

CRICKET

Professionals in the North Staffs. and District League

By THE CRITIC

Ten of the 12 clubs in the Senior A section of the N.S. and District League, which is, of course, the only section in which professional assistance is allowed, have now signed a professional for the coming season. The two clubs that had not done so at the time of writing were Leek and Silverdale. Leek will have the assistance as amateurs of two players who held professional engagements last season, viz., L. H. Crump, who has been their own professional for two seasons, and E. Broderick, who left them last year to become a paid player with Great Chell. I understand the view prevails at Leek that they can do without a professional, but such a decision has little to commend it. A good professional might be expected to bring a real revival of interest in the town, and give Leek one of the most attractive sides in the league.

The same remarks apply to Silverdale, where a bold stroke is needed to bring cricket back to popular favour in the colliery village, one of the oldest centres of the game in the county. For several seasons Arthur Ikin has been registered as a professional by Silverdale, though, I believe, without pay, the reason for the registration being that on leaving Great Chell Ikin could not play in the league as an amateur without standing down for a season. That rule has now been abrogated, and Ikin having been reinstated as an amateur has returned to his original club, Bignall End, to help them in their endeavour to regain their place in Section A.

Eight of the clubs have re-engaged their last year's professional, viz:—Nantwich (Victor Fox), Burslem (Fred Taylor), Longton (George Broadhurst), Caverswall (Roy Smith), Stone (Harry Hancock), Norton (Arthur Smith), Crewe Alexandra (Alan Poate), and Blythe Works (George H. Mayer).

Porthill have made an astute move. Their search for a good-class professional who would supply their needs both as player and coach, not having discovered the right man, they have secured the services as match professional of J. T. Ikin. They have thus sprung a considerable surprise. As is, I suppose, pretty well known, John Ikin, after his successful season in county cricket with Staffordshire last year, signed a contract to qualify for Lancashire and join the ground staff at Old Trafford. The last information I had was that he would be moving to Manchester some time this month. That he should be at liberty to take a professional engagement in North Staffordshire was, therefore, as unexpected as it is agreeable.

Knyversley were relegated to Section B at the end of the 1930 season, and now, after seven years, they return to the top grade. If courage and enterprise reap their due reward they will not soon lose their place again. They have set a fine example to other clubs by engaging as professional a first-class player in H. W. Greenwood, formerly of Sussex. Greenwood, who is 28 years of age, joined the ground staff at Hove in 1929, and made his first appearance in the Sussex team in 1933 as an opening batsman. He played only four innings, and his best performance was against Cambridge University, when, on a difficult pitch, he scored 34 in a total of only 119. In 1934 he played 10 innings in six matches, went in first each time, and scored 113 runs, with a highest score of 32, and an average of 12.55.

In 1935 Greenwood seemed to be entering upon a successful career as a first-class batsman. In 12 innings he scored 386 runs, with an average of 36.72, and made his first and only century, 115 against Essex. He was run out on that occasion after sharing an opening partnership of 305 with John Langridge, with whom he also put up 205 for the first wicket against Oxford University, his own contribution being 77. Against Gloucestershire he helped J. H. Parks to score 210 for the first wicket, making 72, and against Hampshire he made 68, run out, and 24, not out.

For reasons of economy he was not retained by Sussex, has since had an engagement with Forfarshire, and is understood now to be qualifying for Northants. Chiefly a batsman, he also bowls medium-pace off-breaks, which may be useful in league cricket.

CRICKET PROSPECTS

Hopes of Good Season in North Staffordshire and District League

By THE CRITIC

IT has been said that all good things come to an end. Good or otherwise, the long drawn-out football season will come to an end before so very long. But cricketers cannot wait for Association football to stop, for the "winter" game allows them scarcely three months clear out of twelve. The N.S. League usually appoints the last Saturday in April for the start, but this year the last day in the month is Saturday, and the League programme opens on the 23rd, a few days earlier than is customary, but not a day too soon unless the weather should turn nasty. The prolonged drought has given players a much firmer ground for the pre-season practice than they are generally favoured with, and many sunny and reasonably warm days. So one hopes full advantage has been and is being taken of the exceptional conditions to get ready for match play.

A CALL TO PROPER PRACTICE

Entering upon the task of sizing up the prospects of the clubs for the forthcoming season, I have no hesitation in stressing the importance of regular and serious practice, for upon that more than any other single factor depends the raising of the standard of cricket in the League. To players I would say that purposeful, concentrated practice is a duty they owe to their club and to the game, as well as to themselves. It should be regarded as just as much an imperative engagement as is the match at the week-end, and it should include fielding.

I write from experience when I assert that really serious batting practice to perfect defence, cultivate strokes, and eradicate mistakes; bowling practice mainly designed to gain control of length; and fielding practice to acquire safety in catching and speed and dash in ground work, can be as enjoyable as match play, and match play infinitely more enjoyable as a result of it. It makes cricket a pleasant and health-giving evening pastime as well as a fine competitive sport on Saturday afternoons.

I know that practice has been neglected to a most reprehensible degree on many grounds in recent seasons, and to call much of what there has been practice at all is a misnomer. It would be more accurately termed fooling. Not for the first time I would warn players that the silly, unorthodox stroke at the nets is certain to be reproduced in a match, and kicking oneself is futile when one's wicket has been thrown away. So let us hope, first and foremost, that there will be a return of the old habit of practising to improve, or, in other words, a new appreciation of the truth of the old axiom that practice makes perfect.

NEARING THE JUBILEE

The League was founded at a meeting held at Tunstall in 1889, and the first season's cricket under its auspices was 1890, when Norton and Tunstall tied for the championship and Norton gained the honour by winning the play-off. So this is its 49th year, and the only interruption to its continuity was the interruption of the war years. Next year it will complete 50 years of existence.

The idea of binding the leading clubs of the district together in a competitive league was originally the late Mr. W.

C. Hancock's, and he was the League's first hon. secretary. Starting with one division of 12 clubs, the League has for a good many years now comprised four sections, each with 12 teams. What it has accomplished for the good of cricket in Staffordshire is beyond calculation. One feather in its cap is the fact that Staffordshire has won the championship of the Minor Counties many more times than any other county, for there is no possible question that the success of the county has been very largely due to the influence of the League on the club cricket of its district.

PRE- AND POST-WAR STANDARD

It would be idle to contend that the standard of play has been as high since the war as it was for 10 or 12 years before that great catastrophe. That is due to what I regard as a mistaken idea of economy. Just when the influence of professional players of ability and experience was most needed the clubs decided to bar professionals, and when the unwisdom of this policy became too apparent to be denied, and the ban was removed, few clubs had the courage to challenge public support by engaging men of the right type.

Gradually the clubs succumbed to the temptation to secure cheap professionals by engaging amateur players from other clubs in the League, and no step was taken to control this indefensible practice until this year. In future the sanction of the League must be obtained before February 1 for any such engagement.

But the protection, if such it should prove to be, has come too late to save the Great Chell club from the natural consequence of repeated raids upon its strong team of a few years ago by rival clubs. In descending to Section B Great Chell is entitled to the fullest sympathy, and will have the good wishes of most cricketers for a quick return to the top grade.

Knypersley, who take their place, have had the courage to engage H. W. Greenwood, formerly of Sussex, as their professional, and I live in hope that their excellent example will be followed by others, and that we shall soon see the standard of play once again approaching that of the pre-war years.

THE NEW PRESIDENT

For the coming summer I don't look for any very marked improvement in class, but I do look for a thoroughly interesting season's cricket, with more bright and entertaining play than the other sort, and sufficient evidence that the district still possesses plenty of cricketing talent for development, and a public with a real liking for the game if it is well played.

The retirement of Mr. John Leigh after long and valued service has brought Sir Ernest Johnson to the presidency, and what one man of great force of character and business ability, and a genuine love of cricket, can do to ensure the continued prosperity and progressive usefulness of the League will assuredly be done.

ENCOURAGING ENTERPRISE

Conditions of play will be the same as last year, a proposal to introduce the eight-ball over having unfortunately been narrowly defeated. The steps taken

by the League to encourage enterprising methods certainly had some effect last season, when only 15 matches in the Senior A Section were drawn, compared with a general average in the past of nearly 50 per season.

Probably the most potent changes were an increase of 15 minutes (sometimes more) in the time of actual play by excluding the tea interval, and the allocation of three points for a win, against one for a drawn game. In a dry season I don't think the bigger wicket made much difference. Probably it gave bowlers a few wickets which they would not have had with the old standard wicket, but it might be expected to have rather more effect when pitches are responsive to spin and the bat more often beaten. The chief argument against it is, of course, that it is likely to be most effective when least needed.

There was rather less conservatism in the matter of declarations last year, and as the value of the extra point for a win becomes more generally appreciated, sporting declarations will probably become the rule rather than the exception. I have before stressed the point for the consideration of captains that the first essential should be ample time to get the other side out rather than insufficient time for the other side to get the runs. It should be remembered that spectators are thrilled by a good finish and bored by a tame draw.

As I have recently dealt with the transfers of amateur players sanctioned by the League, and the professional arrangements made by the clubs, there is no need for repetition here, beyond saying that all the clubs except Leek and Silverdale, have engaged a professional, and the only changes from last season are Knypersley's appointment and the engagement of J. T. Ikin by Porthill.

IN RECOGNITION OF MERIT

The League and N. Staffs. cricket owe an immense debt to the hon. secretary, Mr. S. Gleaves, who succeeded the founder in that office in the early days of the century, so that the league has had only two secretaries, and could not possibly have had two better. For something like 38 years Mr. Gleaves has carried out the heavy and exacting duties of his office with great ability and equally notable urbanity. The unflinching guide, philosopher, and friend of every club within the aegis of the league, he is everywhere looked up to with affectionate regard for his personality and unquestioning respect for his authority.

As the years go by the machinery of the league goes on working smoothly, and a great mass of work is done by the secretary behind the scenes and escapes notice. That is, perhaps, the best testimony to its efficiency. One can wish no greater boon for the game locally or for the league than that Mr. Gleaves may be able to continue his invaluable service for many years to come.

WHO WILL WIN?

Last season Nantwich took the league's championship flag to Cheshire for the sixth time in eleven years, with Burslem runners-up, and, without verifying it, I imagine the fact that 20 points divided the top club from the third in the table is unique. Nantwich finished nine points above Burslem, who were eleven points in front of Caverswall, with Longton and Stone following closely. At the other end unlucky Chell were tailed off, 13 points behind Norton, who, with Crewe Alexandra, were nearest to danger.

What of the coming campaign? Nantwich and Burslem will probably play a conspicuous part in the struggle for honours again, and I shall be surprised if the champions gain a 9 points advantage this time. Porthill's slump last year was probably a temporary phenomenon, and with their bowling materially strengthened, Norton may have to be reckoned with this time. If

Longton's batting recovers its stability they should be stout challengers, for their bowling and fielding are good.

So far as it is possible at present to judge of the relative strength of the teams, those mentioned seem to be the most purposeful contestants for the leadership, with Stone, Caverswall, and Leek, perhaps capable of springing a surprise, though neither appears sufficiently dependable for a championship side. Though the present champions will take some dethroning I shall not be surprised if this proves to be Burslem's year.

Nor will Porthill surprise me in the least if they add another to their long list of championships. Knypersley are, of course, an unknown quantity, but they look capable of taking a creditable position, and Silverdale, Blythe Works, and Crewe may find themselves fighting an uphill battle.

ALL READY AT NANTWICH

The champions profited considerably last year from the residence in the town of W. A. Smith, the Leicestershire amateur, whose class batting and brilliant fielding were a big asset. He has returned to Leicester and will not be available. To set against that loss is the fact that Dr. J. R. T. Turner will probably be a regular player, and S. Wagstaff has transferred from Crewe. The latter's pace bowling should be useful, and Dr. Turner has the style of a competent batsman. J. B. Swindale is a doubtful starter, and T. Batho, who was making good in the latter part of last season, will, unfortunately, not play for some time owing to ill-health.

Otherwise all last year's players are available, and though some of the stalwarts of the team are getting no younger they give no sign of declining prowess, and so far as one can judge have some years of good cricket in front of them. W. T. Maybury captains the side again, with T. W. Steventon as vice-captain. Victor Fox is retained as professional, and E. H. Steventon will, of course, with the skipper, continue to be the head and front of the attack. J. E. Smith had a good season in 1937, and much promise was shown by E. Robinson, G. Bull, C. Sanders, A. Hambridge, and J. Sproston, the last-named as an all-rounder.

Considering that 181 wickets were shared by "the old firm," Steventon and Maybury, there was no great call for change bowling, in which the team was not too well equipped, but Sproston and Wagstaff, and D. Slater if he could command a length, may be counted upon to render useful assistance when required. The captain might, with advantage, make more use of his own ability as a batsman.

There is a healthy keenness at Nantwich, and practice has been in progress nearly three weeks. The club is blessed with excellent officials, who are unchanged, and a commendable effort is being made to clear the new pavilion of debt. I understand the liability has been reduced to about £350, and there are hopes of wiping that out during the present year.

If they are to win the championship, which I fancy they will be definitely out to do, Burslem will require to improve their batting, and to avoid absurd and panicky running between the wickets. They lost it last year because of those two failings. Batting failures at the start of the season gave them a big lee-way to make up. They went through six matches without reaching a score of 100, and though three of them were won with wickets in hand owing to effective bowling, three were lost with totals of 20, 30, and 57. Thereafter they lost only twice, two vital matches, and on each occasion they threw the match away by running themselves out, one being at Nantwich.

Finishing up with nine victories and one draw (owing to rain), and averaging 195 per completed innings in the last eleven matches they stressed the tragedy of those early failures. The whole question is, can they produce the run-getting power of the latter half of last season right from the beginning? There appears

no reason why they should not provided the players get themselves into form by adequate and well-ordered practice.

The same players are available, with the addition of N. Thornhill, who has followed the example of G. Wardle in transferring from Porthill. Wardle was a useful recruit last season, averaging 20 with the bat, and taking 18 cheap wickets. Thornhill has been disappointing in the last two seasons, probably for want of practice and not taking his cricket seriously. If he makes the best of his ability he should be a run-getter for Burslem.

Bernard Hollowood captains the team for the second year, and no more inspiring captain could be desired. Year after year he is one of the heaviest scorers in the League, and besides the two ex-Porthill players, he can have the backing of A. Birch, W. Briscoe, J. Fenton, F. Bailey, C. G. Dexter, T. Hollowood, and R. E. Hollowood.

Taylor and Roy Hollowood will deal out destruction among opposing batsmen, as before. They headed the League averages last year, and are a match-winning pair of bowlers, with Wardle, W. Fenton, Bailey, and the skipper to back them up when needed, which is not so very often. With Arthur Meigh behind the stumps, if Burslem tune up their fielding to the Bernard Hollowood standard there will not be many tall scores put up against them.

IKIN AT PORTHILL

The performances of Porthill last season were much too bad to be true. To win seven matches and lose nine, and finish No. 9 in the table, is not in accord with Porthill traditions, and I look for something very different this year. So far as amateurs are concerned the only changes of note are the migration of N. Thornhill to Burslem, and the return of J. Bentley after several seasons at Silverdale. H. F. Wood, jun., has been re-elected captain.

In place of Stanley Welsh, who will play as amateur for Norton, J. T. Ikin has been engaged as professional while qualifying for Lancashire. In him the club has secured the services of one of the best young players North Staffordshire has ever turned out, a lad who is a great credit to his father, Arthur Ikin, both on and off the field. As a left-hand bat he may go far, and his right-arm spin bowling gave him 56 wickets for Silverdale last season at a cost of 10s runs each.

Porthill's batting may come back to something like its customary power, with A. A. Bickerton, J. S. Heath, N. W. White, H. F. Wood, J. Bentley, R. Hammond, K. Gleaves, E. S. Washington, H. G. Gastles, J. W. Brown, and Ikin available, and others knocking at the door of the 1st XI.

The bowling will command respect with Noel White and Douglas White, bowlers of pace, and Ikin to spin the ball either way. H. Thornhill started last year on what may be a successful career as a bowler, and his progress will be watched with interest. He also has possibilities as a batsman.

The somewhat precarious tenure of the club's ground adjoining Wolstanton Marsh has happily been ended by the purchase of the freehold, and the club has a task of some magnitude before it in the raising of the necessary funds. A successful bazaar recently brought in a goodly sum towards it.

I trust practice will be taken more seriously at Porthill than was the case last season.

TO BE CONTINUED

CRICKET PROSPECTS

More About N.S. League Clubs

PROBLEMATIC LONGTON BATTING

BY THE CRITIC

To size up Longton prospects is not easy because the batting of the side is up one year and down the next without change of personnel. How's this for a switch-back record? In 1931 their mean batting average was 10.32, in 1932 it rose to 17.71 in 1933 dropped to 15.35, rose again in 1934 to 18.73, fell back to 16.85 in 1935, was up to 21.99 in 1936, and last year dropped again to 15.68.

In a more favourable run getting season the same team were worth six runs less per wicket last year than in 1936. If the up and down order of the last seven years holds good this should be their good year. If the players will give the attention to practice which is their common duty I have no doubt it will be. And if the batting comes up to scratch Longton should stand a reasonable chance of topping the League again, for the bowling and fielding are likely to be as good as any.

R. H. Plant will lead the side for the fourth year, with G. B. Edge as vice-captain, and George Broadhurst will have his third season at Longton as professional. The Skipper has set a good example of consistency in batting, as shown by successive averages of 18.79, 22.95, 24.51, and 29.45, but the following declines give the key to Longton's fall from first to fourth place in 1937:—

W. Bourne from 34.92 to 18.43, A. J. Chadwick from 33.07 to 19.06, G. Pedley from 24.60 to 12.57 (before his injury), and S. Degg from 19.20 to 7.26.

Degg has moved to Fenton, but the others named are available, and with Geoffrey Edge, E. Payne, C. B. Steele, and Broadhurst, make a powerful batting side if they produce the form one knows them to be capable of. Of the eight I have named five have played for Staffordshire, and Broadhurst is, of course, a Cheshire player.

If the XI were completed by A. Lockett, W. Stubbs, and a new-comer from Congleton, A. Webberley, "Dick" Plant would have a team of great possibilities under his command. It is good news that George Pedley has fully recovered from the serious knee injury which he met with on July 17 last, so the side will be full of good-class bowling, with Broadhurst and Pedley as slow spinners, Payne and Bourne fast-medium, and Stubbs and Webberley fast. Even without the last-named it is a convincing attack.

As to Webberley, Mr. Harry England tells me that he has a high opinion of him, and that is good enough for me. Still in his teens, I believe, Webberley promises well as a bowler of pace, is an excellent fielder, and not negligible as a batsman. He is, I imagine, outside the radius at Congleton, but as a native of Longton he has a birth qualification: Congleton will be sorry to lose him.

Among the reserves are R. S. Deacon, who was out of form and lost his place last season, D. Dennis, useful as a batsman-wicket keeper, F. Nixon, and T. Pedley, whose chance of inclusion in the 1st XI at present is reduced by the fact that his clever bowling is of exactly the same type as that of his brother.

The groundsmen has had a good three weeks in which to mend the damage to the pitch from Rugby football, which was less serious than it might have been if the turf had been more yielding in the last few months. But if the use of water is restricted the drought may be a doubtful blessing.

STONE'S REVIVAL

Last year Stone threw off the inferiority complex, and took a respectable

position in the League table after having escaped relegation by the skin of their teeth in the two preceding years. Indeed, the club had its best season in the League, and greatly improved bowling was the main cause of the revival. This time there will not be many changes in the team. The batting of the left-hander, W. Taylor, who has removed to Ireland, will be missed, but A. V. J. Dennis, who has transferred to Caverswall, was out of the team last year after the first match.

The only new-comer is A. J. Copeland, who was a useful member of the L.M.S. team. That is, unless efforts which, I understand, have been made to persuade that brilliant left-hand bat of a few years ago, Harry Goodwin, to take up the game again should prove successful. He will be remembered as having one successful season for Staffordshire in his university days at Birmingham, but serious illness put an end to his cricket. I believe he has fully recovered his health, and has been playing golf during the last year or two.

Resident at Barlaston, he would be a valuable recruit for Stone, for he would probably soon get his form back. I should like to tell my young friend that he is too good a cricketer to be permanently lost to the game, and add any powers of persuasion I may have to induce him to take it up again. It would be a pleasure indeed to see him assisting Stone, and, possibly, Staffordshire. His brilliant driving is a happy memory.

J. A. L. Wenger, who missed half of last season owing to a troublesome injury, is all right again, and continues in the captaincy, with E. C. Fernie as his deputy, W. A. Adams, F. Ravenscroft, H. H. Wood, R. W. Harris, B. Shardlow, A. Jervis, P. Wild, and J. Tomkinson, with Harry Hancock again engaged as professional, will probably be first choice to open the season, with E. D. Slynn, F. P. Woolf, K. Sandiford, B. Preston, and A. J. Copeland, as others likely for first team duty when required.

Shardlow was the outstanding all-rounder last season, with a batting average of 33, and 76 wickets for just 10 runs a-piece—a wonderful record. Apart from him the batting figures were disappointing, and most of those whose names I have given should be capable of some improvement this time.

Sounder batting (for which systematic practice is the talisman), and safer hands and quicker feet in the field are the requirements for further advance at Stone, for with Shardlow and Hancock to open, and Fernie Wood, and others to help, the attack will not be lacking.

CAVERSWALL'S NEW PLAYERS

Though good cricket has been played on the pretty ground almost under the shadow of Caverswall Castle for a great many years, the club has not figured very prominently in the League. In pre-war days, when for so long the late Mr. W. A. Bowers was the head and front of Caverswall cricket, the non-league game was preferred, and since the war the team has not always been strong enough to retain a place in the Senior A Section.

