

KOLPAK MAN

Profile of Deon Kruis by Matthew Carswell

For some sportsman, a professional career is maybe seen as a dream, something they aspire to doing, but in reality accept that they may not actually get there. For Deon Kruis, he is living his dream.



Coming straight out of school, just like any other teenager, it all seemed to pan out for him as he landed a professional career in cricket.

Kruis, or Gideon Jacobus Kruis to give him his full name, was born on May 9th 1974 in Pretoria, Transvaal. He attended St. Albans College in Pretoria and he went on to represent The Eagles, Grinqualand West and Northern Transvaal before he made his big move to English cricket when he joined Yorkshire in 2005.

He joined under the Kolpak ruling. This states that any player from a country that has an Association Agreement with the European Union (for example, countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe), and holds a valid UK work permit, can qualify as a domestic player in English county cricket. Kruis was, incidentally, Yorkshire's first signing under this ruling.

In Kruis' first season he was the highest wicket-taker in Division 2 with 64 at 30.64 and was voted Yorkshire's player of the year. The following year, in 2006, he was again Yorkshire's top wicket-taker. As well as his bowling he is also a danger with the bat as a lower-order batsman.

In first-class cricket he has taken a total of 362 wickets with a personal best of 7 for 58. He has also notched up 131 wickets in limited-overs cricket with a best of 4 for 17 and has already competed in 14 20/20 matches so far in his career.

For Kruis and Yorkshire the new season starts on 20th April with a trip to Durham in the Friends Provident Trophy in which he topped the bowling averages for his county last season, even though he was disrupted by injury.

In 1999 and 2000 Kruis was the Walsden CC professional in the Central Lancashire League.