury sustained at football.

David Oldham hit a forceful boundary to long off to get off the mark but was lucky to survive a catching opportunity to square leg when two Denby Dale fielders collided in going for the catch. Just when it seemed that David Howarth (22) would see matters to the finish, he was bowled with the score on 83. Angus Cox was in no mood to hang around. His first ball was a single to fine leg, two balls later David Oldham also got one and the game was over when Angus glanced his second delivery to the fine leg boundary to leave Thurstonland victors on 89 for 4.

Team: James Adler; Mark Hill; David Howarth; Jordan Halliday; David Oldham; Angus Cox; Tom Sykes (w/k); Joe Law; David Johnson; Ashley Armitage; Mark Rishton.

**Saturday August 6 th
v. Old Almondburians (away)**

**' By roads 'not adopted', by woodlanded ways,
She drove to the club in the late summer haze.' (John Betjeman, 1906-1984, English poet)**

The first ball of the match from young Alex Slack of Old Almondburians was a wide and two more followed in quick succession. If any film directors from Hollywood or Bollywood are in need of extras to fill a battle scene then Thurstonland first team games are currently a good option. Only recently Cumberworth provided 46 and the two sides on the first Saturday in August easily beat that total between them. It certainly helps the scorer to fill the bowling analysis boxes to the full and with a range of symbols to tax the research skills of archaeologists in some distant future time who might come upon some scorebooks in a 25 th century version of *How The Ancestors Lived* .

Runs did also come from the bat with Mick Ingledow quickly into his stride as he and Jack Oldham made a purposeful start on a ground where we had not won since 1998. The wicket looked to have less of the occasionally unpredictable bounce which has been a feature of games here for quite a while. With the total already into the thirties Mick Ingledow miscued a pull shot off a ball from Steve Slack and was caught at mid on. John Eastwood was quickly into his stride but played over a delivery from Mick Hall in the latter's first over when on 10 which left him on 700 for the season. Once more the Oldham family was united at the crease with Jack continuing to please the spectators with some cultured strokes to all parts of the ground. He had reached 41 and suggesting permanence when he got the faintest touch to a ball from the persevering Steve Slack and was caught at the wicket. Kris Thackray, returning after two weeks on holiday, took a little time to get his timing right but his partnership with Martin Oldham soon became the defining part of the match. A short ball was hooked decisively for four to get him off the mark whilst the latter began to play yet another innings of high quality.

Several bowling changes made little impact and 104 runs were added to put the visitors in a good position. Kris was out for 26 just a few balls from the end of the 45 overs which gave Greg Holmes a chance to hit a thunderous cover drive for four before being caught and bowled off the last ball of the 45 overs for a quick fire 8. Martin Oldham ended on 71 not out to pass 500 runs for the season for the first time since the mid 1990s.

Greg Holmes could have dismissed both Steve Slack, often a prolific run scorer himself, and Mick Hall in the first over of the home team's quest to reach the Thurstonland score of 217 for 5. A square drive from the former was hit with great power and John Eastwood in the gully just failed to hang on to a very hard chance whilst the latter edged a delivery straight through Mick Ingledow's hands and second slip and on to the boundary. This was, however, his only scoring shot before he was dismissed and with Alex Slack falling for a duck, both to Lee Booth opening the bowling in the absence of Dan Peace, a possible early finish looked possible. Rick Wilby joined Steve Slack and the latter had seven boundaries by the time he reached 30. The former looked likely to succumb to any delivery but somehow clung on. He also produced some good drives to go with his favoured Chinese cut of which there were at least five, all producing singles.

After a short spell from Damien Pawson in relief of Greg Holmes. Kris Thackray had a rare extended bowl in the absence of David Rishton on holiday. Wilby was eventually bowled for 38 and a brief show of pyrotechnics from Chris Buck ended when Greg took a good catch running in from the cover boundary. Steve Slack, after his brisk start, suddenly found it hard to hit the ball of the square although he survived to the end for a hard working 78 not out. Both Kris and Greg picked up late wickets before the home reply ended on 162 for 6.

**Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood ; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray; Greg Holmes;
Sam Oldham; Lee Booth; Neil Booth; Adam Thackray (w/k); Damien Pawson.**

**Saturday August 13 th
v. Cawthorne (home)**

For the second time in succession, heavy showers made play impossible for the first team in a home fixture. This was the third complete wash out of the season.

Second Team v. Penistone (away)

'I believe we should all behave quite differently if we lived in a warm, sunny climate all the time.' (Noel Coward, 1899-1973 – British dramatist)

Once news filtered through that the second team was about to start its game at 3.30, the latest time permissible, your indefatigable correspondent set out in search of his cricket fix.

The first ball seen brought the second wicket for Thurstonland as the home batsman played an expansive square cut off a ball from Angus Cox straight at David Johnson in the covers who took the catch with studied nonchalance at head height. Earlier Angus had bowled one of the Penistone openers and so the end of the sixth over came with the hosts on 15 for 2.

Damien Pawson, stepping down from the first team, was bowling from the river end and both bowlers maintained a high degree of accuracy in what were obviously damp conditions although the sun had by now made a welcome appearance. He took the next wicket to fall when a top edged shot was caught by Mark Hill at backward square leg. The catch was made to look easier than it was as he had to retreat several yards to get under the ball. Three wickets were now down with the total not yet thirty.

Having bowled five overs, the limit in one spell because of his age, Angus was taken off with figures of 2 for 17. Although conceding a couple of boundaries, he had bowled very tidily and even managed a little away swing which caused anxieties for batsmen outside the off stump. David Johnson took over and quite soon began to run through the opposition who had several young players down the order because of players being on holiday. Like Angus, he bowled an accurate line. Two were bowled, one caught by Jordan Thackray and two taken at the wicket by Tom Sykes. Figures of 5 for 12 put David's tally at 41 for the season so far at an average of just under 16.

The remaining two victims not mentioned fell to the persevering Damien Pawson (3 for 14), one bowled and the other off a rare full toss which was hit with unerring accuracy straight to Mark Hill still lurking at backward square leg. With the rain delay the game had been reduced to a 30 over encounter but only twenty of those were needed with Penistone dismissed for just 43.

The senior citizens in the side, captain David Oldham together with David Howarth and Neil Booth, enjoyed a leisurely tea and improved their pie and scone eating averages as Jordan Thackray and Tom Sykes were sent out to open the innings. The former played some pleasant drives to keep the score moving along whilst the latter took full advantage of anything short to hit some powerful leg side pulls to the boundary.

Only twice did it seem that a wicket might fall, once when Jordan had to resort to a dive to reach his ground when there was a chance of a run out and once when Tom mistimed an attacking shot but the ball just fell out of reach of a fielder. In the end the runs needed came in fourteen overs with the former not out 11 and the latter not out 36. This third successive win put the team in good heart for the final four fixtures of the season in their eleven team section.

Team: Jordan Thackray; Tom Sykes (w/k); Angus Cox; Jordan Halliday; Neil Booth; Mark Hill; David Howarth; David Oldham; David Johnson; Damien Pawson; Mark Rishton.

**Saturday August 20 th
v. Denby Dale (away)**

' Three o'clock is always too late or too early for anything you want to do.' (Jean-Paul Sartre, 1905-80 – French philosopher, novelist, dramatist and critic).

Denby Dale had first use of a benign looking track on a sunny afternoon which defied dire weather reports of earlier in the week. Dan Peace bowled the first ball of the game and the first that he had delivered since July 16 th because of the weather and personal circumstances. His third over saw him have David Firth plumb lbw for 2 with the total on 7. His partner Stuart Geldart was joined by Ashley Amos who was making his first appearances in the home team's senior side in 2005.

Both batsmen had to be watchful against a steady opening attack and Greg Holmes bowled tidily down the slope at the Pie Hall end of the ground. After his six overs he was replaced by Damien Pawson and what turned out to be the key phase of the game began. Amos belied his regular second team status by taking the attack to David Rishton who had replaced Dan Peace and hitting some forceful boundaries to get him to 22. He then had two lives which were to prove costly. An attempted off drive was lofted towards Mick Ingledow who back pedalled for several yards but never really got under the ball which duly plummeted to earth. In David's next over, with the batsman now on 29, a gentle lob towards mid on seemed to signal the end of a bright and breezy knock but, to everyone's consternation including his own, Kris Thackray spilled a chance which normally would have been taken with ease. No eye contact between bowler and fielder was immediately obvious and the potential for altered Christmas card lists was there for all to see.