The men of Caverswall have never been champions or runners-up, but they think they might have finished second last year but for the inroads of holidays and injuries upon the team. However that may be, they have made creditable progress in the last three years. In

1935 they ran away with the championship of the B Section, in 1936 they got half-way up the Section A table, and in 1937 finished third after a sensational collapse in the last seven weeks. Whereas up to that point they had won 12 matches and lost only two, they wound up with six defeats and one draw. This time, I am told, they hope to be able to field their full strength throughout the season.

In their bid for honours they hope to have the assistance of three new players, A. V. J. Dennis (from Stone), J. H. Ragsdale (from L.M.S.), and O. F. Doran, who has been prominent in non-league cricket at Uttoxeter. Their hopes may not be realized in regard to the last-named, who, I believe, lives outside the radius of 10 miles. If the committee grant permission in such a case I think they would be creating an entirely new precedent.

E. J. Wakelin takes over the captaincy, with D. A. Harper as vice-captain, and the old players available include A. Pickard, H. H. Whalley, A. Massey, J. W. S. Beswick, J. Utting, and C. Shenton, with Roy Smith re-engaged as professional. If Wakelin maintains his pace and can steer clear of injury the attack will be strong, for Massey, Pickard, Harper, and Dennis can give him adequate support. However, I understand that Wakelin has not bowled above medium-pace at practice, and has decided not to use his full speed nearly so much this season. That may be a wise decision, but it seems a pity when fast bowlers are so scarce.

The batting, some of which was below par last season, should be improved by the recruits, of whom Ragsdale hit an excellent net out century for the club last season in a friendly encounter with Trentham.

CONFIDENCE AT CRESSWELL

Blythe Works team came very creditably indeed out of their first season among the elite of the League, finishing half-way up the table, in spite of a rather depressing start. They rallied to win nine matches, four in succession at one point, and administered shocks to some of the leading clubs. They have the will to do even better this time, but if they can do equally well they will have no cause for reprimand.

There will be little change in personnel. W. Butler has returned to Knypersley, and the only new-comer of note is R. Davies, of the now defunct L.M.S. team, who should be useful as a left-arm bowler and right-hand bat of the forcing type. Geo. Mayer, re-engaged as professional, is young enough to improve every year.

He took 66 wickets last season, but they cost 15 runs apiece. If he can combine his off-spin with a better control of length he will knock 50 per cent. off his average, and in that case the Works attack will be reasonably strong, for there is useful support in C. Turner, A. Moore, and W. Massey, and two left-handers in Davies and Harold Amison, while G. Brain, a speed merchant formerly with Team, did well enough on his few appearances late last season to warrant a full trial.

Ernest Hawley will be run-getter-in-chief again. He scored 514 last season, and gained success in county cricket. W. Hurst, captain again, and C. Turner, vice-captain, can give useful support, the last-named having completely recovered from an operation which laid him low for the last two months of his first season in North Staffordshire.

A. E. Bennett recovered some of his old form in the second half of last season, and A. Moore hits hard while he is there. Much is expected of two of the young players in H. Amison and F. Barber. Both gave high promise last time, and as Barber, who came from Macclesfield, is also a wicket-keeper of some class, and Amison is developing as a bowler, they may prove a very useful pair this year.

It is pleasing to hear that Amison and Barber have been accompanying regularly all through the winter for instruction at the famous Edgbaston school, which says much for their keenness and desire to succeed.

IMPROVED OUTLOOK AT NORTON

The Norton club suffered severely from the removal of several of their best players to other clubs last season, with the result that apart from Arthur Smith their batting was weak, while the bowling was considerably below the average. The consequence was that only Great Chell were below them in the chart at the end of the season.

The professional scored 747 of the 2,165 runs that came from the bat, a huge proportion for one man. His average was practically 44, and there was nearly 500 runs and 28 in average between him and the next highest, R. Birch. Whether any great improvement can be looked for in the general batting is doubtful, although there should be a better response to the inspiration and example of so fine a bat and so compelling a personality as Arthur Smith.

The only addition to the batting appears to be H. Lowell, but R. Birch, G. Birch, I. Waterfall, R. Hill, J. Rhead, and W. Deakin might improve on last year's showing and give better support to Smith.

The bowling will be a different proposition. Deakin, Smith, Hill, and Rhead shared the bulk of the wickets pretty evenly last time with averages ranging from 13 to 19, and they will be available again, but with the important addition of Stanley Welch, who was Porthill's professional last year and will play as an amateur, and G. Llewellyn, who has been the best bowler of the L.M.S. for a good many years. These two will raise the attack to a good average standard, and that will make a big difference to the effectiveness of the side.

W. Deakin has succeeded R. Hill as captain (with Arthur Smith as vice-captain), and has qualifications for the job. He will do well, however, to make good use of the ripe judgment of the professional.

WHAT OF SILVERDALE?

Whether Silverdale can stand the loss of J. T. Ikin, A. W. Ikin, and J. Bentley, with the return of A. Ward the only compensation, is a problem. A great deal depends on the fitness and form of J. Ankers and C. F. Rushton. The last-named, who, I assume, will be captain again (I have no direct information), enjoyed his best season for many years in 1937, and scored 431 runs with an average of 33, while Ankers, kept out of the team by ill-health until July, batted as brilliantly as ever to average practically 48.

Of the rest who remain there was no average higher than 10, so that improved batting by the rest of the team is essential if the old club is to meet with a fair measure of success. In view of the loss of John Ikin's bowling the attack will devolve mainly on H. Pointon and J. Boon, both good on their day, with assistance from J. Myatt and any reserves who may prove their worth.

If Ward can recover the form which he showed when he forced himself to the front as a young batsman at Silverdale a few years ago, he will be extremely useful, but during the time he has been away, first at Chell and then at Norton, he has not been the same player. It may come back on his native heath. For the rest, the batting seems likely to depend upon J. Myatt, P. Bloor, E. Griffiths, E. Malkin, Arthur Turner (of Stoke City fame), and E. Lowe.

The 2nd XI. have done extremely well in their Section for several years, winning the championship in 1936, so there may be some useful recruits from there.

LEEK EXPECT A GOOD SEASON

My own view is that Leek would have experienced a big revival of interest, and probably been strong challengers for the championship, if they had taken advantage of the reinstatement of Len Crump and Eric Broderick as amateurs to engage a good professional of experience. Other counsels have prevailed. The view appears to be held that the

fact that Crump will continue with them instead of returning to his former club, Burslem, and that Broderick returns after his season with Chell, renders it unnecessary to engage a professional. That, to my mind, is false economy. However, their expectations of a good season may be justified in the result, and I think they will, though the chance of a real boom this season may have been sacrificed.

Leek finished last season by winning six of the last seven matches played, a handsome and timely revival after a lean time. In spite of the loss of Broderick their bowling figures were good, but the batting was rather tame. Although Harold Birch had yet another successful season, his mantle as the leading all-rounder descended on Reg. Halton.

W. C. Charnock retains the captaincy, and he should lead a decidedly useful side with L. H. Crump, W. R. Rider, Reg. Halton, Ron. Halton, H. Birch, H. Kidd, A. Threlfall, E. Dale, E. Broderick, C. Bonsall, E. Hordern, E. Hayward, R. Stainer, and H. Alcock all still available, besides a 2nd XI. that walked away with the championship of their Section last year to draw upon, and one new-comer in G. C. Rydings, who is stated to have played League cricket in Lancashire.

ALEXANDRA'S NEED OF BATSMEN

Crewe Alex. last season won seven matches and lost 14, finishing in the tenth place. I fear it will be necessary to discover new batting talent if they are to do any better this year. Their bowling figures were good, but the batting was much the weakest in the League with the exception of Great Chell, and was only fractionally better than that of the relegated club.

J. Broad was the only amateur to give anything like consistent support to Poate, who is retained as professional, and who did all that could be expected of him, with a batting average of about 22 and 51 wickets at a cost of 10 runs apiece. J. Prince, J. Hossack, and J. Barker all got wickets cheaply, and are available again, but S. Wagstaff, a quick bowler, after playing in less than half the matches last season, has taken a transfer to Nantwich.

Batting is the chief problem, and apparently the runs, or most of them, will have to come from Poate, F. C. Shreeve (captain), J. Broad, R. Kirkham, G. Garrett, J. Prince, A. E. Wagstaff, H. Tortington, and H. H. Owen.

KNYPERSLEY MEAN BUSINESS

Having won promotion after seven years in Section B, the Knypersley club is setting about the task of retaining its hard-won position and arousing widespread public interest with a courage that is wholly commendable, and a faith that will probably be justified. The club owes a great deal to the practical interest of Mr. T. C. Maynard, who has captained the team for some years, and will continue to do so. The Skipper may not now be much of a run-getter, but his leadership is an inspiration to the side.

It was the transfer of Alf Reynolds from Norton last year that made the attack strong enough to win the championship of Section B. His record was 73 wickets, average 6.89. W. Boon had 59 wickets at 8.16 each, and W. Winskill also had an average under 10. With W. Butler returning from Blythe Works, the bowling looked reasonably adequate, so the committee went in for a first-class professional to give added stability to the batting, and had sufficient enterprise to engage H. W. Greenwood, who, as I have previously stated, was making good with Sussex when he was dispensed with as a measure of economy, has since played for Forfarshire, and is to qualify for Northants. Greenwood will impart distinction to Knypersley's batting, and will probably be useful also as a bowler.

Last year most of the runs were scored by Levi Lowe (who is also smart behind the wicket) and W. Boon. I have not seen Lowe for some years, and he was then quite a youngster, but I was impressed by the style and resource of his

batting. Boon, a clean hitter, has played for Staffordshire, and another hard-hitting bat in A. Cooper will make a welcome re-appearance after illness. With E. Bridges, E. Lowe, P. Green, and W. Butler to follow, the batting has a healthy look. P. Green, by-the-by, who is the club secretary, will act as vice-captain.

Knypersley have a picturesque and well-laid ground, they have spent almost £100 on improving the square, and the boundary has been enlarged. If the club does not deserve support no club ever did. But deserts don't count. Spectators must be attracted, and everything possible has been done to attract them.

DECLINING SUPPORT OF COUNTY CRICKET

Lord Dartmouth and Competition of Sensationalism

ANNUAL MEETING OF STAFFORDSHIRE CLUB

REFERENCE to the decline in the support of county cricket generally, due, in part, to the ever-increasing competition of other sports and amusements providing sensationalism with which the summer game could not compete, was made by the Earl of Dartmouth, a former president of the M.C.C., at the annual meeting at the North Stafford Hotel, Stoke-on-Trent, on Tuesday evening, of the Staffordshire County Cricket Club, of which he is president.

Lord Dartmouth, who presided over the meeting for the first time since taking office, also spoke of the call for brighter cricket, but said he was opposed to the suggestion that that should be achieved by legislation. The brightening of cricket rested with the players themselves, and the will to win was the most important thing in the game.

The annual report of the committee, presented by Mr. L. W. Hancock (hon. secretary) recorded that at the close of the past season the Staffordshire side occupied 15th position in the Minor Counties' Championship, compared with seventh in 1936. The drop in the table was primarily due to the fact that the season had to be started without the services of the three regular bowlers of the previous season—A. Lockett, S. Crump, and the late E. N. Backhouse. In addition, an injury kept R. Lawton out of the team after the second match. An entirely new attack was thus necessitated, F. Taylor and B. Shardlow filling the vacancies, the former bowling nearly 300 overs and taking 33 wickets in his first season of county cricket. As regards batting, mention must be made of the successful advent of E. Hawley, the brilliant debut of F. N. Bryan, and the splendid form shown by L. E. Gale and J. T. Ikin. Gale was a model of consistency, and Ikin, at the age of 19, scored 442 runs, which was the highest season's aggregate by any Staffordshire player since 1911. Ikin's worth had been recognized by the Lancashire County Cricket Club, and he had this year joined their ground staff, where they wished him every success. R. Hammond rendered useful service behind the wicket in the absence of C. C. Goodway, who left to play for Warwickshire, and the ground fielding generally was excellent.

SEASON'S LOSS OF £221.

Turning to the financial side, there was a loss on the season's working of £221, due largely to the poor support given to the match with the New Zealand XI, which resulted in a loss of £115. The weather conditions for this match were ideal, yet the total attendance on the first day did not reach 800, and the total receipts for the match were insufficient to pay the guarantee to the visiting side. The committee felt that if no better support was forthcoming for such attractive fixtures it would be necessary for them to be discontinued.

For the coming season they had found it necessary, in view of the serious financial position, to reduce the number of counties to be played from five to four, and there would accordingly be

no match for Lancashire II. this season. It was with regret that the committee had to report that the old county ground at Stoke was no longer available for cricket, having been acquired by the Stoke-on-Trent Corporation for building purposes. Consequently new grounds suitable for county matches had had to be sought, and this year a match would be played on the ground of the Michelin Athletic Club in Campbell Road, Stoke, which it was hoped would be successful, so that it would still be possible to have county cricket in Stoke. The Wolverhampton fixture not having been well supported in recent years, it had been decided this year to play a match on the ground of the Walsall Cricket Club. The committee considered a suggestion that a match should be played at Stafford in the coming season, but in view of the reduction of the number of counties to be played it was not found possible to do so, though it was hoped that this might be possible in 1939.

The report expressed gratitude to Mr. W. A. Adams for again captaining the side, observing that he had worked hard under difficult conditions and at all times displayed great keenness and a will to win. The committee congratulated Sir Ernest Johnson, a vice-president, on receiving the honour of knighthood, and recorded with regret the loss through death of two members in Mr. G. H. Downing and Mr. H. I. Gregory.

SEASON'S FIXTURES

The club's fixtures for the coming season were as follows: June 8, 9, Cheshire, at Oxton; June 13, 14, Yorkshire II., Porthill; June 20, 21, Durham, Norton-on-Tees; June 22, 23, Northumberland, Newcastle-on-Tyne; July 11, 12, Yorkshire II., Wakefield; July 20, 21, Northumberland, Stoke-on-Trent (Michelin ground); August 3, 4, Cheshire, Porthill; August 15, 16, Durham, Walsall.

EFFORTS TO SECURE NEW MEMBERS

Mr. A. Brodie (hon. treasurer) presented the statement of accounts which, he said, showed total receipts of £530 1s. 3d., and expenditure amounting to £751 4s. 11d., the net loss on the season being £221 3s. 8d. Subscriptions amounted to £324 5s., a reduction of £33 on the previous season, largely accounted for by a large number of resignations and a small increase in the number of subscriptions outstanding. Match receipts totalled £161 14s. 3d. Regarding match expenses and the loss on matches, he said the total in 1936 was £789, and the total receipts, after excluding an American tea, were £637; while in the past season expenses, excluding the loss on the New Zealand match, were £630, against total receipts of £530, the deficit apart from the New Zealand match being £100, which compared very favourably with the deficit for the previous season. However, when they added the loss on the New Zealand match the net loss on the season was made up to £221 3s. 8d., which, added to the adverse balance of £592 1s. 5d. from the previous year, gave a total of £813 5s. 1d.

Mr. Brodie said the committee during the season had tried to induce many local gentlemen to join the club, and it was very disturbing to find that those people whom one thought should be most interested very often disappointed by finding no particular reason to join the club. They found also that those who had retired during the year from membership were those whom they most expected to support the social and sporting life of the county. He suggested that business men in the district should be asked to give a larger measure of support than they had in the past, remarking that such support would be to their mutual benefit.

Mr. T. Stinton referred to a suggested appeal, and remarked that Staffordshire, which claimed to be a sporting county, should support the club. He came from Worcestershire, a much smaller county, and last Saturday when the Australians visited Worcester, a city of 49,000, they had a gate of over 11,000; but when the New Zealanders came to Stoke-on-Trent, which had a population of 300,000, there was an attendance of only 800 on a fine day. They could not expect to have a county cricket club flourishing under those conditions. Suggesting an appeal to individuals, he remarked that a man who could afford a couple of hundred pounds for his hunting could "sport" a couple of guineas a year for the county club, even though he did not play cricket.

A SUGGESTED APPEAL

Mr. Brodie said the question of an appeal was considered during the past season, but unfortunately they were not able to interest people whom they approached, and the matter was postponed. He suggested that an appeal over the President's name would yield very good results.

Lord Dartmouth said he would be very willing to assist in any way, but he thought they ought to consider whether that was the time to launch an appeal of that kind. A national appeal had been issued for funds for the Boy Scouts, and as president of that movement in Staffordshire he would be doing what he could to raise money for that object.

Mr. Brodie suggested that the matter should be left to the committee to decide on a suitable date for the launching of an appeal, and said he did not think it would be necessary until towards the middle of the season as the club had received quite a substantial sum from the test and trial matches.

The meeting decided that that course should be followed.

Lord Dartmouth expressed gratitude for his appointment as president, remarking that at Patshall they looked upon the association between the club and members of his family as almost a tradition, and it was certainly one which he hoped might continue for very many years. His one regret was that the two reports which they had received that evening could not have been more cheerful; the position in both respects was not entirely satisfactory. The chief point appeared to be the decline in the position of the team in the Minor Counties' Championship, but an adequate explanation was given in the alterations which were necessary in the playing side. He extended congratulations to those members of the team who stepped into the breach and to all who played, and expressed the hope that those able to play would continue to do so, and that they would see them adding to the laurels already gained in the years ahead.

REPORTS' DISTURBING FEATURES

Possibly the most disturbing feature of the report was that which dealt with lack of support given to the club in its most important match with the New Zealand side. It was a most attractive fixture and was played in perfect weather, but the results were extremely disappointing, and he was afraid the club would be forced to agree with the committee that unless more adequate support was given to fixtures of that kind it would be necessary for financial reasons to discontinue them. That

course would be to the great regret of every member of the club, and if it were taken it would mean that the county, which ought to support a fixture of that kind, would be losing something well worth having. Another matter to cause regret was that this year the club had lost the privilege on the old county lost the privilege of playing on the old county ground at Stoke. The club had played there for something like 50 years, so that it was breaking an old and valued association. At the same time they would be able to play a county match in the city, for this year at any rate.

Turning to cricket in general, Lord Dartmouth said it might be some small consolation to them in Staffordshire to know that their troubles applied in varying degree to almost all the first-class counties. He thought their difficulties fell quite naturally under two headings—those things over which they had no control, and things over which they might have some control. Regarding the former, he thought they would agree that there was the ever-increasing competition of other sports and amusements, not excluding the cinema. There was to-day a large section of the public who liked to take their amusements in short spasms, filled from end to end with sensation, and he was afraid that cricket could not compete: cricket by its very nature did not lend itself to sensationalism of that kind. Some people were trying to introduce it into the game, but he was convinced that they were doing the game no good. They had a very good example of sensationalism recently when they were informed, in headlines of a type more suited to the outbreak of a European war, that in his first practice match after a long sea voyage Bradman had been bowled by a boy.

"LIMIT OF SENSATIONAL FUTILITY"

"That seems to be reaching the very limit of sensational futility," commented his Lordship, who said he was quite convinced that nobody regretted all that fuss more than the boy himself. Cricket could not compete with sensationalism, and he hoped would never try. Turning to the other side, where they might have some control, there were still many people who enjoyed a good game of cricket wherever it was played, whether on a county ground or a village green. That section varied in numbers and enormously in type, and he believed it was up to them as cricketers and as members of committees controlling the game to provide those people with what they wanted.

A good deal had been said about brighter cricket, and he thought there was something in the suggestion. For some years now there had been less of that aggressive spirit by the batsman, the bowler, and especially by the field, and he could imagine nothing more depressing than watching a lethargic field who apparently took no interest in the match. He was glad that that accusation could not be levelled against the Staffordshire team. There were many who suggested that cricket could be brightened by legislation—by drastically altering the rules of the game—

but he was not one who believed in that. Any alteration of the rules of cricket, which, after all, had kept the game going for a long period of years and had proved satisfactory, could only be undertaken with the greatest care and forethought and indeed—as had been the case with the new lbw rule—by experiment in the field, and he was afraid if they rushed in with legislation to brighten cricket the result might be exactly the opposite to that which they desired.

MATTER FOR PLAYERS

The brightening of cricket did not rest with legislation, it rested with the players themselves, and especially in the hands of captains of teams and of the committees who looked after the sides. He would like to congratulate their own captain on the spirit shown in the playing of matches. That aggressive spirit, the will to win, was the most

important thing in the game, and one which he believed throughout the country would have the greatest possible effect in brightening cricket in increasing its popularity. He thought they could say and say with great pleasure that there was some improvement in this respect during the past season, and he fancied that this season—which should be a great cricket season—they would receive an excellent example in this respect from Bradman and his team. He was sure they would join with him in the very warm welcome which every cricket lover in this country was giving to the visiting team. They hoped the Australians would have a happy season and that there would be none of those differences of opinion which did so much harm to the game. He spoke rather feelingly in that matter because he happened to be president of the M.C.C. in the year when, unfortunately, differences of opinion about a certain type of bowling arose between the bodies controlling cricket in the two countries, and that was no bed of roses for the president. He would make no mention of that that evening, except to thank goodness it was now well over and done with—he hoped for ever. Out of evil, however, he believed good had come, for he did not think relations between our own cricketers and the Australians had ever been warmer and closer than to-day, and long might that state of affairs continue. Test matches were obviously important, and they would be fought in a spirit of grim determination, but let them hope that while those battles were going on everybody would remember that cricket, after all, was only a game and should always be played as such. For his part he felt that if, when the last ball of the season had been bowled and good fortune or superior skill had enabled the Australians to retain the Ashes, he would not regard it as a national calamity.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The re-election of Lord Dartmouth as president was moved by Mr. H. J. Plant, who said they remembered the line from which he came. They thought of Lord Dartmouth's father with great personal affection, of all he stood for in Staffordshire, and of the honour he brought to the great house to which he belonged, and they knew that that mantle had fallen on his son, for his presence that evening was an example of his love for all things appertaining to the social and sporting life of the county. Mr. Plant said they had heard slogans in connexion with other sporting matters, and he thought the County Cricket Club might have one—"County cricket in Staffordshire must not die." It was, he said, up to them, and he felt that an appeal to which Lord Dartmouth put his name was assured of success.

