

Recollections of the 1920s and 1930s

By Jack Wakefield

We could not afford expensive hobbies, so many boys joined local cricket clubs which for a few shillings a season allowed us to spend every evening there. When I got into the team I had many happy memories, even in defeat. I recall being run out on successive Saturdays and the umpire saying, with a perfectly straight face 'By gum, lad, tha runs hard but not fast!'. Another day, far from home on a Saturday night, the opposing side had made a big score.

Our last pair, which included me, were at the wicket. We were many runs behind without even a reasonable prospect of forcing a draw. The umpire (who came not a million miles from **Scholes**) gave me out lbw - a shocking decision. We never took these things personally. And as I walked back to the pavilion with him I said 'That was never out'. 'Happen not, lad' was his reply 'But if tha thinks I'm going to risk missing this bus and then have to wait two hours for t'next on a Saturday neet, just for t'doubtful pleasure of watching thee scratch two or three runs, tha art greatly mistaken!'.

I could fault his sportsmanship, but not his logic - he caught the bus, I missed it! I said that I would carry on playing league cricket as long as I was enjoying it but whilst I still was I found my name being left off the teamsheet but I was by then in my middle forties, so had had a good innings.