

Hall of Fame

Steve WHITAKER



Newton-on-Derwent - 1953 – 1956

Wilberfoss – 1956 – 1963

Dunnington 1964 - 2004

Steve Whitaker played his first cricket for Newton-on-Derwent Cricket Club from 1953 until the club went out of existence in 1956 and, in those days, was a promising slow left arm bowler who could apparently turn the ball square. After that club's demise he moved to Wilberfoss who were then playing in the East Yorkshire cricket circuit and stayed for eight seasons up to 1963. Sometime during this period he played some cricket at Rowntrees, probably in the factory's thriving Inter-Departmental where he came into contact with Ted King who had been League Secretary from 1951 – 56 and was a well-known football referee. Ted was sports and recreation supremo at Rowntrees and was skipper of the factory's side in the League. He was an influential character who is credited with changing Steve from a slow left arm bowler into the metronomic seam bowler who was to go on to become arguably the top wicket taker in the history of the York & District Senior League.

Steve was also an accomplished footballer who had a long career in the winter game, has always been an unassuming character and, in typical manner, has furnished very little information to the author of this citation.

However reference to past league handbooks show that Steve played for Dunnington for 41 seasons and is credited with 1439 wickets with a best of 79 wickets in the first division in 1975. Unfortunately no averages were submitted by the club in 1968, 1969, 1972 and 1978 when it is reasonable to expect him to have taken a minimum of 150 wickets. He did not make the averages in 1998 when his appearances were split between first and second eleven games and he had a number of years where he made some appearances in both teams. Thus it would be reasonable to suppose that his York League wicket total is hovering in the region of 1600.

Steve, whose records show that he conceded around 2.42 runs per over, shares with Duncan Steel the distinction of being the only two bowlers to take eight wickets in an innings on ten occasions with his best performance being 9 for 18 against Boroughbridge in 1968. He figured in a remarkable match against Sheriff Hutton Bridge when both he and Bridge bowler Roy Piercy claimed 8 for 28 in 1969. The author played in this match and his possibly flawed recollection is that Sheriff Hutton Bridge emerged as winners. What is certain is that there has been no other instance of two bowlers recording identical eight-wicket hauls in the same game!

Whilst Steve never managed to grab a ten wicket haul in the League he did collect a 'full set' in a Dr. Riddoll's Cup match at New Earswick in 1964. Under the heading "He beat Retreat – and how!" the Yorkshire Evening Press reported that "A York area cricketer literally beat The Retreat last night. In a devastating spell of medium-pace bowling Dunnington's Steve Whitaker took all ten Retreat wickets in a Dr. Riddoll's Cup match at New Earswick – and hit the stumps nine times. Dunnington scored 102-8 in the 18 eight-ball overs (John Taylor 38, S. Whitaker 19no) and The Retreat replied with a total of 68, Whitaker finished with 10-26"

Steve's batting was fairly unremarkable although he did qualify for the league averages in 1970 when he had a substantial average of 30.25. He quotes his highest league score as 50 against York RI but cannot remember the year. A long time acquaintance says that he was sometimes used as a 'pinch-hitter' long before either the term or the idea came in to fashion but that his success in this role was limited.

Throughout his career, Steve always played the game in the true spirit of cricket and is highly respected throughout the League.

AVP

Quoted report extracted from Yorkshire Evening Press

YORK SENIOR LEAGUE RECORDS HELD

- Most 'eight-wicket' performances in the League (10) *held jointly with Duncan Steel*
- Longest time lapse between first 8 wickets (1967) and final 8 wickets (2001) – 35 years
- First bowler to bowl 400 overs in a season – (404 in 1975)
- Only bowler to take 9 wickets in a match twice against same opposition
- Only bowler to take eight wickets in a match three times against same opposition
- Probably most economic seasonal return in 2000 – 102 over @ 1.41 RPO

STEVE WHITAKER – PLAYING RECORD

(Does not include averages in unqualified years and four years where averages were not submitted)

YEAR	DIV.	OVERS	MDS.	RUNS	WKTS.	AVE.	8W/5W	INN.	N.O.	H.S.	RUNS.	AVE	100/50
Dunnington (* denotes averages not submitted by club)													
1964													
1965													
1966													
1967	4	106.0	17	289	28	10.34	2/						
1968	4 *			18	9	-	1/						
1969	3 *			28	8		1/						
1970	4	304.0	89	682	64	10.65	1/	16	8	44*	243	30.25	
1971	3	171.0	43	395	28	14.10							
1972	2 *												
1973	2	246.0	61	579	47	12.31							
1974	2	275.0	74	621	62	10.01	1/						
1975	1	404.0	118	853	79	11.07							
1976	1	345.0	81	902	63	14.31							
1977	1	289.0	68	674	49	13.75	1/						
1978	1 *												
1979	1	328.3	71	910	43	21.16							
1980	1	243.0	67	682	33	20.67							
1981	1	262.0	63	697	45	14.49							
1982	1	258.4	70	584	43	13.58							
1983	1	358.5	115	764	54	14.15							
1984	1	344.4	97	960	53	18.11							
1985	2	398.0	118	808	71	11.38							
1986	1	310.1	80	761	51	14.92	1/						
1987	1	292.5	78	637	61	10.44	1/						
1988	1	282.1	85	684	41	16.68							
1989	1	335.4	89	910	46	19.78							
1990	1	311.0	101	728	41	19.07							
1991	1	276.5	89	757	29	26.10	-/1						
1992	1	200.0	61	479	21	22.81	-/1						
1993	1	138.2	42	373	20	18.65	-/1						
1994	4	234.4	67	640	36	17.78	-/2						
1995	3	275.0	79	669	50	13.38							
1996	2	124.5	44	268	26	10.31	-/2						
1997	2	263.2	82	722	33	21.88	-/1						
1998	2												
1999	2	174.3	46	497	34	14.62							
2000	4	102.0	58	144	27	5.33	-/3						
2001	4	312.5	98	679	53	12.81	1/1						
2002	4	266.1	83	661	46	14.37	-/3						
2003	4	213.0	55	690	28	24.64	-/1						
2004	5	53.0	23	100	9	11.11	-/1	1	-	2	2	2.00	

Totals **8500.0** **2412** **20845** **1431** **14.57** **17** **8** **44*** **245** **n/a**

Average runs per over during career 2.45

Eight or more Wickets in a Match **(10)**

1967	9–46	v Thorp Arch & Boston Spa
	8–36	v Tadcaster
1968	9–18	v Boroughbridge
1969	8–28	v Sheriff Hutton Bridge
1970	8–46	v York Railway Institute
1974	9–32	v Boroughbridge
1977	8–48	v Tadcaster
1986	8–24	v Tadcaster
1987	8–48	v Pocklington
2001	8–39	v Huby

Top of Bowling Averages **(3)**

1987 – D.1 1996 – D.2 2000 – D.4

Leading Wicket Taker in Division **(5)**

1970 – D.4 1975 – D.1 1976 – D.1 1985 – D.2 1987 – D.1

Best Bowling 9–18 1968 v Boroughbridge

Most Wickets in a Season 79 1975

Highest Score 44* 1970

Number of times qualified for Averages in Handbook **(33)**

Batting = 1 Bowling = 32

Winner of League Bowling Award (Alan Shipley Trophy) **1987**