Mr. W. A. Adams seconded, and Lord Dartmouth, responding, said that if during his presidency the club could again be put comfortably on its feet he would have fulfilled all the duties a president could possibly perform.

The vice-presidents were re-appointed en bloc; and Miss Jones, Miss Myatt—the first women members to be so appointed—Messrs. A. E. Hill and N. Billington were added to the committee, on which three vacancies occurred.

Mr. W. A. Adams was again elected captain, and other appointments were as follow:—Hon. treasurer, Mr. A. Brodie; hon. secretary, Mr. L. W. Hancock; hon. assistant secretary, Mr. J. H. D. Myatt; and hon. auditor, Mr. C. E. Bullock.

In proposing a vote of thanks to Lord Dartmouth for his presence. Mr. Stinton said his Lordship's acceptance of office had done much to improve the status of the club and of the game in the county. He remarked that the health of cricket in the county did not merely depend upon the budget of the county club but upon the class and quality of village cricket, and from what he had seen cricket was healthy in Staffordshire.

In acknowledging, Lord Dartmouth said he agreed that "gates" were not of the most vital importance in regard to county cricket; the real backbone on which any county club must depend was the number of its subscribing members. He understood that the number of subscribing members to the Staffordshire club was about 340, which seemed to him inadequate. He suggested that individual members should endeavour to enrol new subscribing members of the club.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE CRICKET LEAGUE

Burslem's Smashing Victory

THREE CLUBS WITHOUT A POINT

By THE CRITIC

THE second Saturday of the season furnished another full afternoon's cricket, with a definite result in all the matches except that at Leek, where Caverswall made a strong reply to the home team's declaration. A total of 348 runs in five hours of cricket, or a rate of 69 an hour, is not in keeping with the demand for bright and enterprising cricket. Scoring at the rate of scarcely more than a run a minute is calculated to produce uninspiring drawn games, as it did in this instance, both clubs dropping two points. Only last year's champions and runners-up have taken full points, and three clubs, including Porthill and Stone, were beaten for the second time, and have no points to their credit. Three of the losers on the opening day, Crewe Alexandra, Longton, and Norton, made amends, and two of the winners of the previous week, Silverdale and Knypersley, fell at the second hurdle. It was a bright afternoon, but a cold nor-easter made the lot of fielders and spectators uncomfortable.

Results in brief: Burslem, 208 for eight, declared; Blythe Works 34. Nantwich 169 for eight, declared; Porthill 140. Knypersley 64; Norton 104. Stone 96; Longton 145 for three. Silverdale 108; Crewe Alexandra 114 for five. Leek 192 for nine, declared; Caverswall 153 for five.

LEAGUE TABLE

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | Pts. |
|--------------|-----|----|----|----|------|
| Burslem | ... | 2 | 2 | 0 | 8 |
| Nantwich | ... | 2 | 2 | 0 | 6 |
| Caverswall | ... | 2 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| Leek | ... | 2 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| Crewe Alex. | ... | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Knypersley | ... | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Longton | ... | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Norton | ... | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Silverdale | ... | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Blythe Works | ... | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Porthill | ... | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Stone | ... | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

IMPROVED NORTON TEAM Bowling Too Good For Knypersley

Flushed with victory over Longton, the Knypersley team, no doubt, went to Norton with the best intentions and not without confidence. But their batting proved vulnerable against a Norton attack that has improved out of recognition compared with last year. Apart from Greenwood the batting was undistinguished. The professional saw three of the best amateur batsmen leave with only 27 on the board, and after his departure, fourth out at 44, there was little to redeem the batting from failure. Greenwood scored only 16, but he was batting well and threatening for a long score when J. Rhead got an lbw decision against him. W. Butler got 14, but the last five wickets fell for six runs to the bowling of the captain, W. Deakin, and S. Welch.

Little could be done with Welch, who in nine overs took four wickets for eight runs; Rhead bowled a similar number of overs to take two for 27; and Deakin, turning the ball a fair bit from the off, came along with four wickets for 19. In the two matches he has taken nine for 46, and Welch eight for 28. The acquisition of the last-named has made

a wonderful difference to the Norton attack. Freed from the sense of responsibility which rests upon a professional bowler, Stanley appears to have recovered all his old fire without loss of accuracy, and with Rhead bowling steadily at a nice pace, and the skipper more sure of his length than formerly, there has been no need yet to call upon Arthur Smith, who had the largest bag of wickets last season, or the slow leg-breaks of R. Hill.

A COSTLY SLIP

It is, perhaps, too much to say that a missed catch lost Knypersley the match, seeing that only 65 were required to win, but it is at least probable that there would have been a close finish if the chance had been accepted. W. Boon captured the first two wickets with only 10 runs scored, and at the same total he should have had that of Arthur Smith. Had the Norton professional gone at that stage anything might have happened. Arthur played to turn a ball to leg off his pads, but it swung a little, he didn't middle it, and the ball popped up to mid-on. It was a simple chance to the Knypersley captain, T. C. Maynard, but he seemed so surprised that he made a spasmodic grab and fozzled it.

Reg. Birch, who had been batting patiently from the start, stayed with Smith till the score was 27, and then a stand by the professional and G. Birch settled the issue. The pair put on 30 before Smith fell to a catch by the wicket-keeper for 22. Birch was out to a marvellous catch by D. Robinson on the boundary with his score at 23. The young fielder jumped to hold the ball with one hand before falling into the spectators. The match was won with four wickets in hand, and R. J. Hallen, J. Rhead, and W. Martin all played some nice strokes in raising the total to three figures.

BETTER BATTING WANTED

On quite a good wicket a lot more runs should have been scored by both sides. In fact the batting throughout was characterized by frequent mistakes. There was no sustained resistance to accurate bowling.

Alf. Reynolds had little luck, and his record of two wickets for 51 in 14 overs was a poor return for a good deal of hard work against his old colleagues. It was W. Butler who came out with the best figures, his 7.3 overs yielding four wickets for nine runs. W. Winstill had two for 18, and did a valuable stroke when he got Arthur Smith caught. What Boon would have done (following his seven for 15 against Longton) if the chance offered by Smith had been taken, who shall say? As it was he met with no further success, and finished with two for 21 in 10 overs.

FLUCTUATING GAME AT PORTHILL

On the Porthill ground Nantwich made a good start, followed by another breakdown in the batting, as in their previous match, but recovered to reach 169 for 8. Their rate of scoring was too slow, for they occupied 2 1/2 hours (one run per minute). However, T. W. Maybury did his best to make up for it with a sporting declaration. Up to a point

the home side seemed likely to take advantage of this and win well within time. But then the game took another turn and Nantwich pulled it off. The champions appear to have been favoured by what luck was going in the course of these fluctuations, and the first and possibly decisive stroke was an accident to John Ikin.

The young professional was bowling cleverly and had taken four cheap wickets when, in trying to hold a hard return by J. E. Smith, he had the misfortune to divert the ball into his face. He had some teeth loosened, and had to retire for the best part of half-an-hour. On his return to the field his bowling was quite naturally affected by the shock of the blow, and he met with no further success. Then an lbw decision against N. W. White at a crucial stage of the game was very strongly criticized. If it was a mistake it was a most unfortunate one for Porthill, for it definitely put Nantwich on top.

Fox (26) and T. W. Steventon (55) again gave the champions a good start with an opening partnership of 60. Ikin, called on a second time, then decided Fox with a nippy leg-break and the batsman played it on. Four more wickets went cheaply, three of them to Ikin, who mixed his bowling skilfully but did the damage chiefly with his leg spinner. Then came his mishap, and later batsmen, against rather innocuous bowling, pulled Nantwich out of the mire.

E. H. Steventon hit hard for 31, not out, and J. E. Smith, J. Sproston, and A. McTurk all helped materially. Both the opening batsmen had a little luck, several chances being missed, which is an old Porthill failing that should not be revived. Even Ikin dropped a catch in the slips, and there is no better slip fielder in the League. Two or three other plain catches in the field were not held, which is disheartening for bowlers, and a likely road to defeat. Ikin's final figures were 4 for 34, and Noel White, without much luck, had two. Douglas White was again absent owing to a cold, and A. A. Bickerton owing to indisposition.

After the loss of two wickets cheaply, a capital stand was made for the home side by G. Price (23) and Ikin, who, in spite of his nasty blow in the mouth, gave an exhilarating display, his leg hitting being beautifully timed and prolific. After Price's departure J. S. Heath kept the professional company, and matters began to look healthy for Porthill, but when the dismissal of Ikin and White by consecutive deliveries from E. H. Steventon opened up a fresh chance for the champions they were quite equal to seizing it. Maybury got Stanley Heath caught in the gully, and he and Steventon polished off the rest in quick time to win by 29 runs. There was merit in the victory, which showed Nantwich getting into their stride even if their form with the bat is not yet quite convincing. Ikin's score was 64, made in his best style, and his batting and that of Tom Steventon, two left-handers, provided the high lights of the match.

STONE FAIL AT LONGTON

Last season Stone started with four victories. Their experience this time—two matches played and no points gained—is rather an unpleasant contrast. However, it is early yet, and so far the team has been far from representative. The captain, J. A. L. Wenger, has not joined the team yet, and on Saturday other absentees included the vice-captain, E. C. Fernie, W. A. Adams, F. Ravenscroft, and P. Wild. With such a depleted side much success could hardly be expected at Longton, even though that team cut up badly at Knypersley.

Hancock (24) and E. D. Slynn (20) were the chief contributors to the modest total of 96, and most of the batsmen were in difficulty with the fast bowling of W. Stubbs, who captured six wickets for 40. The ex-Congleton fast bowler, A. Webberley, made his first appearance for Longton and took a couple of wickets, so that Broadhurst for once had to be content with two.

Longton batsmen found their own fast pitch more to their liking than the soft wicket at Knypersey, and the result of the match was never in doubt. Geoffrey Edge (25) took part with G. Pedley in a useful opening, and D. Dennis also helped, but the gratifying feature was an excellent innings of 53 by Pedley. Up to July last season, when he met with his knee injury, he had failed to find his form, so his early half-century is particularly welcome. A. J. Chadwick (20) and R. H. Plant (18) were together when stumps were pulled up, and the captain has yet to lose his wicket.

BLTYHE WORKS OVERWHELMED

Burslem batsmen did some remarkably even scoring at Creaswell. Only 8 wickets fell and five of the players got beyond 20 and two others reached double figures. Tom Hollowood was top scorer with 48. J. Fenton hit up 35, A. Birch 23, C. G. Dexter 22, and R. Hollowood 24 not out. Fenton and T. Hollowood have made a rousing start to the season, having made 70 and 74 respectively for once out. In the first two matches Burslem's average per wicket is 28, and on both occasions Bernard Hollowood has failed to get going. What will it be when the captain weighs in with his normal quota?

The Works bowlers worked hard, and Mayer secured five wickets for 68. The innings of the home side was of short duration. The batting was feeble against the strong attack of Taylor and Roy Hollowood, whose figures were 5 for 6 and 4 for 24 respectively. The only batsman able to play them at all was C. Turner, who made 18 of the total of 30 scored from the bat. The Works are, of course, missing the solid work of their opening batsman, E. Hawley, who most unfortunately is ill. His absence is a very big handicap indeed.

Up to a point in the Alexandra innings at Crewe the encounter with Silverdale ran on even lines. The visitors could manage no more than 108, and

when five Crewe wickets had fallen it was anybody's game. But at that stage H. Tortington, who was batting well, found the needful partner in the slow bowler, J. Hossack, and the pair defied the Silverdale attack to win the match by five wickets. Tortington claimed the largest share of the credit with a not out 48, and his partner also took out his bat for 18. H. Pointon claimed four of the wickets for 43 runs.

The Silverdale innings had only one meritorious feature, a patient effort of 43 by C. F. Rushton. The folly of wasting good wickets by blunders in running was illustrated again, when E. Griffiths, who opened the season with 98 against Porthill, was run out after scoring 7. The Crewe professional, Poate, made his presence felt to the tune of 7 wickets for 43.

FIRST DRAWN GAME OF THE SEASON

The Caverswall bowling, including E. J. Wakelin, had a rough passage at Leek. After Wakelin had early upset L. H. Crump's wicket, a prolonged stand by E. Dale (44) and E. Broderick (62) had the visiting attack in a tangle. C. Bonsall had H. Birch, each later contributed 22, and the declared total of 192 had occupied such a big slice of the afternoon that Caverswall had nothing to play for but a draw.

The Leek bowlers were unable to dislodge Roy Smith, who played through for a not out 48, and others who helped to put Caverswall in a strong position at the close were J. H. Ragsdale (31), E. J. Wakelin (23), and A. Pickard (22, not out).

SALOP MENTAL HOSPITAL v. STAFFORD

Stafford opened their season at Bicton, where, on a rough wicket, they lost by nine runs.

M. H. Romans batted carefully for his 30, but Heath's bowling made batting rather an ordeal. Wiseman was the best of the Hospital's bowlers; he has a nice action and his five wickets for eight runs were well earned.

For Stafford, Evans, the captain, gave a taste of his form in hitting the wickets five times for 27. But on such a cold, un-crick-like day, few could do anything. Details:—

STAFFORD

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| W. T. White b Heath | 5 |
| H. O. Beck c Lord b Heath | 5 |
| M. H. Romans lbw b Wiseman | 30 |
| L. I. C. Bellamy c Young b Heath | 10 |
| J. E. Blair c Stacey b Lord | 7 |
| J. McLellan run out | 0 |
| R. J. C. Evans c Moxon b Wiseman | 12 |
| D. E. Bloor b Wiseman | 8 |
| L. H. Morris b Wiseman | 0 |
| C. H. Yeates b Wiseman | 0 |
| E. W. Redshaw not out | 1 |
| Extras | 12 |
| Total | 90 |

Bowling: Wiseman 5 for 8, Heath 3 for 23, Lord 1 for 18.

SALOP MENTAL HOSPITAL

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| W. Lord b Bellamy | 17 |
| R. Lovell b Evans | 0 |
| F. Stacey b Bellamy | 0 |
| T. C. Hughes b Evans | 2 |
| J. Wiseman b Evans | 14 |
| S. Young c Bloor b Redshaw | 15 |
| S. E. Heath c Bloor b White | 30 |
| H. Mitchell c Yeates b Morris | 9 |
| J. Gerrard b Evans | 0 |
| E. Moxon b Evans | 3 |
| W. Morton not out | 2 |
| Extras | 7 |
| Total | 99 |

Bowling: Evans 5 for 27, Bellamy 2 for 41, Redshaw 1 for 18, White 1 for 6, Morris 1 for 0.

STAFFORD II. v. UNIVERSAL A

Played at Stafford on Saturday. Universal A: W. Smith run out 3, R. Lugg b Hutchinson 37, —, Arnold c Birch b Hutchinson 3, —, Wrigley b Greatorex 18, G. Voss b Hutchinson 5, H. Taylor c and b Hutchinson 25, J. Ward b Hutchinson 21, V. Tassell b Holford 4, —, Richardson lbw b Hutchinson 1, B. Savory b Hutchinson 0, W. Wilcox not out 8, extras 9; total 134. J. W. Hutchinson seven for 53.

Stafford II.: G. H. Greatorex run out 3, C. Birch lbw b Ward 8, J. R. Bithell not out 37, K. C. Wood st Lugg b Wrigley 2, M. Thompson b Ward 0, J. F. Herbert c Lugg b Tassell 13, J. J. Hatchett lbw b Wrigley 1, J. G. Fletcher c Tassell b Wrigley 0, E. G. Loveys run out 0, A. J. Holford b Savory 0, J. W. Hutchinson b Savory 0, extras 10; total 74. Wrigley 3 for 17, Savory 2 for 4.

UNIVERSAL B v. STAFFORD III.

Played at Doxey. Universal B: A. Stamp c Flavell b Rogers 5, G. Waltho b Rogers 11, W. Grimes b Longdon 4, W. Herbert b Longdon 20, D. Hussey run out 0, F. Mose-dale b Greenwood 0, F. Johnson c Greaves b Longdon 26, W. Rhodes not out 2, W. Rose b Longdon 0, W. Chester b Bray 0, D. MacGregor b Longdon 4, extras 18; total 80.

Stafford III.: H. Flavell b Johnson 24, E. Bray c and b Waltho 39, S. N. Hill c and b Johnson 0, —, McGill st Stamp b Waltho 1, R. Arrowsmith st Stamp b Waltho 0, G. L. Longdon b Johnson 3, C. Greaves b Waltho 3, J. E. Hopercraft c and b Johnson 8, R. Rogers not out 17, extras 9; total for 8, 104. N. F. Greenwood and H. Judson did not bat.

FOSTON AND SCROPTON v. MARCHINGTON

Played at Foston Hall on Saturday. Marchington.—T. Wainwright b E. Birch, 0; W. Tipper b J. Williams, 12; T. Holmes c E. Williams b E. Birch, 12; J. Shaw b Bourne, 44; Ed. Wainwright retired hurt, 3; H. Woolley b Hawkins, 2; T. Gilbert lbw b J. Williams, 5; J. Sandham c Hawkins b J. Williams, 0; E. Wainwright run out, 0; F. Sutton run out, 9; A. Wainwright not out, 1; extras, 13; total, 101.

Foston and Scropton.—W. Jagg retired, 11; M. Barker run out, 2; J. Williams b T. Wainwright, 5; D. Bourne lbw b Woolley, 18; F. Sessions b J. Shaw, 12; E. Williams run out, 11; F. Watkins st. Gilbert b Woolley, 0; A. Hawkins b J. Shaw, 19; E. Birch c Woolley b J. Shaw, 0; T. Summersgill not out, 0; S. Birch c sub by J. Shaw, 0; extras 15, total, 83.

DENSTONE COLLEGE PROSPECTS

With four of last year's successful side still available Denstone are fairly fortunate. D. H. Burrow is the new captain, and he should have the makings of a strong batting side with himself, R. M. Watson, a hard-hitting left-hander, J. H. G. Deighton and R. L. Richards left from last year, and H. B. Gandy, C. P. Roberts and A. P. Spooner other useful batsmen.

The bowling will present more difficulty, as Delighton alone remains of last year's attack. As a medium to a fast right-hander he was then very successful, but may be overworked this season. J. Rogers was in the 1936 side, but failed to find his form last year; if he can keep a length his fastish bowling will be a great asset. D. Ogden is a steady slow left-hander without any really deadly spin; M. G. Hensman, another left-hander, played once or twice last year, but with little luck; with his great height he may be more successful this year. A. V. Campbell is another left-hander who can turn the ball. Unfortunately there seems to be no obvious right-hand leg break bowler, and this lack, especially on the Denstone wicket, will be much felt.

Burrow, wicket-keeper last year, may have to do some bowling and B. M. Cunningham have a trial in this position. Other candidates for places include J. L. Richards, P. J. Pasterfield and G. C. Blunt.

Two interesting new fixtures are a two days' game with Rossall and a one-day game with Bromsgrove. The other school matches are as in the past; against St. Peter's, York, Trent, Work-sop, K.E.S. Birmingham, and Wrekin.

The season opens on May 7 with a game against Tutbury, and on the 12th Derby Friars visit Denstone. The Craven Gentlemen, the Staffordshire Gentlemen, the Notts Amateurs and the Derby Grasshoppers are the other clubs met.

TUTBURY CRICKET OPENS

Tutbury cricketers opened their season with an away match at Oakmoor. The ground was in excellent condition, despite the lack of rain.

Winning the toss, Oakmoor elected to bat. Tutbury bowlers claimed two quick wickets, but were then checked, and E. Swinson and J. R. Goodwin batted until the tea interval, when the Oakmoor captain sportingly declared with three wickets down for 132. Tutbury found little difficulty in passing the Oakmoor total, the foundation being laid by a splendid partnership between Rickman and Billings.

Oakmoor.—E. Swinson not out, 71; J. Davies c Rickman b R. Williams, 0; W. Swinson b Hurdle, 2; J. R. Goodwin b Hurdle, 51; extras, 8; total (3 wickets, declared), 132.

Bowling.—M. F. Hurdle, 2 for 29; R. Williams, 1 for 19.

Tutbury.—S. R. Rickman, retired, 50; J. Billings lbw b Moseley, 47; T. L. Coxon c Shemilt b Atkins, 29; R. Goodall c Swinson b Atkins, 9; H. Graham c Walker b Atkins, 1; R. Williams not out, 9; E. Johnson not out, 2; extras, 10; total (5 wickets), 157.

Bowling.—G. Atkins, 3 for 22; R. Mose-ley, 1 for 37.

COUNTY CRICKET PROSPECTS

A Curtailed Programme

IMPROVED RESULTS PROBABLE

By THE CRITIC

Last season Staffordshire's luck was dead out. It will certainly not be untimely if they experience a favourable turn of fortune's wheel this year. In spite of having to play an all-amateur team in most of the matches, and also of having to develop an entirely new attack, they played well enough until the last match (when they had a lapse) to have been running strongly for the championship with ordinary luck. I make that statement advisedly, having seen every ball bowled. And not only did weather conditions rob the team of many points, but the same malignant influence also robbed the county club of, at a rough estimate, £150 in gate money. At three of the home matches, including the first ever played on the Burslem ground, the "gate" was practically wiped out by the weather, and that in a dry season. Though it was fine for Durham's visit to Burslem, it was far too cold to sit and watch cricket.

