

# Victory sees Birstall clinch Premier title

IT HAS been a long time in coming but last Saturday Birstall Cricket Club were celebrating their first **Central Yorkshire League** top flight title in 48 years.

Birstall have led the Premier Division virtually all season and after slipping up twice in two weeks, they clinched the title at previous champions Townville last Saturday.

The win owed much to the bowling performances of Paul Blakeley (6-50 from 23 overs) and Paul Marlow (4-41) as Townville were dismissed for 152. Dave Booth (57) led Townville's innings with Tim Walton (25) and Stuart Clifton (21) chipping in.

It took Birstall just 25 overs to reach their target and secure the title as Australian Cameron Merchant (67no) and Martin Pickersgill (49) put on 133 for the second wicket.

The championship was confirmed as second placed **Mirfield Parish Cavaliers** could only manage a 4-0 win against Wrenthorpe.

Parish knew their fate by tea, after they had seen Wrenthorpe score 224-6,

with Salman Falzal (106) and Andy Baker (41) among the runs.

Parish completed the six-wicket win which keeps them in second place. Eric Austin top scored with 70 and support came from Nasir Khan (46), Matthew Stones (33) and Dan Cheesbrough (31no).

The battle to avoid relegation from the Premier Division will go to the final day as **Ossett** and **Liversedge** gained bonus points from their respective games.

Ossett's David Sonia picked up 5-35 from 18 overs as Methley were restricted to 81-6 and 81-7, but 53 not out from Michael Waite guided them to 150-8 at the close.

Waite then did damage with the ball as he claimed 5-32 from 16 overs as Ossett were bowled out for 134.

Jamie Sadler (28) and Chris Hosley (34) were Ossett's main run scorers.

They remain a point behind second-bottom Liversedge, although they do have a game in hand.

Liversedge gained a point from their trip to Wakefield St Michael's,

although it could so easily have been four after they lost by just five runs.

Iqbal Khan reached 1,000 runs for the season as he smashed 106 not out. Shabir Rashid (87) and Richard Foster (56) also batted well as St Michael's made 297-3.

Liversedge's reply started well and for the first time this season all their top four made runs.

Liversedge appeared to be heading for victory but fell short as Richard Atkinson (4-68) helped restrict them to 292-6.

Northowram Fields guaranteed their Premier Division survival by beating **Batley** by six wickets. Batley would have felt confident of claiming victory at tea after setting 231-8, thanks largely to a seventh-wicket partnership of 71 between Javed Iqbal (65) and Ilyas Hashmi (50no).

Jason Smith (86no) saw Northowram home with support from Steve Elliott (37), Simon Tandy (35) and Robert Lerner (33).

**Right: Paul Blakeley took six wickets as Birstall won at Townville to secure the title. (030908)**



# Bowled over by win!

**12 YOUNGSTERS from Birstall Cricket Club will play on a Test Match ground and meet the England players after winning a competition organised by the NatWest bank.**

The trip of a lifetime was the prize after the club impressed the competition judges with their commitment to junior cricket. Birstall Village Cricket Club now have two junior sides: there are 27 children wanting to play for the 16 available places, so the club runs a rotation system.

Manager Andy Corbett said: "I can't believe it and nor can the lads. This is once in a lifetime thing, to play at a test match and meet the England players".

Head Coach Rob Drake added: "We're very proud of the kids and it's very nice to get some reward and to be recognised nationally. But we'll be nervous in front of a crowd of 40,000!" The kids will play during the interval.

Part of the club's prize was four tickets to see the England v Sri Lanka match at Trent Bridge, and they are waiting to hear if they have also won a coaching clinic for the kids led by Darren Gough. Andy Corbett added: "I'd like to thank the Birstall Post for all the coverage they've given us - the publicity has helped us win this competition".



U17 Heavy Woollen Cup Winners 2002.

Back row: E. Hobson [scorer], C. Haley, S. Newman, S. Otway, J. Holroyd, J. Watson, L. Burgess, J. Haley, G. Hobson.  
[manager]

Front row: W. Fenton, R. Ferry, R. Hobson [Capt], J. Gould, R. Byrom.