Stuart Geldart went for 22 but Dean Rickson and Tom Goatly both gave determined support to the twice reprieved Amos who celebrated by reaching his half century. He had certainly enjoyed good fortune but also played some authoritative strokes and was never tied down for long. He was eventually well caught by Adam Thackray for 73 off the returning Dan Peace. The Denby Dale innings was given momentum in its later stages by Jim Stanley who overcame an uncertain start by also compiling a half century.

Kris Thackray and Lee Booth also tried to stem the tide but only Dan Peace with creditable figures of 5/49 from 14 overs looked likely to take wickets and tea came with Thurstonland facing a total of 216 for 7.

An opening maiden from the brisk Tom Goatly was faced by Mick Ingledow and the fourth ball of Paul Wilkinson's first over saw Jack Oldham out in odd circumstances. He stood several feet up the wicket looking towards the mid wicket boundary as the bails were removed by wicket keeper Firth. Several hours later he remained convinced that he had middled the ball but had in fact played it on to his foot from where it rebounded straight behind the wicket to effect a rare early dismissal.

Sam Oldham and Mick Ingledow then enjoyed a long partnership with trademark short arm pulls from the latter and a series of stylish drives from the former who is gradually beginning to fulfil his undoubted potential. Sam eventually departed lbw for 65, a personal best in the first team, after they had added 119 soon followed by Mick who made a hard working 54. Martin Oldham chopped a ball on to his wicket for a duck and suddenly the relative prosperity of 119/1 had become a more challenging 123/4. Kris Thackray (21) and Lee Booth tried hard to increase the run rate but the latter was run out for 19 and with Dan Peace and Adam Thackray having fairly short stays it was left to Greg Holmes (9*) and David Rishton (1*) to see out the last few balls, not without a few alarms from Tom Goatly, and the rescuing of a point with the score on 189 for 8.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; Sam Oldham; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray; Lee Booth; Dan Peace; Adam Thackray (w/k); Greg Holmes; David Rishton; Damien Pawson.

**Saturday August 27 th
v. Holmbridge(away)**

**' The sunlight on the garden
Hardens and grows cold'
We cannot cage the minute
Within its net of gold.' (Louis MacNeice, 1907-63,British poet).**

Nobody had mentioned that the picturesque cricket ground at Holmbridge had been booked by the First Battalion (West Yorkshire) Midge Squadron for its training headquarters. If they have the same success in their campaigns against foes in the insect world as they had against their human targets then a new breed of super midge is in the offing. As the day wore on it was interesting to observe the reactions of those attacked. At times it seemed as if a tutorial for tic tac men at the races was being conducted and the origin of the twenties term flappers took on new possibilities as the determined adversary was beaten off by flailing arms, wafted caps and recourse to sweaters over the head in imitation of urban hoodies.

Cricket did also take place and the fortunes in the game ebbed and flowed in the manner of the currently hard fought test series between England and Australia . Mick Ingledow and Jack Oldham had a few lifting deliveries to contend with early from the bowling of R. Bruce and R. Haigh but the loose ball was duly dispatched to the short boundaries and 24 was quickly posted. Eventually Jack was tempted into trying to cut a ball from Haigh which lifted and wicketkeeper Jackson took a diving catch in front of first slip with his own score on 8. John Eastwood took a short time to get his bearings on a ground where it is easy to be lulled into the sense of easy runs being there for the taking. Eventually, however, both he and Mick Ingledow got into their stride and the perimeter wall and fencing were peppered with a series of powerful pulls and drives. Robert Preston then joined the attack from the pavilion end.