These experiences, combined with an unaccountable lack of adequate patronage for the visit of the New Zealanders, which resulted in heavy loss, serve to emphasize the great need of an enlarged membership. It was decided at the annual meeting to make a special appeal, over the signature of the President, Lord Dartmouth, at a date to be fixed later. I hope it will meet with a better response than that evoked by one or two such appeals, sponsored by the President's noble father and predecessor in office. If it is followed up by the use by existing members of their own personal influence with friends and acquaintances it will succeed.

STAFFORD AND THE COUNTY CLUB

As I have previously pointed out, North Staffs. furnishes over 300 members. If the central and southern areas would each provide 100, the club could be carried on without embarrassment.

I have heard that there is some hope of an intensive effort to secure more adequate support for county cricket in the Stafford district, with a view to the playing of at least one county match each season in the county town. I feel sure that if the support were forthcoming the idea would have the full co-operation of the committee. After a lapse of four years the county team will again be seen at Walsall, with worthy opponents in Durham, and the match ought to have a strong attraction for the large following of the Walsall club. It is also to be hoped that the gesture will provoke a better realization of the claims of the county club in the Saddlery Town, which at present furnishes only one subscribing member.

A REQUIEM

With only four home games to be allocated there will be no match this year on the beautiful ground at Tettenhall, and, grievous loss, the old County Ground at Stoke has gone. County cricket has been played there every year, except during the war, for more than 50 years, and now the public authorities of the county and city and the L.M. & S. Ry. Co. have combined to take away this magnificent playing field in the heart of the Potteries in order to build thereon technical schools such as most authorities would prefer to erect anywhere rather than in the very centre of a large industrial area.

Responsible members of the Stoke-on-Trent authority stated publicly that their approval of the scheme depended on an assurance which had been given that another ground of equal suitability for league and county cricket could be pro-

vided. That assurance was quite obviously impossible of fulfilment, and nothing whatever has been done to honour it. In the result the league club which played there has been disbanded, and the county club, for whose benefit the ground was bought and equipped, has to seek other venues less convenient for everybody concerned, and especially for spectators. At a time when all the cry is for physical fitness, for open spaces in big cities, and for more and more playing fields, this action, which I have previously designated the rape of the field, is one of which I have yet to hear one single word in excuse or justification.

AN EXPERIMENT

The fact that the county club is able to experiment with another ground at Stoke has no relation to the assurance to which I have alluded. The Michelin Tyre Co. have made a large sports ground on land opposite their works at Boothton, and they have placed it at the disposal of the County Club for a county match. It is a good ground, and its appointments may be made suitable for county cricket, but for convenience it cannot, of course, compare with a ground that was close to Stoke Station, for it is about two miles out, and away from the more frequent 'bus services. However, if an adequate transport service can be arranged there is reasonable ground for the hope that the experiment will prove successful.

The other two home matches are to be played at Porthill, and the following is the list of the fixtures:—June 8 and 9, at Oxtun, v. Cheshire; June 13 and 14, at Porthill, v. Yorks. II.; June 20 and 21, at Norton-on-Tees, v. Durham; June 22 and 23, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, v. Northumberland; July 11 and 12, at Wakefield, v. Yorks. II.; July 20 and 21, at Michelin Ground, Stoke, v. Northumberland; August 3 and 4, at Porthill, v. Cheshire; August 15 and 16, at Walsall, v. Durham.

THE PATSHULL TRADITION

Before taking a glance at the playing resources of the county, a brief reference to what I regarded as one of the healthiest annual meetings the club has held for some years. The new President, Lord Dartmouth, was the ideal chairman, and in his presence the lugubrious pessimism that has sometimes pervaded the proceedings simply could not live. His Lordship fully realized the difficulties which beset this and other county clubs, but only a purposeful discussion of the best means of improving the financial position was indulged in, and no dark hints about the possibility of having to close down. Even Mr. Harold Plant's suggested slogan, "County cricket in Staffordshire must not die," seemed hardly necessary, for no one, least of all the President, appeared to entertain the possibility of such a thing.

Lord Dartmouth delivered a speech worthy of a past President of the M.C.C., and, taking his first opportunity of thanking the members for his election to the presidency of the Staffordshire County Club, he expressed his sentiments in this delightful sentence:—

We at home look upon the association between the club and members of my family almost as a tradition, and it is certainly one which I hope may continue for very many years.

No pessimistic forebodings about that. And it is only necessary to add that the members of the club fervently hope so, too. His Lordship might well speak of

the family connexion with the club as a tradition, for it has never had any president but the Earl of Dartmouth. When the club was formed his father called the original meeting. His grandfather became the first president, and his father the first hon. secretary. I once heard the late Earl whimsically describe himself as the worst secretary the club ever had. When the first President died his son was, of course, elected to succeed him as president, and now, after many years, during which his great influence was used to the incalculable benefit of the club and of cricket in Staffordshire, he is succeeded by his son, in whom, I am quite sure, the club will be equally fortunate.

SHALL WE DO BETTER OR WORSE?

Well, the team might not play as well as last season and still achieve much better results. As I see no reason why the standard of play should not be equally good this year it is reasonable to expect a materially improved record. With a percentage of only 31.66 in 1937 Staffordshire dropped from the seventh place in the Minor Counties' table to 15th, but the standard of play was good enough for a much higher berth, as I showed when reviewing the season's work in detail, and need not enter into again.

When something like full strength is available Staffordshire should have a capable all-round side, but there are at the moment doubts which make the outlook rather uncertain. John Ikin has, of course, gone to Manchester to qualify for Lancashire. But he has been permitted to take a club engagement with Porthill, and one has wondered whether the Lancashire authorities would release him from his duties at Old Trafford to play for Staffordshire during his period of qualification.

On inquiring of the hon. secretary, Mr. Laurance Hancock, I was not surprised to learn that that extremely wide-awake official had already written to ascertain the feeling of the Lancashire Committee in the matter. An acknowledgment was received and a decision promised when the committee meet. Ikin played a fortnight ago for the Minor Counties against Oxford University, and though I did not hear it I believe a wireless commentator made special allusion to a wonderful catch off his own bowling, and spoke of him as a very promising young cricketer. We in Staffordshire have known him as all that for some time, and I know those c. and b. marvels of his. I shall not readily forget one in a county match at Porthill last season, for it was a marvellous catch. (Good news is to hand later that the Lancashire Committee have intimated that they are quite willing for Ikin to play for Staffordshire, but cannot give consent to cover all the matches: Permission will be given for each match if possible).

Another doubtful player is Ernest Hawley, who, I regret to say, has been ill for more than a month and is not yet fit to turn out for Blythe Works. It is to be hoped, after his very successful first season last year, that he will be able to assist the county again later in the summer, but there is not much prospect of his playing just yet. F. N. Bryan, of Walsall, also had a brilliant debut with Staffordshire in 1937, but there is no definite information as to whether he will be available. Lockett's club engagements will again keep him out of most of the county matches, and I am afraid Arthur Smith is not likely to be free for much county cricket.

The same remark applies to A. B. Hollowood and W. Stubbs. In my judgment the Longton fast bowler would be an acquisition to the side, but his scholastic duties do not permit of his playing except in his holidays. Another doubtful is Ron. Lawton, of Westbromwich, who was incapacitated by a shoulder injury for the greater part of last season, and has not been as prominent as usual this time with his club.

W. A. ADAMS WILL LEAD THE SIDE

I have named eight players who would probably be first choices if they were available, but who are either doubtful or definitely unlikely, and several of them were among the most regular and most successful players last season. That

does not sound very hopeful, but now let me turn to those who are not so unfavourably situated.

W. A. Adams will act as captain for his second season, and will probably be more regular. I believe he hopes to lead the side in all the matches except, perhaps, the last. He will be going on a business trip abroad in August, but may be able to play in Wakes week. His captaincy is a definite asset. The fact that Stanley Crump, now that he has left the Central Lancashire League for the Ribblesdale League, will be available barring accidents throughout the season is another asset. Other players who can play when required are Roy Smith, B. Shardlow, and F. Taylor. There we have five players, three of whom are bowlers, who can play in all, or nearly all the matches.

Leslie Gale had a splendid season in 1937, and he hopes to play in most of the matches again, and if R. H. Plant would accustom himself to county cricket by arranging to play all through I think he would be a prolific run-getter. I hope he will, for eight matches do not constitute a very big demand. C. C. Clarke played in five matches last year, showed his best form on several occasions, and may manage about the same number of games this time.

STAFFORD'S QUOTA

I have mentioned eight players, apart from those who at the moment remain doubtful, who, with a wicket-keeper, should constitute a satisfactory nucleus. If and when Ikin, Hawley, and Bryan are available the county seems likely to have a powerful batting side. Not reckoning Ikin, the bowlers among the eight are Crump, Taylor, Shardlow, and Gale, and in settled weather another bowler is a necessity. If Lawton is unfit the committee may think favourably of E. Broderick, of Leek.

If the Stafford captain, R. J. C. Evans, could spare the time for county cricket, he would be an exceedingly useful all-rounder, but more particularly for his bowling, in which department I understand he is on the top of his form this season. M. H. Romans seems also to have struck his best as a batsman, having in the first three matches for Stafford scored 134 runs for twice out, which gives a nice average of 67. In an odd match or two for the county he might not do himself full justice, but would probably make good if he could command the time for most of the matches.

Other Stafford players worthy of consideration as all-rounders are L. I. C. Bellamy and J. Whitfield. The last-named is, of course, a prominent Police player, and that suggests a doubt if he could be spared from his duties.

As C. C. Goodway prefers to be a Warwickshire player, Staffordshire want a wicket-keeper. G. B. Edge, R. Hammond, and A. Meigh all filled the berth last year, and all are good without being entirely satisfying. From what I have seen, and also from the testimony of players who have been opposed to him this season, I should like to see the Stafford "stumper," J. E. Blair, given an opportunity in county cricket. My present opinion is definitely that he is the best wicket-keeper in the county, and he is not negligible as a batsman.

OCCASIONAL HELP

One would naturally expect such strong clubs as Walsall, Old Hill, Westbromwich Dartmouth, and Wolverhampton to furnish players of the required class for county cricket, and the committee will, of course, have information and advice as to any likely recruits from these sources. Such players as Eric Perry, W. E. Jones, and M. C. Harvatt (of Smethwick) are only able to render very occasional help, and of the younger school I am unable to write with knowledge, but two youthful Walsall players, R. S. Patterson and F. D. Jeffries, appear to have shown exceptional promise against the Dartmouth last Saturday.

On the whole the constitution of the county side seems rather more uncertain than usual at the moment, but I fancy the committee will get together a useful team, and one which may give quite a good account of itself in the competition.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE CRICKET LEAGUE

Excitement at Burslem

NANTWICH AGAIN TAKE THE LEAD

By THE CRITIC

Last Saturday furnished the first really summer-like day of the cricket season. Cold winds had departed; it was sunny, and it was warm. Rains earlier in the week had sootened grounds pleasantly and gave spin bowlers a chance to turn the ball, though in some cases it turned rather slowly. In fact, it was an ideal afternoon for the game, and cricketers enjoyed themselves accordingly. All the matches were finished, and most of them provided entertaining cricket, with a despatchably close finish at Burslem, and capital games at Silverdale, Caverswall, and Stone.

Knypersley failed at Silverdale, and Burslem disappointed a large gathering of supporters by losing after dismissing Norton for 51! As Nantwich made no mistake at Stone, they again enjoy a clear lead, with unbeaten Leek stepping up into second place. Like Stone, Porthill met with their fourth defeat, and the pair still share the wooden spoon, with Crewe, easy victims of Longton, and Blythe Works, who collapsed against Leek, their nearest neighbours in distress.

RESULTS IN BRIEF:

Stone 100; Nantwich 155.
Norton 51; Burslem 50.
Silverdale 120; Knypersley 101.
Caverswall 160; Porthill 134.
Longton 164 for six. Declared; Crewe Alexandra 68.
Leek 108; Blythe Works 36.

LEAGUE TABLE

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | Pts. |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|------|
| Nantwich | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 12 |
| Leek | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 11 |
| Norton | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| Burslem | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 9 |
| Knypersley | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 9 |
| Longton | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 9 |
| Caverswall | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| Silverdale | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| Blythe Works | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Crewe Alex. | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Porthill | 5 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Stone | 5 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 1 |

UNEVEN BATTING BY STONE

County Skipper's Clean Hits

Having obtained one point from the first four games, compared with 12 from the same number last year, it was hardly to be expected that Stone would be able to improve their record at the expense of the Champions, who were the visitors to the pleasant ground on the Lichfield Road. But they have surprised Nantwich before now, and with the pitch more likely to suit Bert Shardlow than in any of the preceding matches, the result was not to be regarded as a foregone conclusion, though the odds were against the home side. Cecil Fernie captained Stone in the continued absence of J. A. L. Wenger. This is his second year as captain, and he has not been able to lead the team since June 19 last year. From that date to the end of the season he was incapacitated by injury, and he has missed the first five matches this term, and presumably may miss more, all of which is extremely bad luck for the captain and the club. It was a surprise that E. D. Slynm had been relegated to the 2nd XI, after batting in good style a week before at Porthill. He is a boy

of much promise, and one to be encouraged. If I had been choosing the team on merit I should have had no difficulty in finding a place for him.

A DELECTABLE PARTNERSHIP

S. Wagstaff, who has had some seasons with Crewe prior to the present one, opened the bowling with E. H. Steventon when Frank Ravenscroft and R. W. Harris went in to start the batting for Stone. The first-named soon placed one of Steventon's off-spinners into the hands of short-leg, but Harris and H. H. Wood had a delectable partnership which took the score to 38. Both batted admirably, and though Wagstaff was erratic and gave way to W. T. Maybury after being off-driven and hit to leg for excellent fours by Wood, the pair played the turning ball so well—off-break at one end and leg break at the other—that there appeared no reason why they should not put Stone in a healthy position. Harris made one faulty stroke off Maybury which offered a difficult chance at mid-on, but this was the only blemish in a bit of nice batting until Wood tried to drive a leg-spinner without going to it and skied it to mid-off. It was a bad stroke which prematurely ended a good innings, and it was the prelude to a batting collapse.

Wood had made 25. Before his blunder the score was 38 with one wicket down; this was changed to 38 for five and 54 for seven. And the chief cause of the transformation was wretchedly poor resistance to some clever leg-break bowling by Maybury. Harris (11) put up another catch to mid-off; Shardlow was bowled at the other end making a primitive stroke at what was a leg-break to him; and A. Jervis was beaten by Maybury's spin. Hancock shaped more hopefully, and stayed while W. A. Adams sent 50 up by twice lifting Steventon yards out of the field with effortless on drives. Maybury abandoned his spin to the left-hander and had a good length with his quick, straight ball, and he was not long before he got a lbw decision against Hancock. J. E. V. Toney fell at the same score, 54, beaten by a leg-break.

"TONY" ADAMS USES THE LONG HANDLE

At this juncture E. C. Fernie joined W. A. Adams, and the partnership realized 39 invaluable runs in 18 minutes. The county skipper played those balls which his great reach could not make into half-volleys with a straight and careful bat, and those that he could reach he thumped to good purpose. An on-drive from Maybury carried the boundary at the deepest point, and he again dispatched Steventon over the pavilion. But they were not all big drives. One perfect off shot went past cover before he could stir, and a mow along the ground to the square-leg boundary (both off Maybury) was effective if not pretty.

Fernie was batting soundly and well until Wagstaff was brought on in place of Steventon, but then a ball "popped" a little as he played forward, and mid-off had an easy catch behind the bowler. He had a timely dozen to his credit. The young left-hander, B. Preston, followed, and shaped well at quick,

straight bowling from both ends, but when Maybury tempted him with spinners he hit a hard, clean drive, which deserved a better fate, into the hands of Bull, fielding on the on-boundary. The score was exactly 100 when K. Sandiford "whipped in," and the knowledge that it was the last wicket was the undoing of Adams. Hitherto he had picked the right ones and hit straight. Obviously his mind was made up to "have a go" whatever came along. It was a straight ball and almost a yorker from Wagstaff, and he hit all across it, with, of course, fatal results. So the total stuck at 100, and Adams had hit 41 of them in 50 minutes, including seven fours (no sixes in this League).

Maybury came out with six wickets for 46 in 15 overs, Steventon bowled 13 overs for 33 runs and two wickets, and Wagstaff had two for 18.

THE USUAL CONFIDENT START

T. W. Steventon and Fox started the Nantwich innings in their usual confident and efficient style against the bowling of Hancock and Shardlow, who, for some reason which was not apparent, opened from the opposite ends to those they generally operate from. The change did not appear to suit either, for they lacked accuracy, and runs came freely. Tom Steventon made some beautiful strokes, and Stone's hundred was made to look a totally inadequate score. However, Steventon's confidence seemed to desert him suddenly. He was almost caught at mid-on off Shardlow, badly missed in the slips off Hancock, clean bowled by a no-ball from the left-arm bowler which he played back to, and then bowled by another of Shardlow's that went through quick and low. He had made 25 of the 37 scored in less than 20 minutes.

With Fox and J. E. Smith making a further stand, the bowlers changed ends, and three more wickets dropped quickly. Fox was bowled by what looked like an in-swinging yorker from Shardlow. G. Bull was beaten first ball by Hancock, and a sweet break-back from the amateur turned from just outside the leg-stump to hit the middle and off and send back "Jack" Smith, who was batting well. J. Rothwell, a young left-hander playing his first game in the 1st XI; and Dr. J. R. T. Turner threatened trouble to Stone, and Wood was put on at Hancock's end, a change of questionable wisdom at that critical stage, for Hancock was bowling accurately and Shardlow was getting the wickets.

However, Shardlow got Dr. Turner caught at cover at 73, and Wood bowled Rothwell at eighty after a couple of loose ones had gone to the boundary. I should say Nantwich have a valuable recruit in this boy.

WAGSTAFF SETTLED THE ISSUE

Up to this point Stone had made a fight of it, and if Hancock had continued bowling I think they might have made a close fight. But Wagstaff took the bit between his teeth, as it were, went for the bowling with ferocity, and quickly had the match won. Shardlow could not find the length to stop him, and was hit for three fours in one over, and Wood came in for similar castigation. The Nantwich captain saw his partner make the winning hit, and was then lbw to Shardlow's in-swinging, a full-pitch on his foot.

Wagstaff continued his onslaught until he had hit 47 in 40 minutes and got 40 of them with boundaries. It was a display of good, clean hitting. He had the courage to attack the bowling vigorously at the crucial stage of the game, and the risks he took were justified in the result. He blotted Shardlow's copybook to some extent, but the left-hander had five wickets for 36. He might have won the match if he could have maintained the length consistently of those that sent back Steventon and Smith. I thought he was fighting the ball to get in-swing too often, when his break-back from leg was his most dangerous ball.

DESPERATE FINISH AT BURSLEM

No team has yet reached 100 against Burslem, and yet they have lost two matches, and came quite near enough to losing a third. The average per wicket against them is a slight fraction over 7. But the batting in the last three matches has not been that of a championship side. Taylor (four for 22) and R. Hollowood (five for 25) got rid of Norton for a paltry 51, but S. Welch (six for 29) and F. Hodson (four for 12) bundled out Burslem for 50. I question whether there was anything in the state of the pitch to justify such scores. The finish was, of course, tremendously exciting, and if one of the Burslem batsmen had not given one run away by running short the match would have ended in a tie. Equally of course, the calling of "one short" was not to the liking of the spectators. And, by-the-by, those who tell us that cricket has lost its appeal should have seen the crowd at this match, which, I understand, was the largest the Burslem club has had for a very long time. There was no change of bowling on either side.

PORTHILL STILL LOSING

The match at Caverswall furnished a good game between evenly-matched sides. Porthill had a fine chance to secure their first victory of the season when they had got rid of nine Caverswall wickets for 118. But a missed chance offered by A. Pickard had disastrous results, for an unexpected stand by the two bowlers, Pickard and J. Tabbinor, for the last wicket took the total to 160, and that proved rather too much for Porthill. It was only another verification of the oft-repeated assertion that fielding is as important a factor in the winning and losing of matches as batting and bowling.

Opening the Caverswall innings with Roy Smith, O. F. Doran enjoyed his first success as a North Staffordshire League player. The pair found little difficulty in the Porthill attack and rattled up 49 for the first wicket, of which number Doran claimed 34 when he was caught in the slips. H. Thornhill and K. Gleaves had just taken over the bowling from Ikin and Douglas White, and after the former had broken the partnership Gleaves struck a shrewd blow by bowling the professional. After this Thornhill bowled with such effect that the game had swung round in the visitors' favour until that last wicket stand by which Pickard (25) and Tabbinor (17, not out) added 44 runs. Thornhill bowled well to take seven wickets for 52.

Porthill lost G. Price and Ikin quickly, the last-named being lbw once more, this time to the slow bowler, Pickard. As I have said before, it seems to me that John will have to correct his footwork. J. Bentley (24) helped J. S. Heath to improve matters, but with the former's departure and the failure of Arthur Bickerton Porthill were in difficulties. Then K. Gleaves gave further evidence of a return to his proper form. He and Stanley Heath obtained such a confident mastery of the bowling that 64 were added in less than 40 minutes. They pulled the game round, and with both well set and six wickets to go the visitors appeared to have re-established a grip on the game. However, when A. V. J. Dennis, the former Stone player, was called upon, Gleaves indulged in a rash swipe and was bowled for 35.

For the rest, E. J. Wakelin and Pickard caused something of a rout. Stanley Heath was caught on the leg side off the slow bowler, having made 47 by cricket which was an object lesson to the younger school. I have heard him talk of retiring in favour of the young ones, but he had better wait until his place can be more adequately filled. In the last two matches he has scored 87 for once out, and has got them quickly by cricket of the best. Wakelin had five wickets for 43 and Pickard four for 36.

