

April 2007 - Phil's View

By Dave Wooding

Following a disappointing opening weekend of the 2007 season – defeat against Micklehurst in the league and Baildon in the Heavy Woollen Cup - I caught up with Shepley captain Phil Heaton to get his views on the weekend's defeats, and his thoughts on the future...



Dave: *I'd like to start off with yesterday's match against Micklehurst. Who won the toss?*

Phil: They won the toss, but we would have batted anyway.

Dave: *Did you think it would be a good track for batting?*

Phil: Well, I thought it wouldn't get any better. So I really wanted to get first use of it, because it was dry and dusty. But we just didn't make enough runs really which is the bottom line. There were a lot of poor shots and we were probably 60 short of what we should have got.

Dave: *How about individually - you batted quite well?*

Phil: Yeah, but a bit of a poor shot from myself as well. Like I say there were probably six or seven poor shots from people that had got in and then got out. It was a bit of a poor batting performance all round.

Dave: *What did you make of Trent's debut with the bat?*

Phil: Well, he looked quite useful for the four or five balls he faced! He's obviously going to be a good cricketer. He's bowled pretty well the last few days, gets it in good areas, moves it both ways. He's got a few runs today (against Baildon) so things are looking quite well.

Dave: *I suppose you thought in the end 141 wasn't too bad a total?*

Phil: No. When I was batting I said to a few people if we can get to 150 we've got a good chance. So I wasn't too disappointed. At 16-4 (their innings) I thought we were well in the game, and another wicket at that stage, if we'd have got one of the two lads out that got the runs, I think we probably would have won. Obviously they just rode their luck a little bit and they both played pretty well. There were a couple of rough decisions, I thought, that could have gone our way, but that's cricket at the end

of the day - sometimes you get them and sometimes you don't. Yesterday we didn't. If we'd have got one or two of those then it might have been a different game.

Dave: *Yeah, it looked to me like one or two more and it could have been interesting...*

Phil: Yeah, we just didn't get wickets. You know when we got them seven down, if we'd have got another wicket quick when Trent came back on it might have made it interesting. Another 30 runs we might have had a good chance with them seven down but at the end of the day it's the same old story: we're short of runs.

Dave: *So you thought Trent bowled well yesterday?*

Phil: Yeah. I don't think he's quite 100% fit yet either. He's been struggling with a bit of a groin strain. But he bowled well, got it through at a decent pace and moved it both ways so things look quite good. We dropped a couple of catches yesterday; we've dropped another three today so if we'd held on to those it would have been a different game. So we've got a bit of work to do this week to get the fielding right.

Dave: *Is that going to be something you'll look at?*

Phil: Yeah. Trent's said that already. At training on Tuesday he's gonna get them practising and we've got to get better. There's no point in having a good opening bowler if we aren't taking the catches.

Dave: *Is Trent running most of the coaching then?*

Phil: Yeah, he's running the coaching during the week. He'll be in charge of all the training, which is what he wants to do so he should get them up and running for next week.

Dave: *How about today against Baildon, did you win the toss?*

Phil: No, we lost it again! We would have had a bat obviously, it's a good wicket. We always knew today we were up against it. They're a good outfit these (Baildon), I think they won it last year. We got off to a decent start again; bowled pretty well early but the two lads in the middle have played well. It just got away from us. We struggled a bit with having to use the fifth bowler. A few catches went down again. But we stuck at it pretty well. But they're probably going to be near the top of the Bradford League at the end of the day, and probably won't be too far off winning this (Heavy Woollen Cup). But we've put up a decent show with the bat. Some good positives have come out of the day.

Dave: *Did you ever think you could get to the 313 target?*

Phil: Well, you never know! We didn't go out not trying to get to the 315 or whatever they got. But we've put up a decent showing, at least we've not just rolled over and died and been 100 all out. The lads can take something out of it. A bit of batting practice on a good wicket.

Dave: *I thought Trent looked better again today...*

Phil: Yeah, he said he didn't enjoy the wicket yesterday but he said he liked this. He liked batting on here and I think, you know, he's going to get better. It's not easy for

him, first time out of Australia, he's only used to batting on their wickets, which are a lot different. But we've got high hopes. After two losses things can only get better.

Dave: *Ashley batted well as well today...*

Phil: Yeah, good to see that! He struggled a bit last year but he did improve as the season got better. But he's played well today. In the next two weeks we get Tom (Denton) back as well so things should improve. We can start getting the runs on the board, and we've got the bowlers to back them up. Danny (Glover) has not bowled well today but he bowled well yesterday. Once Trent gets fully fit he's going to be quite a handful I would think.

Dave: *Do you think with Tom in the side you'll be a bit more steady?*

Phil: Oh yeah. He's a quality player, Tom. 800 runs last year for us you know. He provides us with a good start most weeks. Obviously he's not gonna do it every week but he is a good player. You take a good player out of your team and it's a big wedge out of your batting. He's a year older, a bit stronger, a bit wiser, he'll be hoping to get around the same runs again.

Dave: *So two defeats; its not an ideal start to the season is it?*

Phil: No it's not an ideal start. But I wasn't expecting much today. Yesterday was a big disappointment because I don't think they were a very good team. I'd rather have played them probably in a month when we're up and running a bit more. We should have really won yesterday. And now we've got a tough game next week with Honley.

Dave: *Ah yes, the defending champions...*

Phil: Yeah, they've won it for the last two years. I think we've got to be up for it. We've got to make sure we're ready next week.

Dave: *I suppose on the day anyone can beat anyone...*

Phil: Well we've played them three times last year, once in the cup which we probably should have won.

Dave: *I suppose now the focus is on the Sykes Cup this season...*

Phil: Well, it was always going to be a tall order for us to win the league. We're not going to be consistent enough to win the league. Like you say on our day we can beat anybody. We've not got an easy game in the 1st round; Kirkheaton were in Section 'A' last year, got relegated but if they've kept the team together they won't be the worst side. But we should have enough strength to get through. Then we just need a bit of luck with the draw which we haven't had in the last few years. We always seem to get the top teams for some reason. But hopefully we can get a good cup run.

Shepley's match against Kirkheaton in the Sykes Cup takes place at Kirkheaton on Sunday 6 May