

NEW BRIDGE GLOVEMAN EYES REGULAR 1ST XI SPOT

Q&A with Ashley Donkersley by Paul Rai

What made you want to be a wicketkeeper?

I always wanted to be as close to the action as possible. So I thought about becoming a wicketkeeper straight away. I started playing cricket when I was about 8 or 9 years old. The youngest age group to play in was the under-13s, so I had a few seasons fielding as there were older and better stumpers than me, but when my chance came I took it and didn't look back.



Why did you leave Thongsbridge to join ABCC?

I've only ever played cricket for Thongsbridge so after 9 years it was obviously a difficult decision leaving. At the end of last season I kept wicket for the 1st team and people said that I impressed. Word was going round that I would be stumping for the 1st XI in 2008, but there was also talk of Almondbury's keeper joining. So I wasn't too sure what was happening. Then I got a text from Danny Moorhouse asking me if I wanted to have a net down at Armitage Bridge to see what the skipper thought of me. So I thought I would come down, train hard, impress in the games and hopefully earn a regular place with the first team gloves.

As a wicketkeeper, what takes priority: catching the ball or scoring runs?

Taking catches and stumpings is what I'm there to do and enjoy doing the most. But I also hope to score a few runs for the team.

If you weren't a keeper where would you field?

Probably in the slips so I can have a little cheeky banter with the batsmen.

Which modern-day wicketkeepers do you look up to?

The wicketkeeper I have always looked up to was the stumper at Thongsbridge - he used to stump for Scotland. He had a lot of advice to offer me. He trained me and he was in the slips during games giving me advice and confidence all the way through

England have used many wicketkeepers over recent years - who do you think should wear the gloves for England?

I think the best keeper for England is Geraint Jones - he scores runs and is a good wicketkeeper. He definitely is a confidence player and when the press got on his back he seemed to struggle.

Can you tell us a bit about your best catch and your worst drop?

My best catch was when I played for the school team at Headingley in the Yorkshire schools finals. It was a thick edge diving one handed and it somehow stuck to the glove. To do that on the pitch where England had been playing the Aussies the month before made it that bit more memorable for me. Worst drop was last year, down at Thongsbridge, for the seconds. I was giving loads of abuse to this shocking opening batter. He had already been dropped twice so the atmosphere was getting a bit tasty; then he gives it the big cow shot but manages to edge it to my right; diving forward I got both hands to it but it was just a shocking mistake by myself. I didn't say another word for the rest of the game to the guy.

Do you prefer keeping to the fast bowlers or the spinners?

I like facing quick bowlers, diving around and taking the edges they offer.

Do you have any quirks or superstitions?

I always wet my inners; apparently I don't need to but I always have done. So I don't think I'm going to stop now.

As a wicketkeeper what extra bits of kit do you have in your kitbag compared to a batsman?

The extra kit I need are my keeper's pads, inners and gloves.