LONGTON CAPTAIN AT HIS BEST

Longton made short work of Crewe on the Alexandra ground, and the hero of the occasion was the Longton captain, R. H. Plant, not only for his great inn-

ings at a time when runs were badly wanted, but also for the way in which he put what he conceived to be the interest of the side before any personal consideration. That is to say that when requiring only seven runs to achieve a distinction much prized by batsmen, viz., to reach the century, he declared the innings closed to give his bowlers plenty of time to get the home side out. He is batting better than ever, and his not out 93 gave him an aggregate so far of 163 for twice out, though he was caught in shielding his face from a fast, bumping ball at Caverswall after scoring only two. Apart from that accident he has taken 165 runs for once out.

Longton lost five wickets for 56 (G. B. Edge 23), but Broadhurst (24) then helped Plant to put on 85 runs in 55 minutes before the professional was run out. J. Prince (21) and Poate (17) made more than half of Crewe's modest score, the bowling of W. Stubbs, Broadhurst, and G. Pedley being too good for them. It is good to find Geo. Pedley taking wickets again, and an analysis of four for 13 suggests that he combined a good length with his spin. Broadhurst had three wickets for 17.

LEEK ON THE HEELS OF THE LEADERS

Leek batting did not shine very brightly at Cresswell, but that of Blythe Works suffered an eclipse. L. H. Crump (34) held one end up for Leek while six wickets fell, and C. Harrison hit up 29 in double quick time right at the end to make the total look a little more respectable. W. Massey took four for 47, and R. G. Davies three for 19. The home side collapsed completely. C. Bonsall's analysis was four for 7, Reg. Halton's three for 2, and E. Hordern's two for 2. So Leek remain the only unbeaten team and are only a point behind the leaders.

Knypersley fell from grace at Silverdale. A score of 120 by the home side offered them a reasonable chance to add another three points to their tally and hold their high place. But Greenwood, after his success against the Australians at Northampton, failed on this occasion, succumbing to a good ball from H. Pointon, and the rest of the team were not quite equal to the demand, though Levi Lowe (34) and W. Boon (21) made a brave effort after the departure of the professional. The attack of the slow left-hander, F. Vardy, H. Pointon, and J. Boon met with little check after the pair named had been separated, and Knypersley were beaten by 19 runs. Vardy's four wickets cost 25, and Pointon's three were debited with only 17 runs.

In batting, Silverdale owed a good deal to R. Ward (35), C. F. Rushton (26), and the wicket-keeper, J. Cooke (19). The wickets were spread over five bowlers (with, of course, one run out), and A. Reynolds had three for 40.

DRAWN GAME AT STAFFORD
"HAT TRICK" BY BELLAMY

Wednesbury were visitors to the Hough Ground on Saturday, and after batting 24 hours they compiled a total of 182. Greenhough (62), Field (37) and Sutton (29 not out) being the chief contributors.

Bellamy, the Stafford all-rounder, distinguished himself by performing the "hat trick." James, Townsend and Tooth being the victims. Otherwise the Stafford bowling was below standard, and the same remark applies to the fielding, several catches being dropped.

With a little over an hour and three-quarters left, the home side started well, W. T. White being in form right from the start, but only the captain, R. J. C. Evans, could stay with him. Sutton's fast bowling being the chief cause of the trouble. It was distinctly unlucky for White that, after scoring a capital 77, he should be out to the last ball of the match, the Stafford total then being 142 for nine wickets. Sutton came out with the good analysis of eight wickets for 34 runs. Details:—

WEDNESBURY

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| F. Greenhough c Morris b Evans | 62 |
| F. Field c Redshaw b Evans | 37 |
| W. T. James c Bellamy | 10 |
| B. Fellows c and b White | 14 |
| R. Sutton not out | 29 |
| W. Townsend b Bellamy | 0 |
| F. Tooth lbw b Bellamy | 0 |
| G. Phoenix st Blair b Redshaw | 8 |
| R. C. Ryder b Redshaw | 12 |
| T. Newton run out | 0 |
| J. Morris b Bellamy | 2 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 182 |

Bowling: Bellamy 4 for 44, Redshaw 2 for 53, Evans 2 for 64.

STAFFORD

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| W. T. White b Sutton | 77 |
| D. E. Bloor b Sutton | 6 |
| B. S. N. Anderson lbw b Sutton | 2 |
| L. I. C. Bellamy b Sutton | 6 |
| H. O. Beck b Sutton | 1 |
| J. E. Blair b Morris | 1 |
| R. J. C. Evans b Sutton | 28 |
| J. A. R. Miller b Sutton | 4 |
| J. McLellan b Sutton | 0 |
| L. H. Morris not out | 1 |
| Extras | 16 |
| Total (9 wkts.) | 142 |

E. W. Redshaw did not go in.

Bowling: Sutton 8 for 34, Morris 1 for 25.

LEAMINGTON v. STAFFORDSHIRE GENTLEMEN

Played at Leamington on Sunday. Staffordshire Gentlemen: C. Howl b Pugh 81, H. F. Wood c Curtis b Marshall 9, H. O. Beck st Rayner b Marshall 0, C. Hatton st Rayner b Marshall 14, C. Clarke c Rayner b Marshall 1, R. J. C. Evans b Marshall 29, E. C. Fernie b Marshall 3, J. E. Blair b Marshall 4, T. Rickards b Marshall 1, W. H. Twigg not out 17, J. McLellan c Gerrity b Marshall 3, extras 2; total 169. Marshall took nine for 69.

Leamington: T. H. Curtis c Hatton b Evans 0, J. A. E. Binny b Wood 49, E. G. Gerrity st Blair b Evans 11, K. White c Beck b Wood 9, D. H. Herbert c McLellan b Fernie 5, J. G. Pugh b Wood 18, Grosvenor-Williams c Clark b Fernie 3, J. M. Marshall b Fernie 13, J. Methereill not out 9, K. Rayner c Evans b Fernie 2, G. H. H. Smith c Clarke b Fernie 0, extras 5; total 142. Fernie took five for 35.

KING EDWARD VI. SCHOOL, STAFFORD, v. STAFFORD RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

On the school ground on Monday, 20 overs being played, the Rugby players winning easily. Scores:—

K.E.S.: S. C. Woodget b Longdon 3, P. F. Pryce c Evans b Kenney 0, J. C.

M. Mountford not out 42, F. L. Dodd retired hurt 3, C. E. P. Holford c Lees b Longdon 0, R. Barnwell c Kenney b Bamford 3, G. J. L. Smith not out 9, extras 14; total 74. B. H. Glass, S. Hudson, D. L. Robertson, J. M. Williams did not go in. Bowling: Longdon two for seven, Kenney one for 13, Bamford one for nil. Stafford R.U.F.C.: K. Bamford run out 22, R. Kenney retired 51, J. McLellan lbw b Mountford 0, G. L. Longdon not out 22, J. Lees not out 7, extras 12; total 114. R. J. C. Evans, J. T. Wilson, A. Roberts, E. A. K. Jarvis, D. G. Bray, J. Collier did not go in. Bowling: Mountford one for nine, Holford nil for 40, R. Barnwell nil for 28, J. M. Williams nil for 17, Glass nil for eight.

SHUGBOROUGH PARK v. STAFFORD P.S.A.

Played at Stafford on Saturday. Scores:

Shugborough Park: B. Billington b Bassett 47, H. Houghton b Merricks 27, S. Hopper c Lawton b Merricks 6, R. Stubbs c James b Lawton 19, A. Appleby not out 15, K. Bamford b Morton 12, H. Higginbotham b Norton 7, extras 5; total 138 for six. Bowling: Morton two for 17, Merricks two for 27, Bassett one for 16.

Stafford P.S.A.: R. Norton not out 10, G. Merricks c Higginbotham b Appleby 0, T. James b Hopper 1, H. Lawton c Houghton b Appleby 0, T. Saggars c Billington b Hopper 8, W. Bassett c Plummer b Hopper 18, W. Johnson c and b Hopper 0, T. Wise c Higginbotham b Stubbs 3, H. Smith c Billington b Stubbs 11, H. Roberts c Hopper b Stubbs 4, extras 3; total 53 for nine. Bowling: R. Stubbs three for 10, Appleby two for six, Hopper three for 26.

BURTON A. v. TUTBURY

Played at Burton on Saturday.

Tutbury: S. R. Rickman b Illsley 11, J. Billings b Gothard 4, J. L. Brear b Robinson 7, T. R. Deighton st Clark b Jenkins 68, G. G. Hodges lbw b Illsley 0, W. West b Robinson 8, R. Bishop b Gothard 10, M. F. Hurdle c McMurrugh b Jenkins 30, H. Graham b Dolman 3, L. Starbuck c Illsley b Jenkins 3, E. Johnson not out 0, extras 13; total 157.

Burton A: R. Illingworth run out 49, F. J. Dolman b Hurdle 0, C. C. Clarke not out 77, F. L. J. Jackson b Brear 0, S. J. A. Evershed b Brear 4, M. B. Jenkins b Brear 13, H. J. Pepper c Starbuck b Brear 11, G. Illsley not out 1, extras 7; total for six wickets 162. E. J. Gothard, L. Robinson, and E. C. McMurrugh did not bat.

Bowling: J. L. Brear four wickets for 54 runs, M. F. Hurdle one wicket for 36 runs.

SUDBURY v. FOSTON & SCROPTON

Played at Sudbury on Saturday.

Sudbury: A. Startin c Plumb b Watkins 50, H. Startin c Jagg b Watkins 2, W. Alcock c Smith b Watkins 0, W. Wright b Plumb 22, F. Allen run out 2, J. Greensmith c Plumb b Sessions 4, E. Woolley b Watkins 4, E. Pawlett not out 4, D. Wheat not out 6, W. Wardle and W. Edge did not bat, extras 4; total for seven wickets declared 93.

Foston & Scropton: A. Smith run out 2, M. Barker b A. Startin 12, E. Birch b Woolley 8, W. Jagg b Woolley 11, D. Bourne c Pawlett b Greensmith 9, F. Sessions not out 20, G. Plumb not out 8, L. Hawkins, N. Wood, B. Morris, and F. Watkins did not bat, extras 2; total (for five wickets) 72.

BLYMILL AND WESTON v. WOLVERHAMPTON POLICE

Played on the ground of the former on Saturday, May 21, the visitors winning an exciting match by four runs. Scores:—

Wolverhampton Police: P.C. Woodford lbw b R. Hitchen 2, P.C. Longhurst c R. Hitchen b White 34, P.C. Quinn c G. Hazlett b Medlicott 3, P.C. Eccleston b Medlicott 8, P.C. Garbett not out 11, P.C. Carnfield c Medlicott b White 0, P.C. Williamson b Medlicott 9, P.C. Reynolds c G. Hazlett b R. Hitchen 1, P.C. Grundy b Medlicott 0, P.C. Phillips b Medlicott 0, P.C. Ball b Medlicott 2, extras 6; total 76.

Blymhill: K. J. Hazlett lbw b Quinn 0, R. D. Smith lbw b Garbett 0, H. T. Harper c Eccleston b Woodford 22, J. E. White c and b Quinn 0, G. C. Hazlett lbw b Quinn 0, Lord Newport: b Woodford 5, F. B. Averill b Woodford 12, C. W. Hitchen b Woodford 21, R. Hitchen not out 8, H. N. Hill b Quinn 1, S. Medlicott b Woodford 1, extras 2; total 72.

LICHFIELD v. KYNOCHS

Lichfield were easy victims to Kynochs on the Birmingham Road ground on Saturday, when they were dismissed for a total of 48 against the visitors' 114. Mellor was Lichfield's best bowler, taking six wickets for 41 runs. For the visitors, Hudson took six for 27 and Thomson four for 17. Scores:

Kynochs: S. Scott b George 46, M. D. Bassett b George 5, L. Coley b Mellor 3, L. Pellow c Renshaw b Mellor 16, G. Thomson b Mellor 0, J. Broadhurst b Mellor 2, R. Jenkins b Mellor 3, R. Hadley b Mellor 7, F. Moseley b George 14, S. Matthews b Ashpole 8, J. Hudson not out 2, extras 8; total 114.

Lichfield: C. Coleman b Hudson 6, G. N. Ashpole c Pellow b Hudson 10, A. E. Renshaw b Hudson 2, N. Whitfield st Hadley b Thomson 8, E. A. George b Thomson 3, T. M. Partridge b Thomson 8, G. Ellett st Hadley b Hudson 1, G. I. Temple b Thomson 3, A. Mellor c Bassett b Hudson 1, N. L. Hamilton b Hudson 2, F. Oram not out 0, extras 4; total 48.

DENSTONE COLLEGE v. ST. PETER'S, YORK

Played at Denstone on Saturday. St. Peter's won the toss and batted. Two quick wickets fell to Deighton, but some steady batting by Lynch and Bennett retrieved the situation, and with 130 for five on the board and both batsmen well set, the visitors seemed likely to reach a good total. A collapse against the bowling of Burrow, who had six wickets for 65, and Deighton, three for 39, left the all out score 147, the last four wickets falling at the same total.

With the wicket still full of runs Denstone found little difficulty in winning by six wickets, but the success was due chiefly to the batting of D. H. Burrow, who completed his second century in succession in 90 minutes. Apart from him the Denstone batting was not inspiring, though Gandy made 21 and Watson was batting well at the end. Scores:

St. Peter's York: R. C. Lynch lbw Burrow 41, H. A. Milburn lbw Deighton 4, J. A. Wright b Deighton 0, V. L. F. Davin c Hensman b Burrow 20, R. S. Dixon b Burrow 2, T. F. Cameron b Burrow 19, L. W. Bennett b Burrow 42, I. D. C. Morison c Watson b Deighton 6, J. H. Butler run out 0, M. S. Douglas not out 0, R. N. Rimmer st Cunningham b Burrow 0, extras 13; total 147.

Denstone: D. H. Burrow not out 108, M. G. Hensman b Rimmer 2, H. B. Gandy st Dixon b Milburn 21, C. P. Roberts st Dixon b Butler 4, R. L. Richards lbw Wright 0, R. M. Watson not out 10, extras 5; total (for 4 wkts.) 150. J. G. H. Deighton, H. S. Ray, D. P. Johnston-Monk, B. M. Cunningham, and D. Ogden did not bat.

MINOR COUNTIES

COLLAPSE OF STAFFS.

ALL OUT FOR 179 RUNS

BARTLEY'S FINE BOWLING

Staffordshire opened their Minor Counties programme by opposing Cheshire on the picturesque Oxton ground, Birkenhead, to-day. Conditions were good, although there was an absence of sunshine.

Both sides were well represented. Staffordshire relied largely on players who have previously assisted the county, but there were two newcomers in L. Lowe (Knyppersley) and R. S. Patterson (Walsall). No fewer than nine Merseyside players were included in Cheshire's eleven. The teams were:—

Cheshire.—J. D. Worthington, G. A. McEntyre, K. H. McEntyre, J. D. Canevali, A. M. Wolstenholme, R. M. Dutton, E. Hawkins, H. G. S. Prescott, Dennis, Parkinson and Bartley.

Staffordshire.—W. A. Adams, L. E. Gale, R. Smith, C. C. Clarke, J. T. Ikin, R. H. Plant, S. Crump, L. Lowe, A. Reynolds, F. Taylor and R. S. Patterson.

A FINE CATCH

Staffordshire won the toss and decided to take first innings on a wicket that seemed full of runs. Gale and Smith, the opening pair, however, were forced to bat very cautiously against the fast bowling of Dennis and Bartley, and the first ten runs occupied 20 minutes. Dennis, as a matter of fact, opened with three maidens, and it was not until the fourth ball of his fourth over that Smith cut a rising ball through the slips for the first four of the day.

Bartley also bowled well, and with the total 18 he captured Smith's wicket, the Caverswall player being out to a smart catch in the slips by Canevali, who had to dive full length to grasp the ball inches from the ground.

Gale, who had been very restrained, stayed three-quarters of an hour in making 10 and was then bowled by Bartley with the total at 42.

Ikin quickly settled down, and though frequent changes were made in the attack, he batted with confidence. A fine off-drive by him, off Bartley, sent the half-century up when the innings had been in progress 67 minutes. Soon afterwards, Ikin had an escape when Dennis, fielding at mid-off, just failed to hold a terrific low drive. This escape did not curb Ikin, for in the next over he scored a beautiful six off Parkinson.

With his score at 43, Ikin snicked a ball from Dennis into the slips, but Bartley failed to take a simple catch.

Ikin reached 50 after he had been batting 75 minutes, an off-drive also sending up the century after Staffordshire had been batting one and three-quarter hours. At that point, Ikin had hit one six and three fours.

Along with Patterson, Ikin remained undefeated until lunch, the partnership lasting an hour, having then put on a very useful 69.

IKIN OUT

The luncheon break proved fatal to Ikin, for off the fourth ball of the first over on the resumption he was clean bowled by Dennis. This proved to be the first of two wickets which fell within 20 minutes for an addition of only 14 runs—Clarke was caught off Dennis for 10—but the youthful Patterson continued to bat in a very confident manner, and, although his shots, for the most part, lacked power, his placing was always accurate against keen fielding, and he was never in any real difficulty.

Patterson had the satisfaction of reaching his 50 after he had been batting an hour and three-quarters.

Plant was bowled by Bartley after he had contributed 11, and Bartley quickly met with three more successes, taking the wickets of Crump, Lowe and Adams. Reynolds and Taylor were run out, and the visitors' innings closed after three hours and 20 minutes with the total 179.

The visitors fared very badly after lunch, the last eight wickets falling in an hour and five minutes for an addition of 68 runs. This was mainly due to the effective bowling of Bartley, who, during this period, captured four wickets for 24 runs.

Patterson, who had been at the wicket two hours and a quarter, carried out his bat for a splendid 62 which included six boundaries.

STAFFORDSHIRE—First Innings

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| R Smith c Canevali b Bartley | 13 |
| L E Gale b Bartley | 10 |
| J T Ikin b Dennis | 56 |
| R S Patterson not out | 62 |
| C C Clarke c Prescott b Dennis | 10 |
| R H Plant b Bartley | 11 |
| S Crump lbw b Bartley | 2 |
| L Lowe b Bartley | 0 |
| W A Adams b Bartley | 0 |
| A Reynolds run out | 0 |
| F Taylor run out | 3 |
| Extras | 3 |

Total179

BOWLING ANALYSIS

Staffordshire.—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|------------|------|----|----|----|
| Dennis | 22 | 8 | 68 | 2 |
| Bartley | 23.4 | 5 | 54 | 6 |
| R M Dutton | 5 | 2 | 14 | — |
| Parkinson | 10 | 1 | 40 | — |

BURSLEM WIN AGAIN

THRILLING GAME WITH STONE

NORTON'S ONE-RUN VICTORY

Burslem retained their clear lead at the head of the North Staffordshire and District Cricket League by defeating Stone yesterday.

There was a thrilling finish to the match. Replaying to Stone's 61 (Taylor had six for 31, making his holiday "bag" 16 wickets for 88 runs, and Hollowood four for 24), it looked long odds on Burslem for losing when nine wickets were down for 48—three wickets fell at this total—but their professional, Taylor, and Meigh, gave them victory by five runs. Hancock bowled extremely well for Stone, taking five wickets for 14.

D. A. Harper, for Caverswall, took seven Silverdale wickets for 87 and scored 59 runs, efforts which helped his side to win easily.

Longton lost at home to Norton by one run: Nantwich beat Blythe Colour Works; Porthill Park (H. F. Wood 91) gained their second success—at the expense of Leek; and Knypersley drew at Crewe.

North Staffordshire League. Senior Division—Section "A"

BURSLEM v. STONE

Stone.—F Ravenscroft b Taylor 1, R Harris c Birch b Hollowood 2, H H Wood b Hollowood 7, E D Slynne st Meigh b Taylor 13, Hancock (H) b Taylor 0, E C Fernie b Hollowood 6, F P Wolfe b Taylor 9, J E V Toney b Taylor 0, B Shardlow b Hollowood 5, R F Reader not out 5, A J Copeland b Taylor 9, extras 6; total 61. Taylor (F) six for 31; R R Hollowood four for 24.

Burslem.—A B Hollowood lbw b Hancock 5, F Bailey b Hancock 0, J Fenton c Wood b Shardlow 12, T Hollowood b Hancock 5, A Birch st Copeland b Hancock 11, G Wardle lbw b Shardlow 0, C G Dexter b Hancock 2, R R Hollowood run out 0, N Thornhill c Fernie b Shardlow 0, Taylor (F.) not out 10, A Meigh c Wood b Shardlow 8, extras 13; total 66. Hancock (H) five for 14; B Shardlow four for 39.

SILVERDALE v. CAVERSWALL

Silverdale.—T W Cocks b Harper 22, J Bloor c and b Harper 12, F Thompson c and b Harper 3, C F Rushton b Harper 14, R Ward b Harper 0, A Turner lbw b Wakein 6, F C Steele c Massey b Harper 10, H Peinton b Wakelin 2, R Hill b Wakelin 1, F Vardy b Harper 1, J Boon not out 1, extras 3; total 75. D A Harper seven for 27.

Caverswall.—Smith R b Pointon 19, J Beswick b Vardy 7, D A Harper c Pointon b Vardy 59, J Ragsdale b Pointon 2, H Whalley b Turner 5, E J Wakelin b Vardy 6, O Doran b Boon 7, A Pickard not out 39, A Massey not out 9, extras 5; total (for 7 wickets) 156.

LEEK v. PORTHILL PARK

Porthill.—Ikin (J T) c and b Hordern 31, G Price run out 1, H F Wood c and b Bonsall 91, A A Beckerton b Hordern 23, J S Heath b Hordern 0, N W White c Charnock b Halton 16, J Bentley not out 21, extras 5; total (for six wickets, dec) 200.