With drinks taken at 103/1 after 25 overs it seemed as if a large total beckoned but soon afterwards John drove a little airily at Preston to provide wicket keeper Jackson with his second victim. He felt afterwards that he should have pressed on from his total of 42. Mick Ingledow soon followed, bowled for 63, a second successive fifty, by a well directed yorker. Kris Thackray was soon bowled for his first duck of the season and the runs suddenly dried up as the bowlers improved their accuracy, perhaps taking their lead from the ever persistent midges. Lee Booth and Martin Oldham eventually got things moving again only for Lee to be run out, for 11, for the second time in a row from a direct hit. Martin Oldham compiled a confident 30 before his dismissal but brief stays from both Dan Peace and Greg Holmes meant that David Rishton and Tom Sykes, standing in as wicket keeper for the holidaying Adam Thackray, had to see out the last two overs and a bit. The score of 178 for 8 was adequate but disappointing when a total well in excess of 200 had looked likely at the halfway point of the innings.

In the Holmbridge reply the accurate Greg Holmes soon bowled Mark Beaumont for nought and Dan Peace soon after removed his opening partner to leave the hosts on 15/2. In form Andy Haigh then took charge. Short balls left the ground at great heights and fours, both classically driven and thick edged snicks, also hastened the score along. Lee Booth took a couple of wickets but it took the introduction of David Rishton, who bowled tidily on the small ground, to remove Haigh for a belligerent 51 thanks to a smart catch standing up by Tom Sykes. When the score reached 104/7 it seemed that Thurstonland would come out on top but Craig Furze and opening bowler Haigh had other ideas and gradually the score mounted and a fifty partnership followed. Greg Holmes came back into the attack to bowl Haigh (26) only for Tom Jackson (13*) to give good support to Craig Furze (35*) and lead his team to an unexpected win on 179/8. Lee Booth had 3 for 68 but the plaudits went to Greg Holmes 3/24 from 8 overs and to David Rishton whose seven overs brought him figures of 1 for 17.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Kris Thackray; Lee Booth; Dan Peace; Greg Holmes; David Rishton; Tom Sykes (w/k); Damien Pawson.

**Sunday September 4 th
v. Hoylandswaine (home)**

'The opera ain't over 'til the fat lady sings.' (Dan Cook, in *Washington Post* 3 June 1978).

The first of the one o'clock starts for September games was a sign that the season was in its final stages. The weather, however, was borrowed from high summer with unbroken sunshine providing ideal conditions for the players and spectators. It was the kind of atmosphere which, if it could be bottled, could be opened as a tonic when the sky seems close to the ground in winter and the spirits are in need of a lift.

This was the first home game for the first team since July 16th as the last two with ground advantage had fallen victim to the weather without a ball being bowled. Jack Oldham was playing for Huddersfield Schools and being watched by his father Martin and Kris Thackray was also unavailable. Their replacements were Mark Hill, Tom Sykes playing as a fielder rather than keeping wicket as he had done the previous week as deputy for the now returning Adam Thackray and fifteen year old debutant Joe Law after some promising performances in the seconds.

Accurate opening overs from Wayne Storey and Steve Webb meant that runs were at a premium early on and Sam Oldham played a little fretfully before aiming an expansive off drive to the former and departing for a duck thanks to a sharply taken catch at slip by Robert Greenwood. John Eastwood was soon into his stride and Mick Ingledow, enjoying a productive late season run of scores, followed his example. A fifty partnership soon came to boost the scoring rate after the slow start. Richard Brocklehurst replaced Webb and Mick Ingledow was out for 33 to his first false shot, caught off a pull shot. Lee Booth had to play carefully as he joined John and runs dried up a little. He was not to last long as he was caught by Steve Hardwick standing up to spinner Greenwood who was the best of the Hoylandswaine bowlers, eventually taking 5/38.

Adam Thackray was the second duck victim, bowled by Brocklehurst, after being promoted in the order. Tom Sykes played positively and hit one good leg boundary but he also had a relatively short stay and his dismissal was a repeat of Lee's having scored 11. Debutant Joe Law was lbw for the third duck of the innings and the home side was glad of John Eastwood's 57, his innings ending when he was bowled by Greenwood .

