

A key decision put on the line

By PETER SNAPE

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A BIZARRE "six or catch" controversy involving Yorkshire Colt pace bowler Graham Liley provided the decisive moment as Holmfirth moved into joint second place in the Huddersfield League with a four-wicket win at Lascelles Hall.

Holmfirth, earlier apparently easy winners, had slipped to 140-6 with 42 needed off the last seven overs when the left-handed Clayton drove home captain John Shaw to long-on to Liley whose throw had run out Gary Jakeman the previous over.

The fielder held the chest-high catch two-handed a good 18 inches inside the boundary but the force of the ball saw him stutter slightly backwards and then side-ways. Liley exultantly claimed the catch only to see umpire Arnold Darlington signal six.

As Liley protested Mr. Darlington and most of the fielding side went to the boundary to inspect the scene accompanied by considerable verbal advice from the spectators. At last Mr. Darlington again signalled six having to stop the game a

few balls later to warn one spectator that he would be removed from the ground if he did not calm down.

Liley said later: "It was a fair catch; I didn't go over the line. I am not a cheat." Shaw added: "I thought it was a good catch.

"His foot went on the line," said Mr. Darlington.

So who was right? Even though standing only eight yards from the incident I could not be sure, the situation being com-

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plicated by the two-inch gully separating the field and boundary boards. In any doubt the batsman receives the benefit so that decision was probably correct.

Ten came off the next two overs before Shaw, whose spin had consistently troubled the visitors, surprisingly and fatally took himself off.

Clayton, with his second six and Fletcher plundered 15 off the 46th over from his replacement Shetty and it was now downhill all the way with Fletcher striking the winning boundary off Marner, son of Lancashire's Peter, with six deliveries to spare. Clay-

ton, five at the time of the 'catch' contributed a crucial unbeaten 34.

Opener Thornton had gone to a brilliant catch by Brook at backward point before Brewster and Cocking added an untroubled 76 for the second wicket. But Shaw's spin put on the brakes and with Glendinning stumping two to go with a catch off Liley to dismiss Rajinder Amarnath, brother of Indian Test batsman Mohinder the home side forced their way into a slight advantage.

The first hour in which the rain-affected pitch helped Holmfirth's seam bowler was also vital with Fletcher, recently recruited from the troubled Huddersfield C and AC club with Gary Jakeman, and Booth restricting the runs to 18 from the opening 14 overs.

But Hall and Shaw added 72 impressively for the second wicket and Marner and Nichols contributed some important late blows.

Hall's dismissal for 66 was also controversial. Going for a quick single he was obstructed accidentally in mid-pitch by Bruce Jakeman as Holmfirth's captain went to field the ball.

Hall had no chance of

making his ground as the bowler Fletcher flicked off the bails — all perfectly legitimate though one suspects that had the game been south of Watford rather than at the ancestral home of Yorkshire cricket the batsman might have been recalled.

That incident had the tongues wagging at the tea interval; it was as nothing compared with what was to follow.

LASCELLES HALL — J. Senior c and b Booth 17. J. Hall run out 66. J. Shaw b Fletcher 50. J. Parnment lbw Fletcher 1. S. Shetty b Amarnath 8. R. Nagalingam c Tracey b Fletcher 10. N. Marner lbw Fletcher 19. S. Nichols not out 19. D. Brook not out 0. Extras 11. Total (for 7 wks.) 181. Bowling: Booth 16-6-20-1. Fletcher 20-8-50-4. Amarnath 14-5-50-1.

HOLMFIRTH — S. Brewster c Hall b Liley 45. M. Thornton c Brook b Shetty 0. R. Cocking st. Glendinning b Shaw 28. R. Amarnath c Glendinning b Liley 10. M. Tracey st. Glendinning b Shaw 23. G. Jakeman run out 17. A. Clayton not out 34. M. Fletcher not out 12. Extras 14. Total (for 6 wks.) 182. Bowling: Shetty 11-3-43-1. Marner 12-4-39-0. Shaw 17-3-62-2. Liley 9-2-24-2.