Leek.—L H Crump b Thornhill 10, E Dale lbw b J T Ikin 5, E Broderick c Woolliscroft b Thornhill 13, R Halton b Thornhill 15, A Threlfall b D L White 38, W Rider b J T Ikin 4, C Bonsall b D L White 4, H Birch not out 22, W C Charnock c Thornhill b J T Ikin 1, L Perkin c Ikin b J T Ikin 0, E Hordern b J T Ikin 0, extras 10; total 125. J T Ikin five for 32.

CREWE ALEXANDRA v. KNYPERSLEY

Knypersley.—L Lowe b Hossack 33, H W Greenwood c Prince b Hossack 3, A Cooper b Barker 4, W Boon c Broad b Hossack 45, E Lowe c Simpson b Hossack 2, W Winstill b Barker 3, P Green b Barker 0, A Reynolds b Barker 10, W Butler b Prince 44, T C Maynard b Poate 1, D Robinson not out 8, extras 6; total 159. A Barker four for 26; T Hossack four for 36.

Crewe Alexandra.—Poate (A) b Reynolds 0, F C Shreeve b Winstill 60, J Broad b Reynolds 7, H Tortington b Winstill 9, J Prince b Winstill 56, H Simpson not out 5, W Cooke not out 0, extras 4; total (for 5 wickets) 141.

LONGTON v. NORTON

Norton.—Smith (A) b Webberley 27, R Birch b Broadhurst 6, G Lancaster c Plant b Broadhurst 1, R Hallam b Broadhurst 0, J Rhead b Broadhurst 13, R Hill c Dennis b Broadhurst 12, S Smith c Edge b Stubbs 25, G Barnett b Broadhurst 0, S Welch b Stubbs 19, A H Mountford not out 3, W Deakin b Stubbs 2, extras 10; total 118. Broadhurst six for 52.

Longton.—G Pedley b Welch 18, G B Edge c Barnett b Rhead 23, E D Dennis b Welch 7, R H Plant b Welch 42, A J Chadwick c and b Hill 3, Broadhurst (G) c and b Hill 0, E Payne st Lancaster b Hill 3, E Dennis c Lancaster b Welch 4, W Hine b Welch 0, A Webberley not out 4, W Stubbs st Lancaster b Hill 3, extras 10; total 117. S Welch five for 31. R Hill four for 28.

BLYTHE COLOUR WORKS v. NANTWICH

Nantwich.—Fox (W V) b Massey 48, G Ball b Massey 10, J E Smith b Mayer 6, T Hope b Moore 1, E H Stevenson b Davies 28, S Wagstaffe b Massey 3, J Sproston b Davies 4, S G Davies b Mayer 1, W T Maybury b Davies 7, B T Dutton b Mayer 1, A McTurk not out 0, extras 2; total 121.

Blythe Works.—H Amison c McTurk b Stevenson 3, G Sherwin b Wagstaffe 1, A Bevington c Sproston b Wagstaffe 32, W Hurst lbw b Stevenson 35, F Barber b Wagstaffe 1, A Bennett st McTurk b Stevenson 2, F Clare b Stevenson 2, A Moore c Davies b Maybury 2, R Davies c Ball b Stevenson 1, Mayer (G H) not out 2, W Massey b Maybury 17, extras 3; total 101. S Wagstaffe three for 18, E H Stevenson five for 42.

TABLE TO DATE

| | P | W | L | D | Pts |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|-----|
| Burslem | 9 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 21 |
| Nantwich | 9 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 18 |
| Caverswall | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 17 |
| Norton | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 17 |
| Knypersley | 9 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 16 |
| Leek | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 15 |
| Longton | 9 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 15 |
| Crewe Alexandra | 9 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 9 |
| Silverdale | 9 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 8 |
| Blythe Works | 9 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| Porthill Park | 9 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| Stone | 9 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 4 |

Senior Division—Section "B"

WHITCHURCH v. ALSAGERS BANK

Whitchurch.—C Coffin 0, L E Norton 1, J F Lennon 52, R Smith 41, E J Howley 1, Major W. Wormington 1, A R Nash 21, K J Slater 27, H Casewell 4, H Madeley 0, A Beckett not out 1, extras 3; total 152.

Alsagers Bank.—L Shufflebotham 13, H Lea 0, W Moore 2, R Dean 14, E Jones 5, F Tomkinson 5, L Jones 0, J Wareham 26, F Owen 1, W Alwin 6, L Riley not out 4, extras 15; total 89. H Madeley three for 13; C Coffin three for 29.

CHEADLE v. CHEDDLETON M.H.

Cheadle.—C Chandler 6, E Swinson 3, B Whitehurst 24, S Whitehurst 14, A Harris 0, R Whitehurst 0, J Kerr 0, H Capewell 6, J Beardmore not out 13, J Keates 0, K Crook 0, extras 6; total 72. A Maddison nine for 34.

Cheddleton M.H.—F Hamnett 5, F Bailey 9, A K Shaw 3, M Eve 3, A Garner 0, L Kirkham 17, R Arrowsmith 23, R Vine 0, A Maddison 4, F Cutts 6, J Kirkham not out 3, extras 1; total 74. J P Keates four for 31; S Whitehurst three for 9.

KIDSGROVE v. FENTON

Fenton.—S Degg 2, J Booth 18, A J Kerry 8, T Mann 4, A Smith 7, G F W Wain 1, A R Cooper 0, F J Pugh not out 2, A Scarratt 0, P McArdle 1, W B Leese 0, extras 6; total 49. R Jones eight for 19.

Kidsgrove.—F Farley 48, R Jones 24, J Beech 0, E Hadley 0, L Evans 7, N Dean 0, J Colclough 29, R Dakin 15, R Wainwright 11, W Knowles not out 8, W Wainwright 1, extras 16; total 157. A Smith four for 37, D McArdle three for 32.

GREAT CHELL v. AUDLEY

Audley.—J Hancock 16, R Bailey 0, H Fryer 0, R Dale 32, N White 18, M Tapley 10, C Timmis 1, C Fryer not out 2, R Tapley 0, T McElhin 2, F Darlington 10, extras 12; total 103. F Vodrey four for 37, H Averill three for 13.

Great Chell.—R Goodwin 10, C Clowes 15, H Averill 1, J Madeley 0, A J Colley 7, J Pedley 0, W Mould 7, T Broad 9, F Vodrey not out 39, F Wilshaw not out 11, extras 9; total (for 8 wickets) 106. M Tapley six for 38.

ASHCOMBE PARK v. SNEYD COLLIERY

Ashcombe Park.—T Sutton 24, S Alcock 2, J Proffitt 0, H N Turner 3, D Turner 5, D Rane 20, Rev J H Bowman 0, T Alcock 13, R Mellor not out 8, J Alcock 0, O Brassington 0, extras 1; total 76. E Mayer four for 13, F Curwin three for 32.

Sneyd Colliery.—S Dawson 2, A Broadbent 22, J Shaw 0, R Hickman 4, A Wright 0, E Heaton 6, E Mayer 17, A Boulton 0, F Owen not out 2, A Millward 2, F Curwin 0, extras 1; total 57. J Proffitt five for 25, O Brassington four for 30.

BIGNALL END v. HARTSHILL

Bignall End.—K W Platt 65, A W Ikin 105, S B Hassall not out 24, G Harrison 24, D Riley not out 4, extras 13; total (for 3 wickets) 237.

Hartshill.—J C Martin 1, J Peake 57, H Taylor 4, W Tunnicliffe 9, W Johnson 1, E Hulme 17, E Binns 11, F Lawton 1, W Bailes 32, C Bentley 4, W Ellis not out 0, extras 16; total 133. K W Platt two for 6.

MONDAY'S CRICKET

N.S. LEAGUE—Senior "B"

WHITCHURCH v. KIDSGROVE

Whitchurch.—I. E Norton 17, C Coffin 13, H S Smith 0, J Lennon 60, R Smith 26, S Jackson 2, A R Nash 2, Major W. Wormington 0, K J Slater not out 4, A Beckett 0, H Madeley 0, extras 13; total 137. W Wainwright four for 20; J Colclough five for 24.

Kidsgrove.—R Wainwright 5, E Farley 16, E Millington 46, R Jones 15, J Colclough 3, A Hancock 0, E Goodwin not out 2, W Knowles 7, W Wainwright 4, T Bollington 0, J Beech 0, extras 13; total 111. R Smith four for 27; C Coffin four for 23.

CHEDDLETON M.H. v. GREAT CHELL

Great Chell.—R Goodwin 21, C Clowes 39, W Mould 6, F Waters 0, H Averill 0, J Madeley 0, T Broad 11, J Pedley 12, F Vodrey 10, F Wilshaw 0, T Snape not out 0, extras 3; total 104. A Maddison five for 44.

Cheddleton M.H.—F Bailey 5, M Eve 3, R K Shaw 30, A Garner 0, L Kirkham 15, A Maddison not out 25, F Hamnett 0, R Arrowsmith 15, R Vine not out 18, extras 2; total (for 7 wickets) 113. J Pedley four for 37.

N.S. LEAGUE—Junior "B"

Betty 40 (J Furnival five for 8), Scot Hay 36 (W Chell four for 10, B Madden four for 17), Ashcombe Park 46 (C Bentley five for 24), Hartshill 128 (A Deavall 46, A Emery, sen. 24).

BLYTHE BRIDGE AND UTTOXETER

LEAGUE—Division 1

Stallington 93 (C Thorley 44 (E Burton four for 31, W E Atkin four for 31), Rosteer 88 (J Dwyer 21, R Burton 21, F Millward six for 27).

Staffordshire Set Cheshire Big Task

215 RUNS NEEDED
FOR VICTORY

HOME CAPTAIN'S UNUSUAL MOVE

Although 40 runs behind with one wicket in hand, J. D. Worthington, Cheshire's captain, took the unusual course of declaring the innings closed when the match with Staffordshire was continued at Oxtou today.

He was influenced in this decision by the fact that rain fell during the morning, causing the resumption to be delayed for half-an-hour, and that the wicket was likely to be helpful to the bowlers.

The move proved successful, for within half an hour Staffordshire lost both opening batsmen. With five on the board Gale was bowled by Bartley and 12 runs later Smith had his off-stump uprooted by Dennis.

IKIN'S FIFTY

This brought together Ikin and Patterson, who were concerned in such a profitable stand yesterday, and once again they came to the rescue. On this occasion, however, their partnership was of shorter duration, for after three-quarters of an hour, and when 39 runs had been added, Patterson tried to pull a ball to leg, but mis-hit, and K. H. McEntyre made a simple catch.

Ikin had three escapes when in the 20's, being missed on two occasions on the leg boundary by G. A. McEntyre, while Dennis just failed to reach a short return off his own bowling. Ikin was nothing if not venturesome, and after an hour's batting he had made 40 out of 74, which included one six and four fours.

Ikin, in the 40's, had another let-off when he snicked a rising ball from Dennis into the slips, but K. H. McEntyre failed to hold the catch.

Ikin went on to get his half-century after an hour and a quarter, but shortly afterwards had his fifth "life," being dropped in the out-field by Hawkins. He and Clarke remained undefeated until the luncheon period, at which time Ikin had made 74, which included three sixes and six fours.

Half-an-hour after lunch, the visitors lost four wickets for an addition of 29 runs and among those to go was Ikin. With his score at 86, he drove to mid-on and was caught by G. A. McEntyre, who thus atoned, in some measure, for having failed to hold two earlier chances.

Despite his good fortune, Ikin can be given credit for an aggressive innings. He hit three sixes and seven fours in a stay lasting two and a quarter hours, during which he had seen the total advance from five to 154.

Bartley clean-bowled the last three batsmen at an individual cost of 7 runs, making his record for the innings five wickets for 37.

The innings closed at 174, and Cheshire were thus faced with the task of getting 215 runs for victory in two hours 40 minutes.

The home county were given a good start by G. E. McEntyre and Dennis, the pair sending up the half century in 30 minutes. Without addition, however, Dennis was lbw to Taylor.



TAYLOR, the Burslem Cricketer Club professional, who, playing for Staffordshire, took five wickets for 85 runs in Cheshire's second innings.

STAFFORDSHIRE
First Innings: 179.

| Second Innings | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| L E Gale b Bartley | 1 |
| R Smith b Dennis | 9 |
| J T Ikin c G A McEntyre b Bartley | 86 |
| R S Patterson c K H McEntyre b Dutton | 32 |
| C O Clarke c Wolstenholme b Dennis | 32 |
| R H Plant lbw b Dennis | 0 |
| S Crump c Prescott b Dennis | 11 |
| L Lowe b Bartley | 9 |
| W A Adams b Bartley | 2 |
| A Reynolds not out | 0 |
| F Taylor b Bartley | 8 |
| Extras | 3 |
| Total | 174 |

CHESHIRE
First Innings: 139.

| Second Innings | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| G A McEntyre not out | 50 |
| Dennis lbw b Taylor | 21 |
| A M Wolstenholme not out | 1 |
| Extras | 1 |
| Total (for 1 wkt) | 59 |

BOWLING ANALYSIS
Staffordshire.—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|------------|------|----|----|----|
| Dennis | 22 | 8 | 68 | 2 |
| Bartley | 23.4 | 5 | 54 | 6 |
| R H Dutton | 5 | 2 | 14 | — |
| Parkinson | 10 | 1 | 40 | — |

Staffordshire.—Second Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|-----------|------|----|----|----|
| Bartley | 21.4 | 5 | 37 | 5 |
| Dennis | 19 | 1 | 81 | 4 |
| Dutton | 3 | — | 11 | 1 |
| Parkinson | 9 | — | 42 | — |

Cheshire—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|----|----|----|----|
| Reynolds | 19 | 3 | 35 | 3 |
| Taylor | 17 | 4 | 30 | — |
| Crump | 15 | 2 | 38 | 4 |
| Ikin | 5 | — | 16 | 1 |
| Gale | 6 | 1 | 16 | 1 |

STAFFORDSHIRE WIN BY 14 RUNS

TAYLOR AND CRUMP
BOWL FINELY

CHESHIRE'S GALLANT FIGHT

Staffordshire beat Cheshire by 14 runs in the Minor Counties match at Oxtou yesterday.

Cheshire declared at the overnight score of 139 for nine, 41 runs behind. This seemed to be a wise decision when Staffordshire lost two wickets for 17 runs, but J. T. Ikin and R. S. Patterson stayed, and the side totalled 174.

Cheshire needed 215 runs to win, and they made a gallant fight. G. A. McEntyre and Dennis put on 50 for the first wicket, and A. M. Wolstenholme and R. M. Dutton added 108 for the fourth wicket.

Cheshire, with six wickets to fall had only 35 runs to get, but F. Taylor and S. Crump were down the subsequent batsmen, and Staffordshire won eight minutes from time.

STAFFORDSHIRE
First Innings: 179.

| Second Innings | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| L E Gale b Bartley | 1 |
| R Smith b Dennis | 9 |
| J T Ikin c G A McEntyre b Bartley | 86 |
| R S Patterson c K H McEntyre b Dutton | 32 |
| C O Clarke c Wolstenholme b Dennis | 32 |
| R H Plant lbw b Dennis | 0 |
| S Crump c Prescott b Dennis | 11 |
| L Lowe b Bartley | 9 |
| W A Adams b Bartley | 2 |
| A Reynolds not out | 0 |
| F Taylor b Bartley | 8 |
| Extras | 3 |
| Total | 174 |

CHESHIRE
First Innings: 139.

| Second Innings | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| G A McEntyre b Taylor | 36 |
| Dennis lbw b Taylor | 21 |
| A M Wolstenholme c Reynolds b Taylor | 53 |
| J D Ganevall c Taylor b Crump | 6 |
| E H Hawkins b Crump | 4 |
| K H McEntyre run out | 4 |
| Parkinson st Lowe b Taylor | 10 |
| J D Worthington c Ikin b Taylor | 2 |
| R H Dutton b Crump | 3 |
| H G Prescott b Crump | 59 |
| Bartley not out | 1 |
| Extras | 0 |
| Total | 200 |

BOWLING ANALYSIS
Staffordshire.—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|------------|------|----|----|----|
| Dennis | 22 | 8 | 68 | 2 |
| Bartley | 23.4 | 5 | 54 | 6 |
| R H Dutton | 5 | 2 | 14 | — |
| Parkinson | 10 | 1 | 40 | — |

Second Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|-----------|------|----|----|----|
| Bartley | 21.4 | 5 | 37 | 5 |
| Dennis | 19 | 1 | 81 | 4 |
| Dutton | 3 | — | 11 | 1 |
| Parkinson | 9 | — | 42 | — |

Cheshire.—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|----|----|----|----|
| Reynolds | 19 | 3 | 35 | 3 |
| Taylor | 17 | 4 | 30 | — |
| Crump | 15 | 2 | 38 | 4 |
| Ikin | 5 | — | 16 | 1 |
| Gale | 6 | 1 | 16 | 1 |

Second Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|------|----|----|----|
| Reynolds | 8 | 1 | 41 | — |
| Taylor | 24 | 4 | 65 | 4 |
| Crump | 23.2 | 2 | 85 | 8 |
| Ikin | 4 | — | 24 | — |

PROSPECTS

CAVERSWALL TO ENTERTAIN LEADERS

Nantwich at Home To Leek

PORTHILL PARK ATTRACTION

Burslem, leaders of the North Staffordshire Cricket League, and the only Senior "A" team to win all their three holiday matches, face a big test to-morrow when they visit Caverswall, who are third in the table.

The Cobridge club's exalted position is due almost entirely to their powerful attack, and they still possess the remarkable distinction of having dismissed every side they have met for fewer than 100 runs.

Caverswall's two defeats to date have been sustained on their own ground, but they are a well-equipped combination and should be capable of extending their visitors to the full. Teams:—

Caverswall.—E J Wakelin (capt.), D A Harper, A J Kirkard, O F Doran, J H Ragsdale, A Massey, H H Whalley, J Tabbinnor, J W S Beswick, A Cockey, Smith (R). Reserve, A V J Dennis.

Burslem.—A B Hollowood (capt.), R R Hollowood, T G Hollowood, A Birch, F Bailey, F Johnson, C Brammer, G Wardle, J Fenton, A Meigh, Taylor (r).

CHAMPIONS' TEST

Another match which should produce a keen and entertaining struggle is at Nantwich, where the champion, and leading challengers to Burslem entertain Leek. The Moorland club lost its unbeaten record during Whitsuntide—they were twice defeated, in fact—but they are capable of rising to the occasion, as was evidenced by their victories over Burslem and Longton. Nantwich, on the other hand, are not quite as invincible as in recent seasons, and there should be, therefore, a fine struggle for supremacy.

Leek's team shows changes. W. C. Charnock, the captain, misses his first game of the season through indisposition. P. Harrison the reserve wicket-keeper batsman, supersedes T. L. Perkins, the regular stumper, and will make his second appearance with the side. Teams:—

Nantwich.—W T Maybury, T W Steverson, E H Steverson, J E Smith, G Full, J Sprieston, S Wagstaffe, J R T Turner, E Burton, R J Retwell, Fox (w/v).

Leek.—W R Keler, H Birch, E Broderick, L H Crisp, C Bousall, E Horder, P Harrison, Ron Halton, Ret Halton, E Dale, A Threlfall.

Having broken the ice by gaining two victories during the holiday week-end Porthill Park will have gained confidence for their attractive home fixture with

Longton. This is another match which promises to provide plenty of entertaining cricket, and, with the weather more settled, Porthill should be rewarded with a big "gate" to compensate in some degree for previous disappointments this season. Teams:—

Porthill Park.—H F Wood, jun. (capt.), N W Waste, J Bentley, H G Castles, A A Bickerton, R Hammond, J S Heath, K Greaves, H Thornhill, D L White, Ikin (J T).

KNYPERSELEY AT HOME

There can be no doubt that Knyperseley have justified fully their promotion, and though they suffered their first home defeat at the hands of Burslem on Whit Monday, they will be expected to resume winning form again to-morrow when Blythe Colour Works visit their pleasant ground. Blythe have been successful only once away from their own ground. Teams:—

Knyperseley.—T C Maynard (capt.), P Green, L Lowe, A Reynolds, E Lowe, W Butler, W Worsell, W Boon, D Robinson, A Cooper, Greenwood (H W). Reserve: W Lowe.

Blythe C.W.—W Hurst (capt.), A E Bennett, A E Moore, G Amison, G Sherwin, A R Davies, A E Eaton, W Massey, F Barber, A Bevington, Mayer (G H).

NORTON AT SILVERDALE

Norton, occupying the fourth position only four points behind the leaders, visit Silverdale, and will be anxious to improve on an excellent away record, for they have won three of their five fixtures on opponents' grounds. Teams:—

Silverdale.—T W Coeks (capt.), C F Rushton, R Barratt, A Ward, E Griffiths, H Pointon, J Myatt, J Cooke, J Boon, F Steele, F Vardy.

Norton.—W Deakin (capt.), A Smith, R Birch, J Reed, W Martin, G T Lancaster, F Hodson, S Welch, G Birch, R J Halliorn, S Smith.

Stone will be seeking their second victory of the season when they entertain Crewe Alexandra, a team which has shown improved form recently. Teams:—

Crewe Alexandra.—F C Shreeve (capt.), H Tortington, J Broad, J Prince, D Kirkham, A E Wagstaff, S Broad, H Simpson, J Barker, J Hossack, Poate (A).

OTHER TEAMS

Following are other selected teams for to-morrow's matches:—

N.S. LEAGUE—Senior "B"

Great Chell.—R Goodwin (capt.), C Clowes, F Wishaw, F Vodrey, H Averill, J Madelev, W Warburton, F Waters, J Pedley, W Mould, J Snape.

Kids Grove.—J Colclough (capt.), E Farley, Jack Beech, T Bollington, C Cotton, W Cooper, A Hancock, R Jones, W Knowles, E Millington, F Morris.

N.S. LEAGUE—Junior "A"

Burslem.—E Bailey (capt.), N Thornhill, C G Dexter, W Boardman, A Barker, W Fenton, P J Kirkham, G Evans, E Baker, W Briscoe, B Hodgkiss.