Dan Peace batted well in the later stages and included some elegantly forceful cover drives in a season's best score of 28. Mark Hill at last managed to score runs in the first team (5) before being bowled by Hoylandswaine youngster James Exley and there was the unusual sight of the Thurstonland last pair, David Rishton and Greg Holmes in partnership. They added 11 before the former got himself an average for the campaign when he was caught at the wicket for 8 with Greg undefeated on 5 to leave a target of 165 with one over unused. This was only the second time this season that the side had been bowled out. The other occasion was in the cup quarter final at Mirfield at the beginning of July.

Young opener Clark Pickles hit an excellent four through the covers before being caught at mid off by Tom Sykes. Chris Sammon was dropped on nought and one before going on to be the mainstay of the visitor's reply. Greenwood went for 19 and Ryan Copley fell to Lee Booth thanks to a good catch on the long on boundary by Joe Law. He in turn had a good first over before losing his radar a little and Lee Booth and David Rishton bowled in tandem for the vital middle overs. Steve Webb (20) and Wayne Storey kept up the run chase although the loss of wickets meant there was little margin for error. Lee had three victims and David two before Dan Peace and Greg Holmes returned with tidy spells at the end to restrict Hoylandswaine to 152 for 9. Dan Peace returned the well deserved figures of 4/32 and Greg, although not taking a wicket, bowled economically in conceding just 17 from his seven overs.

Team: Sam Oldham; Mick Ingledow; John Eastwood; Lee Booth; Adam Thackray (w/k); Tom Sykes; Joe Law; Dan Peace; Mark Hill; David Rishton; Greg Holmes.

**Sunday September 11 th
v. Crossbank Methodists (away)**

**'The way you wear your hat,
The way you sip your tea,
The memory of all that-
No, no! They can't take that away from me!' (Ira Gershwin 1896-1983, American songwriter).**

The final away game of the 2005 season saw the long trip to Birstall and the one o'clock start tested the willpower of those whose Sunday mornings usually took in an extra hour or two in bed followed by a lunchtime drink. It was past quarter to one when the first player joined your correspondent and the rest of the team a minute or two later rather in the manner of the sheep who caused anxiety to Bo Peep in the nursery rhyme.

Speed changing was the order of the day and proceedings got underway only a minute or two late. In the absence for the first time this season of Lee Booth, sixteen year old off spinner Ashley Armitage was given his first team debut after two promising years in the seconds. The ground was damp after the heavy showers of the previous 36 hours and the home side were please to ask Thurstonland to bat first. Mick Ingledow was an early victim for just a single when he gave a catch to cover off the first ball of the second over and both Jack Oldham and John Eastwood had to play cautiously on a slow wicket which had variable bounce. So circumspect was the former that it was over half an hour before he got off the mark with a single.

John gradually got into his stride with pulls for four off shorter deliveries and Jack played two fine drives to the midwicket boundary before he was caught behind off a thin edge for 11 which he had had to battle for. Martin Oldham got off the mark fairly quickly as the hosts began to run through a range of bowlers, using seven in all at some stage of the innings. M.Coulbourn was very economical, conceding only 14 in 11 overs and taking one wicket. It was a relief when he was eventually taken off.

John reached his fifty with a six over midwicket which just eluded the hand of the fielder placed there and quickly added twenty more before holing out in the same area from a ball which really should have had the owners of the cars parked on the top boundary looking for their insurance policies to see if they were covered for broken windows. His 70 runs took him to 869 for the season. Sam Oldham joined Uncle Martin and scored 23 in rapid time thanks to two sixes and two fours before being caught whilst the latter contributed 27. Kris Thackray hit one lovely cover drive for four in his total of 9 but younger brother Adam, again promoted in the order could only manage two before being bowled. Late flurries from Dan Peace, Greg Holmes and David Rishton saw the final score reach 180 for 9.

Last year's visit had seen Crossbank crawl to 49 for 8 from 45 overs and it was a relief to see that a more positive approach being adopted this time. They were looking for the double and a win was wanted in their battle against relegation. Wickets, however, began to fall quickly thanks to an accurate opening spell from Greg Holmes who took the first three to fall, including A. Firth who scored 80 at Thurstonland. Having been dropped several times on that occasion, he fell to a stunning slip catch by Kris Thackray which rivalled the one taken by Andrew Strauss in the test series to dismiss Adam Gilchrist.