Elland in final again

ELLAND, winners of the Yorkshire Champions Trophy for the last two seasons, beat Morley in a tense finish yesterday to set up a repeat of last year's final against Pudsey St. Lawrence on August 31.

Rain reduced the match to 31 overs a side and Morley made 120-4 with Curry taking 3-35 and Sutton, the opening bat, making 43 n.o.

Elland's opener Bradley hit 57 n.o. to see his side home with three balls to spare, despite Exley's 3-37.

Morley 120-4 (A. Sutton 43 n.o., G. Cardall 38, M. Curry 3-35). **Elland** 121-5 (S. Bradley 57 n.o., I. Exley 3-37).

PENNANT ALLIANCE: Welton 140-9 (A. Bailey 60), Sutton 98 all out (R. Wilkinson 6-51), Hull Zingari 136-6 (R. Hutchinson 39, P. Dobbs 44, G. Berry 2-36), South Holderness 135 all out (H. Crawford 21, S. Thompson 5-55, M. Whitehead 4-41), Driffield 124-3 (D. Shaw 68), Bridlington 120-9 (T. Mullins 38 n.o.), Pocklington 160 (J. Nuttall 44, N. Berry 34, D. Tough 4-57, M. Cartwright 3-42), Lonsborough Park 161 (S. Dodd 35, S. Lyus 4-63), Stamford Bridge 100 (R. Lawson 46, C. Woodburn 28, G. Atkinson 4-2), A. Deane 3-35, Beverley 104-2 (P. Laycock 59 n.o., G. Atkinson 35 n.o.).

EAST RIDING SUNDAY LEAGUE. All games abandoned. Leading averages after seven games: Batting: T. Jackson (Hornsea) 61.0, J. Dodds (Stamford Bridge) 46.0, A. McConnell (Kirkella) 33.3. Bowling: R. Steane (York CS) 11.0, P. Robertson (N. Ferryby) 12.2, M. Cooke (Kirkella) 13.1.

Second-placed pair still in relegation peril

HOLMFIRTH and Meltham share second place in the Huddersfield League yet are only eight points above bottom club Hall Bower such is the uniquely intense competition (writes PETER SNAPE).

Before Saturday's games seven points separated nine clubs but with the bottom two Hall Bower and Bradley Mills both gaining four points the logjam is even tighter with only champions Elland, 13 points ahead and seemingly certain to retain the title, out of the pack.

"Any 11 of the 12 can go down," said Bruce Jakeman, Holmfirth's captain. "It is an incredible situation and I can recall nothing like it. Everybody is beating everybody else in turn.

"I think the standard is going up because the better batsman in Section B are prepared to move to top section clubs and bat lower down. The pitches are improved and the bowling is not what it used to be in the days before

the League went open and clubs relied on one top line professional who was often an opening bowler.

"There are some good sides about and the League has evened up, probably because of the introduction of the excellent one overseas player limit," said John Shaw, Lascelles Hall captain.

"Elland are perhaps in a slightly false position so far in front but the closeness of the rest will keep interest going."

By gaining only one point on Saturday Lascelles Hall, Sykes Cup finalists next Sunday, are one of the four clubs on 25 points immediately above the two relegation spots, an issue that is certain to be unresolved until the final games on September 13.

League positions. Section A: Elland 42, Meltham 29, Holmfirth 29, Snaithwaite 27, Kirkheaton 27, Kirkburton 26, Shepley 25, Morley 25, Lascelles Hall 25, Broad Oak 25, Bradley Mills 23, Hall Bower 21. Section B: Marsden 46, Thonusbridge 36, Huddersfield 34, Dalton 31, Rastrick 28, Almondbury 28, Paddock 24, Golcar 23, Lintwaite 21, Primrose Hill 20, Armitage Bridge 17, Lockwood 12.