Caverswall.—F Barber (capt.), I L Hadley, A V J Dennis, C Shenton, E Plant, G Abbott, R Bradbury, J Utting, J Farmer, T Gott, P Shenton. Reserve, J Hall.

Blythe O.W.—F Ridge (capt.), E Lewis, L Ridge, H Amison, C Turner, F Clare, A Bettany, J Bickerton, A Whitehurst, B Hawkins, A Taylor.

Crewe Alexandra.—Major G R Jackson (capt.), F Lowndes, H H Owen, G Garrett, J H Middleton, T Hassall, S Hare, S Dawson, J Harrison, W H Cooke, V G McCandless.

Knyperseley.—J W Hancock, J Heath, W Lowe, W Lunn, F Fuller, J W Bedson, S Lawton, L Brereton, H Green, R Cooper, T Walley. Reserves: E H Downes and W Wingrove.

Silverdale.—J Barnett (capt.), J Bloor, P Bloor, W Brown, E Malkin, R Ward, R Hill, A Bytheway, S Byatt, F Thompson, W Lowe.

Norton.—W Cooke (capt.), A Edge, C Dunn, H Lowell, D Lunt, I Waterfall, T Mould, G Basnett, R J Smith, L Stonier, F Sargeant.

Porthill Park.—S M Showan (capt.), W C Washington, G A F Baguley, R Baldwin, L Furnival, J W Brown, E A Oliver, R W Parry, E J Porter, G Price, T B Woolliscroft.

N.S. LEAGUE—Junior "B"

Great Chell.—S Worthington (capt.), R D Harris, T Broad, J Boon, L Flinney, J Roscoe, R J Davies, F Williams, L Barber, G Rhodes, J Hanford.

Kids Grove.—E R Dale, R Dakin, E R Baynam, W Corfield, N Dean, G Furze, C B Hancock, E Hadley, F Fryer, R Wainwright, W Wainwright.

STONE AND DISTRICT LEAGUE

Division I.

Mossfield Colliery.—A Smith, A Herrod, V Drinkwater, G Tams, F Herrod, J Stanley, N Bryan, R Edwards, H Peers, J Spendlow, L Redman.

Jones and Shuffebottom.—H Hand (capt.), H Cotton, J Sands, J Butler, T Mayer, J Durbur, J Thompson, E Bailey, T Brett, A Huson, P Hudson.

Division II.

Caverswall.—A E Shenton (capt.), N Wardle, J Hall, T Hamnett, A Axling, S E Boden, W Forriater, A Amison, E Rowley, L Blackmore, F Stephens. Reserve, J Bradburn.

Fenton Gas Dept.—J Crofts (capt.), I Waterfield, L Penkethman, M Penkethman, N Smith, S Smith, A Sherratt, H Toft, H Dobell, A Baker, H Lewis. Reserve, J Toplass.

Division III.

Newcastle Wesley.—J Lea (capt.), H Bradley, J Leese, A Legge, A Trickett, G Wainwright, G Dawson, H Jones, G Parsons, J Clay, W Ward. Reserves: A Bradley and A Ward.

Trent Social.—J Taylor (capt.), A Chell, J Royle, C E Stanier, W Shore, W Wilson, S Shore, J Shore, H Stokes, J Jackson, A Underwood, T C Stanier.

Division IV.

Mossfield Colliery.—D Taylor, T Follows, L Childs, J Cannell, W Russell, H Redman, A Obrey, B Burgess, E Hardy, H Obrey, G Heath. Reserve: T Hardy.

Fenton Gas Dept.—J Pugh (capt.), W Forrester, G Edwards, P Palmer, L Allen, A Eaton, E Painter, J Emberton, S Pemberton, E Hindmarsh, E Shaw. Reserve, R Wilson.

OTHER MATCHES

Burslem "A."—E Dunn (capt.), T Bould, D Allman, C V Davies, T Hulme, B Brock, R L Salmon, T Drake, S Fox, A Matthews, J Humphries.

Great Chell "A."—Jas Clayton (capt.), C Erdley, J Machin, Roy Stringer, A Darn, J Hallam, F H Lindop, D Schofield, H Yeomans, W Bethell, J Clarke. Reserves: J Nixon and J Brindley.

Norton "A."—P Beardmore, E Martin, F Mountford, C Collinson, W Jolley, H Martin, F J Smith, N Lowell, A Smith, K Dunn, E Beardmore.

Porthill Park "A."—W H Eagles, W R Sherwin, R Warburton, A Viggers, A Willett, F Turner, S Hulme, J S Heath jun., E J Johnson, D Dovey, G Walker.

A SPECIAL REPORT OF THE
NANTWICH V. LEEK
MATCH WILL APPEAR
IN THE
"SENTINEL" CRICKET FINAL
TO-MORROW

COUNTY CRICKET

Staffordshire's First Match

INTERESTING DUEL WITH CHESHIRE

By THE CRITIC

THE Staffordshire county team opened the season with an interesting day's cricket at Oxton on Wednesday, in which a slight advantage was gained against Cheshire. Conditions were entirely favourable, except for a gusty wind. W. A. Adams did two good things as captain; he won the toss and took first innings, and when Cheshire's turn came to bat he managed somewhat limited bowling resources with good judgment.

The Staffordshire innings was rather patchy. First of all, L. E. Gale and R. Smith stood the racket of some awkward fast bowling for half an hour when Bartley and Dennis were making the new ball swing a lot. Bartley, in particular, was swinging it either way. And when Smith was out to a fine, low catch in the slips, Ikin and Gale weathered the storm for another half hour. Gale batted an hour for 10, and he rendered valuable service. After his departure the two junior members of the team, John Ikin (20) and R. S. Patterson (18), put on 69 in an hour of skilful batting before lunch. The defence of both was excellent, and while Ikin was the more forceful, the Walsall player never appeared in the least difficulty and made many good strokes. He was expert at getting short ones round to leg. Parkinson, the ex-Lancashire spin bowler, had no effect on either batsman, and Ikin drove him grandly for six, afterwards offering a just possible chance at mid-off, a really hot one which Dennis could not hold with outstretched hand, and could not be expected to.

Immediately after lunch Ikin was cleverly and rather unluckily stumped off a ball well outside his legs, which he tried to glide. Cyril Clarke and "Dick" Plant each made Patterson a good partner for a short time, but the former was snapped at the wicket and the latter bowled by Bartley's rather slower ball that whipped back from the off, and then followed a complete collapse. The fifth wicket fell at 148 and the 8th at 156. To aggravate the breakdown the last two men were run out, and I don't think Patterson was to blame in either case.

Patterson, in his first innings in county cricket, greatly impressed by the soundness of his game, and the neatness of his scoring strokes. In a stay of two hours and a quarter he gave no chance, and hardly ever failed to middle the ball. He is beyond question a young batsman of great promise, and showed later that he is fast in the out-field. Bartley bowled really well for Cheshire.

The Staffordshire bowling was used with discretion, and the Cheshire batsmen were never allowed to get on top. The best stand was one of 52 in 50 minutes by Canevali and Hawkins, which opened up the likelihood of a stern battle for the first innings lead, but Stanley Crump took three wickets in two overs to put Staffordshire in the ascendant, so that Cheshire were 40 runs behind with the last pair at the wicket when stumps were drawn for the day.

Mention must be made of the remarkable debut as wicket-keeper of Lovi Lowe, of Knypersley. Stumping two and catching two batsmen, he conceded no byes, and his stumping of Dennis on the leg side was extremely smart and of great value to the side.

AN EXCITING FINISH

Another full and interesting day's cricket on Thursday, with fluctuating fortunes and a close finish ended in a win for Staffordshire by 14 runs. Cheshire declared at the overnight score to put Staffordshire in at once after rain showers which delayed the re-start by half an hour. The feature of the innings was a rather fortunate effort by Ikin, who, however, batted finely, and most of the four chances he gave were from big hits near the boundary. He hit three sixes and seven fours. Clarke also batted well, hit a six, and helped Ikin to add 84 for the fourth wicket.

Cheshire were left with 215 to get in rather less than three hours, and lost three wickets for 72, but Wolstenholme and Dutton made an exhilarating and courageous attempt to win the match, hitting 108 in 58 minutes to take the total to 180 with only three wickets down. It looked almost a certainty for Cheshire, with 35 runs required, seven wickets in hand, and comfortable time left. But then the Staffordshire team rose to the occasion in great style. Taylor and Crump bowled with vim and skill, the fielding was excellent, and only 20 runs were added for the remaining wickets. Both Dutton and Wolstenholme left at 180, and the ninth wicket fell at 195. With eight minutes of the extra time left K. McEntyre ran himself out in attempting a third run for a stroke of his own which Adams misfielded. The Skipper recovered well, and with an accurate throw-in enabled Lowe to put the finishing touch to a wonderful recovery and a creditable victory.

Staffordshire (1st Innings): L. E. Gale b Bartley 10, R. Smith c Canevali b Bartley 13, J. T. Ikin st Prescott b Dennis 56, R. S. Patterson not out 62, C. C. Clarke c Prescott b Dennis 10, R. H. Plant b Bartley 11, S. Crump lbw b Bartley 2, L. Lowe b Bartley 0, W. A. Adams b Bartley 0, A. Reynolds run out 9, F. Taylor run out 3; extras 3; total 179. (2nd Innings): L. E. Gale b Bartley 1, R. Smith b Dennis 9, J. T. Ikin c G. McEntyre b Bartley 86, R. S. Patterson c K. McEntyre b Dutton 13, C. C. Clarke c Wolstenholme b Dennis 32, R. H. Plant lbw b Dennis 0, S. Crump c Prescott b Dennis 11, L. Lowe b Bartley 9, W. A. Adams b Bartley 2, A. Reynolds not out 0, F. Taylor b Bartley 8, extras 3; total 174.

Cheshire (1st Innings): Dennis st Lowe b Ikin 19, G. A. McEntyre c Lowe b Reynolds 17, A. M. Wolstenholme b Crump 5, J. D. Canevali lbw b Reynolds 24, E. H. Hawkins st Lowe b Gale 33, K. H. McEntyre c Lowe b Reynolds 8, Parkinson lbw b Crump 19, J. D. Worthington lbw b Crump 5, R. H. Dutton b Crump 0, H. G. Prescott not out 5, Bartley not out 0, extras 4; total (inns. closed) 139. (2nd Innings): Dennis lbw b Taylor 21, G. A. McEntyre b Taylor 36, A. M. Wolstenholme c Reynolds b Taylor 53, J. D. Canevali c Taylor b Crump 6, E. H. Hawkins b Crump 4, K. H. McEntyre run out 10, Parkinson st Lowe b Taylor 2, J. D. Worthington c Ikin b Taylor 3, R. H. Dutton b Crump 59, H. G. Prescott b Crump 1, Bartley not out 0, extras 5; total 200.

BOWLING ANALYSIS

Staffordshire (1st inns.): Dennis 22-0-8m.-68r.-2w, Bartley 23.4-5-54-6, Dutton 5-2-14-0, Parkinson 10-1-40-0. (2nd Inns.): Dennis 19-1-81-4, Bartley 21.4-5-37-5, Dutton 3-0-11-1, Parkinson 9-0-42-0.

Cheshire (1st Inns.): Reynolds 19-3-35-3, Taylor 17-4-30-0, Crump 15-2-38-4, Ikin 5-0-16-1, Gale 6-1-16-1. (2nd Inns.): Reynolds 8-1-41-0, Taylor 24-4-65-5, Crump 23.2-2-65-4, Ikin 4-0-24-0.

STAFFS. CRICKET

**YORKSHIRE II.
FIGHT FOR
RUNS.**

**TAYLOR'S FINE
BOWLING**

208 ALL OUT

Staffordshire made their first home appearance in this season's Minor Counties Championship to-day, when they opposed Yorkshire II. on the Porthill Park club's ground.

Both sides included a player new to county cricket. Staffordshire's latest recruit, V. T. W. Troman, is the Walsall all-rounder, and Haigh, for Yorkshire, was also making his first appearance.

The sun was shining when the game began, in contrast to the opening day's play in the Porthill fixture last season, when heavy rain prevented a start being made in the game against Lancashire II. until the second day.

Yorkshire won the toss and G. A. Wilson and Watson opened the innings on a good wicket, and Taylor, the Burslem professional, shared the attack with Troman.

Wilson scored faster than his partner, but when Watson had registered his first run in county cricket—he had failed to score in three previous innings—he quickly overhauled his partner, 33 runs coming in the first half-hour.

Crump superceded Taylor, who was switched to Troman's end, and the Burslem professional saw Crump fail to hold a sharp chance at first slip.

TAYLOR'S SUCCESS

Taylor bowled with fine accuracy in his second spell, and had Wilson lbw in the second of three successive maiden overs. Crump also found a good length, conceding only four singles in seven overs. Watson and Haigh, however, batted soundly and the former reached 30 by turning Crump to leg for two.

Crump broke the partnership at 64, Haigh being bowled by a ball which came through quickly. The paucity of boundaries showed the quality of the bowling, but Shardlow, losing his length temporarily, was hit for a four and a six by Watson.

The left hander passed his half century and put 90 on the board by straight driving Taylor to the boundary. At lunch the score was 104 for 2.

WATSON DISMISSED

In his second over after lunch, Taylor claimed Watson's wicket with a beautiful ball, the total then standing at 111. Watson's invaluable contribution of 63, included a six and seven fours.

Despite the steady advance of the score, both Crump and Taylor were bowling extremely well, and runs were never easy to get.

At 137 Beaumont was run out after a streaky innings for 27. Hamer left with one run added, caught by Hollowood fielding close in on the leg side, to Taylor's bowling. Cadman went in the same way at 144.

Yorkshire's innings closed for 208. Taylor, who sent down 40 overs, had the fine figures of seven wickets for 72 runs.

YORKSHIRE II.

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----|
| G A WILSON lbw b Taylor | 14 |
| WATSON b Taylor | 63 |
| HAIGH b Crump | 13 |
| BEAUMONT run out | 27 |
| HAMER c Hollowood b Taylor | 12 |
| CAWTHRAY b Taylor | 18 |
| CADMAN c Hollowood b Taylor | 5 |
| CRICK b Taylor | 27 |
| HAMPSHIRE not out | 16 |
| BRAYSHAW lbw b Crump | 4 |
| COL. CHICHESTER-CONSTABLE c Shardlow b Taylor | 1 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 208 |

**STAFFS. LOSE
BY NINE
WICKETS**

**FINE EFFORT BY
IKIN**

**STAND WITH
PATTERSON**

Staffordshire faced a difficult task at Porthill to-day, when, with eight second innings wickets standing, they needed 76 to avert an innings defeat by Yorkshire.

R. S. Patterson and Ikin, whose sound batting at Oxtou last week was largely responsible for Staffordshire's success against Cheshire, were the overnight not outs.

They resumed their innings this morning to the bowling of Brayshay and Cawthray. Brayshay worked up a good pace in his opening overs, and Ikin was tempted to touch one ball which flew off his bat to give Cawthray a difficult chance in the slips. The fieldsman got his hands to the ball, but failed to hold it.

Both batsmen displayed a good range of strokes, Ikin scoring at a faster pace than his partner. Two successive boundaries off Brayshay, both on the leg side, put 70 on the board, with the result that Hampshire and Cadman took over the attack. Runs, however, continued to come steadily, Ikin scoring well on the leg side. He stepped out to drive Cadman for four, reaching his 40 off the next ball.

Patterson began hitting fours, and, despite frequent bowling changes, the partnership was unbroken when the century was hoisted.

PATTERSON CAUGHT

Ikin reached his 50 with a square cut to the boundary off Wilson, but in the next over Patterson was caught in the slips off Brayshay, after sharing in a courageous stand of 79. His own contribution of 26 to the total of 118 included a five, two fours and a three.

With only two runs short of the total necessary for Yorkshire to bat again, Ikin left l.b.w. to Wilson for a brilliant 51, after having defied the Yorkshire attack for an hour and 20 minutes. Seven fours, one three and four twos were his chief scoring strokes.

A single from Reg. Halton equalled the Yorkshire score, and, with the wicket, apparently, breaking up, the bowlers had taken command of the game.

In view of Staffordshire's low total in their first innings, they had pulled the game round well in averting the innings defeat.

Halton and Crump added 27 for the sixth wicket, Halton falling to a brilliant catch at the wicket.

Crump offered stubborn resistance, but the latter batsmen were disposed of cheaply. Staffordshire's innings closed at 171, leaving Yorkshire to get 50 for victory. At lunch, they had scored 11 without loss.

G. A. Wilson and Watson appeared capable of knocking up the necessary runs, but at 39 Watson was lbw to Crump.

Haigh stayed with Wilson to take the score to 51, Yorkshire II. winning by nine wickets.

YORKSHIRE II.

First Innings: 208

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| G A WILSON not out | 25 |
| WATSON lbw b Crump | 14 |
| HAIGH not out | 4 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total (for 1 wkt) | 51 |

STAFFORDSHIRE

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| A B HOLLOWOOD b Hampshire | 27 |
| R SMITH b Cawthray | 12 |
| IKIN c Crick b Cadman | 8 |
| R S PATTERSON c Crick b Cadman | 13 |
| V T TROMAN c Haigh b Hampshire | 6 |
| REG HALTON c Crick b Brayshay | 7 |
| CRUMP run out | 2 |
| L LOWE b Brayshay | 0 |
| W A ADAMS c Beaumont b Cadman | 0 |
| B SHARDLOW run out | 5 |
| TAYLOR not out | 1 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total | 86 |

Second Innings

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| A B HOLLOWOOD b Cawthray | 13 |
| R SMITH b Cawthray | 22 |
| IKIN lbw b Wilson | 51 |
| R S PATTERSON c Cawthray b Brayshay | 26 |
| V T TROMAN b Brayshay | 5 |
| REG HALTON c Crick b Brayshay | 20 |
| CRUMP not out | 20 |
| W A ADAMS b Brayshay | 0 |
| L LOWE run out | 8 |
| B SHARDLOW b Cadman | 0 |
| TAYLOR at Crick b Cadman | 0 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total | 171 |

BOWLING ANALYSIS

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|----|----|----|
| Yorkshire II.—First Innings | | | | |
| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
| Taylor | 40.2 | 14 | 72 | 7 |
| Crump | 35 | 11 | 58 | 2 |
| Troman | 5 | 0 | 18 | 0 |
| Shardlow | 6 | 0 | 23 | 0 |
| Ikin | 7 | 1 | 31 | 0 |
| Yorkshire II.—Second Innings | | | | |
| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
| Taylor | 8 | 3 | 22 | 0 |
| Crump | 7.2 | 1 | 21 | 1 |
| Staffordshire—First Innings | | | | |
| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
| Brayshay | 11 | 3 | 22 | 2 |
| Cawthray | 9 | 1 | 24 | 1 |
| Hampshire | 5 | 1 | 18 | 2 |
| Cadman | 6.5 | 1 | 19 | 3 |
| Staffordshire—Second Innings | | | | |
| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
| Hampshire | 9 | 2 | 35 | 0 |
| Cawthray | 11 | 2 | 33 | 2 |
| Brayshay | 18 | 2 | 40 | 4 |
| Cadman | 10 | 2 | 25 | 2 |
| Hamer | 5 | 1 | 14 | 0 |
| Wilson | 9 | 2 | 28 | 1 |

COUNTY CRICKET

STAFFORDSHIRE v. YORKSHIRE II.

A Bad Wicket and Its Consequences

WINNING THE TOSS WINS THE MATCH

By THE CRITIC

The curious ill-fortune of winning the toss when it doesn't matter, and losing it when it is vital, seems to cling to Staffordshire. In the opening match at Oxtou, W. A. Adams won the toss, but so far as I could detect, it made no difference, for the wicket was a good one, and it was playing as well at the finish as it did at the start. At Port-hill on Monday W. A. Adams lost the toss, and with it the match, for the wicket, never too good, wore so badly in the course of a few hours that batting on it after tea was mostly a gamble. As I shall show, I think, Staffordshire ought to have had the use of it a good deal sooner than they did, and therefore aggravated their difficulties, but in any case, granted reasonable equality between the teams, the side batting last was bound to lose on such a pitch. That, of course, is equivalent to saying that the wicket was not fit to play county cricket on, and that is the fact, however unpleasant it may be to say so. It should be possible to prepare a wicket which in fine weather will give the two sides a fair field and no favours. If it is not possible it is not fit for county cricket, and it is no use blinking the fact.

In this case four hours' play spoilt the pitch. Staffordshire had only been batting a short time when a good length, fast ball reared abruptly to hit Smith a painful, and even a dangerous blow over the heart. Later Halton was also temporarily knocked out in the same way, and later again Lowe raised his bat to save his body and received a severe rap on the fingers which caused him to drop the bat in pain. The spectators shouted angrily at the bowler, Hampshire, but it was not his fault. He was bowling a good length. The fault was entirely in the state of the wicket.

INDIFFERENT FIELDING

Whereas the fielding of the team had been good against Cheshire, there were early mistakes when Yorks. took first innings, which were expensive. Watson, a young left-hand bat playing in his third match for Yorks. II., opened the batting with G. A. Wilson. Watson had played three innings and failed to score a run, and he should have added a fourth cypher, for Taylor let a chance escape him off Troman in the slips before the left-hander had scored. A little later Wilson offered Crump a slip chance off Taylor, and he also was let off. In this case it did not matter so much as the amateur was soon lbw to Taylor, and the same applies to a chance by Haigh to Shardlow at short leg, also off Taylor, but these lapses do make a difference even if the batsmen do not make a very long stay. When Ikin was brought on with two wickets down for 90, Beaumont gave a palpable chance of stumping off his first ball. Had these various chances been accepted Yorks. would not have batted until tea time and put up a score of over 200, and the tremendous handicap Staffordshire were under when they batted would have been rather less pronounced.