Ashley Armitage relieved Greg, as Dan Peace bowled tidily with little luck, and took his first senior wicket with a sharp caught and bowled. His eventual figures of 1/37 from 8 overs did him great credit. From 43 for 6, the home side eventually reached 139 thanks to a good stand between Paul Ratcliffe and captain Wayne Lawford and some late hitting from N.James. David Rishton took two wickets and Dan Peace one before the returning Greg Holmes finished things off in the 43 rd over to end with 4/18.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Sam Oldham; Kris Thackray; Adam Thackray (w/k); Dan Peace; Greg Holmes; David Rishton; Ashley Armitage.

**Sunday September 18th
v. Edgerton (home)**

**'But it's a long, long while
From May to December;
And the days grow short
When you reach September.'** (Maxwell Anderson 1888-1959, American dramatist)

Visitors Edgerton already knew that they would be relegated when they arrived for the final fixture of the season. To their credit they did not tinker around with batting the batting order or give everyone a bowl and the result was a pleasant game of cricket as the autumn equinox approached and more weeks than bear thinking about before next April.

Jack Oldham accompanied Mick Ingledow to the middle to open proceedings on the letter's final game before retirement. Mick has been at the club for ten years and scored an average of just short of 600 runs a season during that time as well as compiling a batting average of just above thirty runs per innings. Along with sterling service at Hoylandswaine, he has been a key figure in Central League batting circles for a long time.

F .Rehman and N.Ali both bowled a little short at the outset and so 41 virtually untroubled runs came in the first ten overs. Jack Oldham with typical useful exuberance was ready to take on fielders at every opportunity and Mick had to employ his trademark triple cry of 'No!' with increasing frequency and at an ever greater volume to the entertainment of the onlookers. He was coaxed into several slightly skittish singles and, when an overthrow turned a scampered run into a two, he covered the extra yards in the manner, perhaps, of a Mississippi steamboat and it was not hard to imagine bell and whistles accompanying his efforts in addition to the paddle wheel working overtime.

Javed Ahmed and Roger Massiah slowed matters somewhat but the score gradually mounted and the century stand came up in the 30th over with Mick completing his half century. Jack was playing a supporting role and mixed periods of circumspect defence with well crafted boundaries and a six from a slower ball when time seemed to stand still as he wound up before heaving the ball over long on. He also passed the fifty mark. Interest now centred on whether Mick could reach a farewell century and whether the existing record opening partnership total of 154 could be passed.

The fortieth over saw the latter target reached and the 41st saw the score on 169 when Mick hit a fierce drive to the right of fairly short mid wicket. Instinctively Roger Massiah stuck out his hand and to everyone's amazement, not least his, the ball was clamped in it. A final innings century had eluded him by one run...caught for 99! Jack also fell soon after to another fine catch for 67, just two runs short of 500 for the campaign. A cameo 22 not out from John Eastwood followed from a mere ten balls faced, Martin Oldham faced two balls, despatching the first for four whilst the second bowled him. Greg Holmes, promoted in the order, enjoyed making eight not out from as many deliveries and so the innings closed on 208 for 3. Left armer Din Mohammed took all three wickets to fall at a cost of 38 runs.

After tea Dan Peace quickly removed the stylish Javed Ahmed for 7 and followed next ball by trapping wicket keeper Singh lbw. Greg Holmes bowled his first six overs very accurately taking 2/6 in that spell and later Kris Thackray also took two wickets in successive deliveries on his way to fine figures and a career best of 4/33. At 42/7 after 16 overs it seemed that matters would end quickly but a determined and often stylish 78 not out from Khalid Rehman who received dogged support from the tail, in particular bowling hero Din Mohammed (19), ensured that matters stretched out until the returning Dan Peace(4/69) took the last two Edgerton wickets with six overs to spare to leave a final total of 139. Tom Sykes, again standing in for Adam Thackray, kept wicket tidily and took three catches.

Team: Mick Ingledow; Jack Oldham; John Eastwood; Martin Oldham; Greg Holmes; Sam Oldham; Kris Thackray; Lee Booth; Tom Sykes (w/k); Dan Peace; David Rishton.

