

'THE TEAM SPIRIT GIVES ME A BUZZ'

Q & A Player Profile: Martin Burke

Nickname - Beaky

Age - 37

Batting style - Right-hand bat

Bowling style - Right-arm medium

Role - 2nd XI opening bowler

How did you first get into playing cricket and how old were you?

I was thirteen and my uncle was one of the people running Mackintoshes C.C. He got me down to Mackintoshes and I've been bitten by it (cricket) ever since.

How would you describe yourself as a cricketer?

Typical aggressive bowler, always give 110% no matter what and just really enjoy playing for the team. But I've been doing the coaching side of it and it's now time to put something back into the game. So when I'm not bowling or batting it's about helping the young lads and bringing them through.

What has been your best Blackley moment?

There's been a lot to be honest. I've been the captain of a cup final team; we lost, but it was nice. I played in other cup finals, won trophies, but I think the camaraderie and friendship within the club is the best thing.

Which famous cricketer do you most relate to or play like?

I used to get compared to Peter Martin from Lancashire (below). Think it was because we are both fairly tall; I used to have decent pace, can get a bit of bounce and can't bat.



What are your aims for the forthcoming season?

Well I had a bad season last year and only finished with about 25 wickets. I'd like to think this season if I bowl consistently well I can be aiming to get 30-plus wickets. I'm not

young enough to be bowling 20 overs a game but if I can bowl about 6-8 overs, contribute to the team and help out the lads, then I'm happy.

Do you have any unfulfilled ambitions left in cricket?

I want to play cricket with my son. He plays for Blackley and captained the under- 11s last year. I think he will be a really good player and once I've played cricket with him I'm finished. I will have done everything I want to do.

On a lighter note...what is your most embarrassing moment in cricket?

It will probably have to be a dropped catch somewhere. I'm not the best fielder in the world or the safest pair of hands. I normally field down fine leg so I'm rarely called upon. So it's just unfortunate when I am.

Which members of the Blackley squad are the most fun on a night out?

Dave Peel is a good laugh, fancies himself as a bit of a ladies man, he's no chance though. But really it's a group situation, we all tend to feed off each other.

What are your favourite comments/sledges when out in the field?

Just typical bowlers' comments really. If a batter has missed a few I'd probably ask him if he needs a bell in the ball so he can hit it. This guy can't get it off the square or he's only brought an edge to the crease and not a middle. The usual banter.

Who is the dressing room joker at Blackley?

Matthew Bennett is probably the biggest culprit but to be fair I do join in as well. He hasn't played for a few seasons because of other commitments but when he did you would come in after the game and shoes would be full of shower gel or talc, laces would go missing and all sorts. One week he actually cut the seams out of Steve Williams' underpants so when Steve went to put them on after the game he pulled his pants right up to his chin!

And finally what is the best thing about playing cricket?

It's the team spirit that I like. I really enjoy it and get a great buzz. You try hard, both teams do their best and win or lose you have a few pints after the game.