

# NEW RECRUIT!

## Profile of Andy Ingle by Sam Smith

Blackley's growing reputation for developing young cricketers and their junior set-up was a key factor in attracting newly-qualified coach Andy Ingle to the Lindley Road club. The 41-year-old opening batsman has played in the Halifax League for over two decades - including five years in the Premier Division – with Old Crossleyans, Bradshaw and Stainland.



**Andy in a previous life – back row, far left**

But after gaining the English Cricket Board Level 2 qualification last season he aimed to put it to good use. "I wanted to move to a club where I could put into practice the things I had learned on the training course," said Andy, who joined Blackley mid-way through last season.

"I knew that Blackley put a great deal of resources and time into their junior cricket teams – it seemed the ideal place to coach young players. I'm getting a bit older now and I can't see my playing days going on for too much longer. So coaching is a way of putting something back into the sport. The ground is fairly close to where I live which is handy – and the social side of the club is very good and family-orientated. So for me Blackley was the ideal move."

Since joining, Andy has certainly thrown himself into the junior coaching work. This season he is manager of the Under-17s team – who practice on Tuesday evenings – and he is also involved with the Under-13s and Under-15s on Saturday mornings.

Andy has set himself some targets for the Under-17s who had a difficult season last year, losing every game. "Obviously we will be aiming to improve on that and I will be doing a lot of coaching on basic skill levels," he said. "But the main factor is that everyone enjoys the sport. If they don't enjoy what they are doing then they are not going to continue playing cricket."

"We want to encourage them to make progress and to make the next step up to the senior teams. It is the first time I have had the responsibility of running a team – so I will be focusing on everything going to plan, that we get a full team out every week, things are organised and, of course, the lads enjoy themselves."

To gain his Level 2 certificate, Andy went on an intensive four-day course which included 10 hours of coaching in the presence of a Level 2 coach and final assessment. He now wants to get plenty of coaching experience under his belt – and then, maybe, down the line try for the Level 3 accreditation. "Clubs at grassroots level now realise that they need to get their coaches qualified – there is sponsorship money being pumped into coaching and the development of youth cricket which is good for the future of the game."

Andy is also a member of the club committee and will be playing for the Second XI. "Although I am getting a lot of satisfaction from coaching, I still really enjoy playing," he said. "Hopefully, I can score a few runs and maybe even push the guys in the first team if things go well."