

## **MATTHEW STEERS: SPINNER AND JOKER**

By Mark Edmonds

*One player hoping to put the 2008 Huddersfield Drakes League in a spin is club stalwart and vice-captain Matthew Steers. Now in his seventh season at Barkisland, the Sheffield-born spinner is one of the club's mainstays as well as being one of the first names on the teamsheet. University of Huddersfield student and resident Barkisland writer Mark Edmonds caught up with Matthew to find out about the man, the spinner and the practical joker.*



### **Has cricket always been a passion of yours?**

I've always liked cricket and always played it with my brother and my dad. I started just down the road at Kirkburton CC before coming here to Barkisland. The game's always been in the family and they still both play at Elland Cricket Club.

### **How did you come to being a spinner?**

Well, it started when I was at school really. I didn't fancy running in over and over again; that seemed like too much work, so I tried spinning the ball one day and luckily it came out pretty well. After that, I kept on with it, enjoyed it and just carried it on from there.

### **Were you ever much of a batsman?**

I was never a batsman; I just always struggled with it and ended up in the lower-order. I've always tended to concentrate more on my bowling as that is what gets me in the team.

### **What would you pick out as your best bowling performance?**

[Pauses and lets out a long sigh] God that's a good one...I'd have to say it was about three seasons ago or so when we played against Hall Bower. It

was right at the end of the season and whoever won the game would be pretty much assured of promotion, so it was a big game to say the least. I ended up with seven wickets, giving us the victory and promotion – that was probably my best performance I'd say.

**You were also made vice-captain for the 2007 season. What does that role involve?**

It's mainly an on-field role. I help [captain] Paul [Winrow] with all the pre-match warm-ups and giving advice with decisions when it comes to fielding positions. Paul himself takes charge of all the training, but I'm always there as his right-hand man, so to speak.

**It's also been said you're a bit of a joker, is there any truth in this?**

[Laughing] Well there's been a bit of a dirty rumour going around that I may have been responsible for some things. People are always quick to point the finger at me!

**Any pranks that you're particularly proud of?**

There was a time when one of the younger players was going to a family dinner after one of our matches, so a few of us decided to put some Ralgex into his boxers for when he got changed. He was definitely a bit uncomfortable that night...[laughs]

**Finally, what's your ambition for 2008?**

Well at the start of each season, I always set myself a target of wickets for the year, while also aiming to be as economical a bowler as I can. As for the side itself, I'm hoping we can go on a good cup run as that's always exciting to be involved in. Most importantly though, I want us to perform well in the higher division - I really think we can get a top-five finish.