



Todmorden Cricket Club Review

TWO GOOD REASONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SEASON

Following a disastrous couple of seasons on the field, Todmorden Cricket Club could not have looked on this past season with anything but optimism perhaps tinged with anticipation.

There were two good reasons for pre-season optimism. One was the introduction of limited overs cricket and the other was of course the signing of an experienced professional in Peter Marner. And where Marner tends at times to frustrate, the final analysis coupled with the undoubted inspiration he has given to the amateurs, there can be no doubt that his presence has been more than instrumental in the side's most successful campaign for some seasons in the Lancashire League.

The side can be well satisfied with their runners-up position. At the opening of the season, skipper Kevin Wilkinson confided that to finish in the top four would be highly satisfactory. Referring to this last Saturday he felt that the side "had not done too badly" which must rate as the understatement of the year. Whatever the knockers might think, the Todmorden club have had a magnificent season and the fact that they were not written off in the championship race until the second last game of the season speaks for itself.



Paul Thackray, the winner of the Evening Star Tankard for the fastest 50 of the season in 43 minutes against Rishton.

After some gloomy years recently Todmorden can look upon the past season as a starting gate for brighter things in the future. Some of the amateurs have improved beyond recognition and a glance at the final averages reveals the all round improvements that have taken place.

Kevin Wilkinson, captain of Todmorden Cricket Club, receives the Holland Cup from Lancashire League Chairman, Mr. Arthur Wilson. His colleagues who helped to ensure the runners-up position in the league are (back row) G. Stansfield, M. Heywood, M. Jowett, P. Thackray, P. Brownbridge; (front row) P. Marner, J. Townsend, B. Whittaker, I. Smith, J. E. Clayton and W. Southwell (scorer).

came in the last six matches when Marner was opening the innings.

IMPACT FROM MARNER

His impact on the side throughout cannot be ignored. He has scored 662 runs at an average of 34.83 in 23 innings. Undeclared on four occasions, he has constantly delighted spectators with a brilliant century against Church, five half centuries, a 40 and a scorching 38 not out in the humiliation of Nelson two weeks ago. On eight occasions out of 23 he has failed to reach double figures but on six of these "failures if you like" the Todmorden side won which speaks highly of the amateur batting.

There has been a vast improvement in this department with Kevin Wilkinson leading the way with 454 runs—a great effort. His best support has come from Clayton (277), Brownbridge (213), Heywood (191), Smith (168) and Mike Jowett with 133 runs from ten innings.



"SPEEDY" THACKRAY

Two batsmen have been far from their best. It's strange that one of these should be Paul Thackray whose match winning fifty not out against Rishton was an isolated instance of his batting prowess. This 50 was the fastest of the season but was his only good score. On only four other occasions in 15 innings did Paul reach double figures which hardly demonstrates his batting talents. Another batsman out of touch has been Garth Stansfield, handicapped no doubt by his relegation in the batting order, but nevertheless capable of making more than 86 runs in a season.

FINE BOWLING DISPLAYS

On the credit side however, Stansfield has been consistent behind the sticks and Thackray must rank as the best close fielder in the league. The standard in the field has been high generally coupled with some fine bowling throughout from in the main, Brian Whittaker, John Townsend and Marner himself. Whittaker with 77 wickets at 10.71 was the leading amateur wicket taker in the league. He has been capable of bowling long stints, sometimes throughout the innings, without excessive punishment. This has been criticised in some quarters, particularly from the point of view that Clayton has not been over-used as a bowler, but again the final analysis must prove something.

Good support has been forthcoming from John Townsend who at his best is virtually unplayable. He is a bit unlucky to only have 42 wickets to his credit this season. Marner has also proved very useful indeed with the ball and has claimed 44 wickets. On twelve occasions Todmorden have succeeded in bowling the opposition all out thus qualifying for bonus points.

For the record Todmorden have scored 2,754 runs for 168 wickets at an average of 16.38 as opposed to their opponents total runs being 2,358 for 190 wickets at an average of 12.41. Quite a difference.

THRILLS AT RISHTON

On 9th May, Todmorden shot out East Lancs for the lowest score of the season—29, and on 4th September, Nelson were bowled out for another low score—44, this being the game when Todmorden hit off the necessary runs in less than five overs. Perhaps the most thrilling match was at Rishton when the much talked about Thackray 50 helped Todmorden to a two wicket win. Another talking point was the home game against Rishton when Todmorden captured four vital points while all the other Lancashire League games were rained off. A splendid 59 from Marner helped Todmorden to a 122 for two declared total after only 20 overs.

OVERS CRICKET

Finally a comment on overs cricket which I said earlier was a contribution from the Todmorden...