REMARKABLY STEADY BOWLING

Yorks. II. batted 3hrs. 55mins., and Taylor bowled for the whole of that time with the exception of six overs sent down by Shardlow. He kept the visiting professionals playing, as did Stanley

Crump, by maintaining a remarkably steady length and bowling throughout with vim as well as accuracy. How well he stood the strain is shown by the fact that his last five overs and one ball produced two wickets and only one scoring stroke, and that a fluky four through the slips, Crump in his first spell bowled 16 overs for 16 runs and a wicket, and he enjoyed no luck all through his 35 overs. Troman, who opened with Taylor, bowled at a good pace (later in the day he would have been extremely awkward), and should have had the tonic of an early wicket, which also applies to Ikin, but neither he nor Shardlow could keep a good length. Anyhow, it was not their wicket.

The best batting was that of Watson, who stayed two hours and hit a six and seven fours, but Beaumont and Cawthray also shaped well. When six wickets had fallen for 144 Crick and Hampshire scored some valuable runs, but the former made many lucky strokes.

STAFFORDSHIRE BATSMEN IN THE TOILS

After the roller the pitch was not too venomous for a short time, and Hollowood and Smith scored 30 in half-an-hour by bright cricket. Hollowood was second out at 48, and batted well for his runs. He was bowled by Hampshire's first ball, and when Cadman, a slow, left-arm bowler who is well thought of in Yorkshire and was playing his first Minor Counties game, was put on, Ikin jumped in to drive his first ball and was easily stumped. Patterson stayed three-quarters of an hour, and was caught at the wicket off the spin bowler. There was scarcely any further resistance, Crump being run out when Patterson called for a fourth run for a late out of his own. The Walsall youth was running to the danger end, and he made good, but Crick threw the wicket down at the other end. Crump could certainly have made the run if he had realized the danger. The Captain had good intentions, but failed to clear the boundary with a drive, and was neatly caught. Another mix-up cost Shardlow his wicket, and thus two wickets that could ill be spared were thrown away.

Staffordshire had to follow on 122 behind, and in the last half hour of a disastrous day lost the wickets of Hollowood and Smith, both of whom were again batting well. So, with eight wickets in hand, the home county required 76 runs to avoid an innings defeat.

THE INEVITABLE END

Staffordshire did better than was expected on Tuesday by setting their opponents 50 runs to get to win, but the inevitable end was reached early in the afternoon, when Yorkshire II. won by nine wickets. The improved position was largely due to another value partnership by Ikin and Patterson, who in the first hour added 72, making 79 altogether for the partnership, before the young Walsall player was caught in the gully from a hard cut. Had it not gone straight to the fielder it would have been regarded as a good stroke, but the fault was that he did not keep it down, probably because the ball did not come off the pitch quite as he expected. Patterson gave one chance at 14, low down at silly mid-off, but otherwise played all the bowling skilfully.

For a time Ikin had most of the bowling and was much the quicker scorer. He also had an early escape, but the chance, low down at point, was an extremely difficult one. He batted altogether an hour and 20 minutes, and his hits included seven fours, all excellent shots. They were mainly hard, low drives and leg hits. He was out almost directly after Patterson, being leg before to a ball from the fast bowler. In view of the conditions, and the speed bowling against him, his was an innings of much merit, and was his third half-century in four innings.

With this partnership broken, Staffordshire again had a bad time. Brayshay had four wickets in eight overs for 18

runs. Reg. Halton got to 20 before being caught from a bumping ball by the wicket keeper standing back, and the Staffordshire captain earned the unwanted "pair of spectacles," but was entitled to sympathy, for the ball that bowled him was a lightning shooter. Troman had previously been bowled by one that just took the balls. Crump and Lowe shaped well until hesitation in starting for a run cost the latter his wicket, and the end came in a hurry. Crump was batting confidently, and it was a pity there was no one to stay with him.

It only took the visitors 40 minutes to score the required runs for the loss of one wicket. One wondered why the pitch was not quite so vicious as on Monday afternoon. Probably it was the dew of early morning and the heavy roller that tamed it just a little. Scores and analysis:—

YORKSHIRE II.—1st Innings

| | |
|---------------------------------------------|-----|
| G. A. Wilson lbw b Taylor | 14 |
| Watson b Taylor | 63 |
| Haigh b Crump | 15 |
| Beaumont run out | 27 |
| Hamer c Hollowood b Taylor | 12 |
| Cawthray b Taylor | 18 |
| Cadman c Hollowood b Taylor | 5 |
| Crick b Taylor | 27 |
| Hampshire not out | 16 |
| P. Brayshay lbw b Crump | 4 |
| Col. R. C. C.-Constable c Shardlow b Taylor | 1 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 208 |

2nd Innings

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| G. A. Wilson not out | 25 |
| Watson lbw b Crump | 14 |
| Haigh not out | 4 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total (1 wkt.) | 51 |

STAFFORDSHIRE.—1st Innings

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| A. B. Hollowood b Hampshire | 27 |
| R. Smith b Cawthray | 12 |
| J. T. Ikin st Crick b Cadman | 8 |
| R. S. Patterson c Crick b Cadman | 13 |
| V. T. Troman c Haigh b Hampshire | 7 |
| R. Halton c Crick b Brayshay | 6 |
| S. Crump run out | 2 |
| L. Lowe b Brayshay | 0 |
| W. A. Adams c Beaumont b Cadman | 0 |
| B. Shardlow run out | 5 |
| F. Taylor not out | 1 |
| Extras | 5 |
| Total | 86 |

2nd Innings

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| A. B. Hollowood b Cawthray | 13 |
| R. Smith b Cawthray | 22 |
| J. T. Ikin lbw b Wilson | 51 |
| R. S. Patterson c Cawthray b Brayshay | 26 |
| V. T. Troman b Brayshay | 5 |
| R. Halton c Crick b Brayshay | 20 |
| S. Crump not out | 20 |
| L. Lowe run out | 20 |
| W. A. Adams b Brayshay | 8 |
| B. Shardlow b Cadman | 0 |
| F. Taylor st Crick b Cadman | 0 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total | 171 |

BOWLING

Yorks.—1st Inns.: Taylor 40.2-14-72-7; Troman 5-0-18-0; Crump 35-11-56-2; Shardlow 6-0-23-0; Ikin 7-1-31-0. 2nd Inns.: Taylor 8-3-22-0; Crump 7.2-1-21-1.

Staffs.—1st Inns.: Brayshay 11-3-22-2; Cawthray 9-1-24-1; Hampshire 5-1-16-2; Cadman 6.5-1-19-3. 2nd Inns.: Hampshire 9-2-25-0; Cawthray 11-2-33-2; Brayshay 16-2-40-4; Cadman 10-3-25-2; Hamer 5-1-14-0; Wilson 9-2-28-1.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE CRICKET LEAGUE

Great Game at Porthill

SHARDLOW WINS VITAL POINTS FOR STONE

By THE CRITIC

THERE was plenty of entertaining cricket in the league on Saturday, but I am afraid the number of spectators who witnessed it would be severely limited by the unseasonable coldness of the weather. At the Knypersley match, which I attended, the cold wind was most trying, and one was a little surprised that a fair number of supporters had the hardihood not only to pay for admission, but to stay to see their team win. They defeated Blythe Works without great difficulty, and maintained a high position in the table. On the other hand the result left the Works in rather a serious plight. The visit of Stone to Cresswell to-day is of great importance to both clubs, for the smart victory of the Stone players over Crewe Alexandra put them on level terms at the bottom of the chart.

At Porthill, Longton, in a splendid game, just failed to overtake the home team's big score in time, and the match was drawn, as was that between Nantwich and Leek at the Cheshire town. These two games produced 877 runs for the loss of 28 wickets, or an average of over 31 runs per wicket, which is a contrast to the cricket at Stone, where 20 wickets fell for 117, or an average per wicket of just under six. The third century of the season in league matches was scored by George Pedley, for Longton, so two of the three stand to the credit of Longton players, and there would probably have been a third had not R. H. Plant declared at Crewe with his own score at 93.

Silverdale, at home to Norton, again cut up badly and suffered their fourth defeat in eight days, but Burslem, getting the better of Caverswall after a struggle on their opponents' ground, obtained their fourth victory in the same short period and their fifth in succession, to increase their lead to four points, with Norton displacing Nantwich as runners-up.

RESULTS IN BRIEF:

Leek 252 for 9, dec.; Nantwich 200 for 3.
Porthill 213; Longton 212 for 6.
Silverdale 70; Norton 177 for 5.
Stone 62; Crewe Alex. 55.
Knypersley 109; Blythe Works 66.
Caverswall 120; Burslem 128 for 7.

LEAGUE TABLE

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | Pts. |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|------|
| Burslem | 10 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 24 |
| Norton | 10 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 20 |
| Knypersley | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 19 |
| Nantwich | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 19 |
| Caverswall | 10 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 17 |
| Leek | 10 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 16 |
| Longton | 10 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 16 |
| Crewe Alex. | 10 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 9 |
| Porthill | 10 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Silverdale | 10 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Blythe Works | 10 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 7 |
| Stone | 10 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 7 |

THE HALL MARK OF CLASS

T. C. Maynard won the toss at Knypersley, and took first innings. Greenwood and Levi Lowe opened to the bowling of W. Massey and Mayer. It was a bad wicket, and it was a mercy that it was soft. Both ends have been re-laid and the new turfs have not had time to knit sufficiently to make a perfect surface, and will probably not do so this season. No doubt it will be kept soft for matches, for if it were hard it would be dangerous.

On the whole it played better than I expected. A few balls reared awkwardly, but generally speaking the ball had a tendency to keep low, and even to shoot. It was a slow and treacherous wicket, and must have been a trial to Greenwood after playing for Northants the preceding three days. But the batting of the Knypersley professional had the stamp of class. His watchfulness, his timing on the uncertain wicket, and his footwork were just what one expected from a first-class bat. I found myself wishing he were qualified for Staffs. instead of Northants.

Mayer often turned his off-spinner a couple of feet, but it turned slowly. If it had turned half as much but quicker it would have tested even Greenwood. As it was the batsman only went to it when he could safely smother the break, and went right back to watch it when he could not.

George Mayer did what I have not seen him do before—varied his off-breaks with an away swinger. If he could have bowled this at the off-stump, it would have been a highly dangerous ball, but he was rather wide with it and Greenwood, quickly detecting it, left it severely alone; except once, when Mayer pitched it near enough to the off-stump, and well up, to make the batsman play it. It went away appreciably, and Greenwood got a lucky four off the edge through the slips. He was at the wicket 73 minutes, and scored 32, and his correct and skilful batting under unfavourable conditions was sufficiently engrossing to make one almost forget that it was cold enough for December. Only that once did he fail to play the ball in the middle of the bat, or, in spite of its varying pace and height off the pitch, to keep it on the ground.

It was A. Moore who got his wicket. It was the only ball I saw the slow bowler turn from the off. He had been bowling straight and a good length, and perhaps doing just a shade from the leg occasionally. So when one whipped back the width of the wicket from the off, Greenwood was obviously taken by surprise, and was leg-before, fourth out at 60. He had not attempted much in the way of hitting, but when A. R. Davies, put on for the first change in place of Massey, favoured him with two short ones in his first over, they were both hooked powerfully to the boundary.

THE BEST STAND OF THE MATCH

To go back to the beginning, Lowe left at 10, getting under the ball in trying a leg hit off Mayer and skying it to fine leg. It was one of the worst balls Mayer sent down. Then W. Boon kept Greenwood company for 35 minutes and added 39, which proved the most productive partnership in the match. He batted well, with more restraint than one usually associates with him, and his 17 comprised several good shots besides some resource in defence. He fell to one of Mayer's off-spinners that kept rather low, and he edged it only to help it on to the wicket.

A little later Moore came on for a remarkably successful spell. A. Cooper played round a straight one, Greenwood was lbw as stated, and E. Lowe and A. Reynolds were bowled by consecutive

balls. P. Green had been opening his shoulders to Mayer, and got three fours in one over, but the first of these hits should have been fatal, for it offered a plain catch in front of the sight screen. After bowling 17 overs, Mayer was relieved by Massey, and three fours came from his first over, but he bowled Green, who had accumulated 23 extremely useful runs, at 84. W. Winskill and W. Butler offered further resistance, and added 22, of which Butler made 18, but Mayer came on again to get Butler easily stumped, and bowl Winskill, while the Knypersley captain was foolishly run out.

Mayer in 19.2 overs took four wickets for 42, and Moore bowled 11 overs for 11 runs and four wickets.

HOW NOT TO PLAY "DONKEY DROPS"

The Works made a bad start, and some dreadful batting by the middle men resulted in seven wickets being down for 28. The usual order of going in was altered with disastrous results. Mayer and G. Sherwin opened against A. Reynolds and W. Boon, but the professional had to retire for a time, being struck on the elbow by a kicking ball from Reynolds. The young left-hander, G. Amison, was bowled by an in-swing from Boon at 5, and a run later A. Bevington, trying to get away from another nasty one from Reynolds, was caught by the wicket-keeper off the handle of his bat, and W. Hurst caught in the slips first ball. This also rose chest high, and the batsman tried unsuccessfully to get away from it.

Then Mayer resumed his innings and, not disposed to stand up to be hit again, lashed out at Reynolds and lofted him into the long field several times, bad strokes but quite safe. However, after batting half an hour for six, Sherwin was beaten by Boon, and P. Green being put on in place of Reynolds, claimed three quick wickets with his tossed-up leg-breaks. Mayer tried to mow the very first of these without going to the pitch of it, and without even the precaution of covering up, and saw it turn slowly about two feet from leg to hit the wicket. E. Eaton was rather unfortunate, for he hit one hard past cover, but did not keep it down, and Greenwood at extra cover, made a fine, low, running catch. Massey was promoted from No. 11, presumably to hit the slows, but the first one was fatal to him. He could have jumped out and hit it full pitch, but he reached halfway, allowed the break to beat the bat, and left the wicket open —7 for 28.

Having done his bit Green was taken off, and Reynolds resumed, but F. Barber and A. E. Bennett gave us the only real bit of batting in the innings. Both played good cricket, stayed together nearly three-quarters of an hour, and added 30 in spite of bowling changes which brought on W. Butler, Greenwood, and W. Winskill. Butler bowled at a fair pace, and had a tendency to keep low, and he took the last three wickets. Barber was bowled after batting nearly an hour for 16, Moore played on, and Davies was lbw. Bennett, who took out his bat for 17, was also at the wicket only five minutes short of an hour.

The discomfiture of the Works' team was begun by Reynolds's bumpers, continued by Green's "donkey drops," and completed by Butler's successful spell, but Boon also had a useful hand in it. He took two for 26, and Reynolds two for 11, figures which paled before Phillip Green's three for four, and Butler's three for six.

STONE'S SECOND VICTORY

The batting of the Stone team was of rather an insipid character when J. A. L. Wenger won the toss and took first innings against Crewe Alexandra at Stone. J. Barker (five for 23) and J. Hossack (three for 19) held the upper hand, and the only redeeming feature was a brave stand by R. F. Reader and G. W. Hammersley for the last wicket, without which the total would have fallen considerably below the modest 62 which it eventually reached. The match seemed a good thing for the visitors, but Bert Shardlow had one of his inspired spells of bowling, and Crewe

were routed despite a gallant late bid by Hossack, who hit 29. Shardlow's analysis was seven for 23, and at one point he took four wicket in five deliveries. They were valuable points for Stone, and if they can repeat the victory to-day at Cresswell they will finish the first half of the season clear of the last place after all.

GREAT BID BY LONGTON

It would be difficult to imagine a better game than that served up by Porthill and Longton at Wolstanton. Thanks to a fine innings of 61 by J. S. Heath, a patient 37 by J. Bentley, a useful 28 from R. Hammond, and some late hitting by H. G. Castles (37), Porthill got what looked almost an impregnable score. But Longton went for the runs, and that they got so near to a brilliant win, in spite of the fact that their captain and fastest scorer, R. H. Plant, was run out without receiving a ball, was a credit to the team. G. Pedley and G. B. Edge (39) gave the side an excellent start, and Pedley went on to score 104 in 145 minutes, which is quite good going for one end. Broadhurst (27 not out) and E. Payne were together when the umpires called "last over" with eight runs required. H. Thornhill kept his head and bowled steadily, and the best batsmen could do was to score six.

BURSEM'S VICTORY MARCH

Caverswall, at home to the leaders, did what no other team has done this season against them—put up a three-figure score. Roy Smith played a masterly innings of 56, and was then run out, but most of the Caverswall batsmen could make little of Fred Taylor, who took six wickets for 34. A. B. Hollowood (31) and J. Fenton (46) had a valuable partnership for Burslem's fourth wicket, and put their side on the victory path. Later G. Wardle hit up 25 not out. Caverswall were without E. J. Wakell, who was indisposed.

The Nantwich wicket was too good for the bowlers. Leek compiled the big total of 252 for nine wickets before declaring, the principal contributors being evergreen Harold Birch (82), and E. Broderick, who was run out after scoring 34. W. T. Maybury's five for 68 were good figures in such an innings. In the reply of Nantwich only three wickets were lost for 200. T. W. Stevenon was at his best in taking 83 from the Leek bowlers, J. E. Smith maintained the good form he has shown this season in scoring 37, and G. Bull was going well at the finish with 37, not out.

Stanley Welch proved destructive against Silverdale, taking six wickets for 27 in an innings in which the Silverdale captain, T. W. Cocks, was the only double figure scorer with 18 before he was run out. R. Birch (67) and Smith (41) had a big partnership for Norton. Considering that they ended last season in the eleventh position, Norton, though they have been a trifle fortunate to win two matches by one run (two runs meant six points), are entitled to congratulation on reaching the position of runners-up.

WOLVERHAMPTON v. STAFFORD

The left-hand slow bowling of T. J. Rutherford proved to be the undoing of Stafford at Tettenhall on Saturday. Romans and White gave the visitors a good start, but the left-hander came on at 47 and carried all before him.

Thanks to E. W. Page, the home side just got the runs, though Evans and Redshaw bowled well. Details:—

STAFFORD

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| M. H. Romans c Clarke b Rutherford | 26 |
| W. T. White c Howl b Rutherford | 16 |
| J. T. W. Neville c Croft b Rutherford | 0 |
| J. Whitfield c Rutherford b Croft | 8 |
| L. I. C. Bellamy c Reed b Rutherford | 4 |
| J. E. Blair c Reed b Rutherford | 6 |
| R. J. C. Evans c Hackett b Rutherford | 0 |
| L. H. Morris at Page b Croft | 10 |
| R. Kenney c Blakemore b Rutherford | 11 |
| J. McLellan c Annan b Croft | 7 |
| E. W. Redshaw not out | 4 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 100 |

Bowling: Rutherford 7 for 36, Croft 3 for 29.

WOLVERHAMPTON

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| N. A. Read b Evans | 1 |
| E. W. Page lbw b Redshaw | 49 |
| A. D. Wilkie c Whitfield b Kenney | 22 |
| A. Brown b Bellamy | 1 |
| P. A. Annan c White b Evans | 14 |
| R. Howl c Bellamy b Evans | 1 |
| E. C. Blakemore lbw b Redshaw | 0 |
| W. J. Croft b Evans | 5 |
| T. J. Rutherford c Bellamy b Redshaw | 13 |
| E. W. Hackett not out | 7 |
| Extras | 11 |
| Total | 124 |

C. E. Clarke did not go in.

Bowling: Evans 4 for 21, Redshaw 3 for 45, Bellamy 1 for 25, Kenney 1 for 5.

STAFFORD II. v. WOLVERHAMPTON II.

At Stafford, Wolverhampton II. won by four wickets. Scores: Stafford II.: G. H. Grestorex run out 5, D. E. Bloor b Trench 0, J. R. Bithell c Sidaway b Timmins 1, C. H. Yeates c Norgrove b Timmins 0, H. O. Beck c Sidaway b Norgrove 11, N. H. Read lbw b Trench 31, J. F. Herbert lbw b Trench 8, J. G. Fletcher c Blaine b Trench 13, G. N. Gosling not out 28, G. L. Longdon c Norgrove b Timmins 0, J. W. Hutchinson b Trench 0, extras 1; total 93. J. Timmis three for 19, W. J. P. Trench four for 39.

Wolverhampton II.: D. Blaine b Longdon 28, W. J. P. Trench b Grestorex 4, W. C. Norgrove c Herbert b Grestorex 46, G. Pidduck b Longdon 1, C. C. Meynell at Gosling b Grestorex 0, R. G. Willcock c Read b Longdon 10, T. C. Arthur b Longdon 8, R. Sidaway c Gosling b Hutchinson 3, C. H. French not out 3, extras 10; total (for eight) 111. Longdon four for 26, Grestorex three for 36.

Stafford III. 146 (H. G. Flavell 49, S. N. Hill 23, J. E. Hoperart 22, A. R. Richardson 15), Headquarters Police 38.

BLYMILL AND WESTON v. C. & B. SMITH'S, WOLVERHAMPTON

Played on the ground of the former on Saturday, June 11, the home team, after declaring at 180 for five wickets, won a very easy victory by 150 runs. Score:—

Blymhill: K. J. Hazlett lbw b Painter 54, R. Hitchen c and b Painter 12, H. J. Harper c Black b Osborn 5, J. E. White c Cook b Painter 4, R. D. Stewart-Brown not out 70, Lord Newport c Cook b Dodd 6, C. W. Hitchen not out 26, extras 3; total (innings declared) 180. Major R. O. Bridgman, W. Pointon, H. N. Hill, S. Medlicott did not bat.

C. & B. Smith's: G. Cork c White b R. Hitchen 3, G. Dodd b Medlicott 14, E. Bigford c Bridgman b R. Hitchen 0, S. Ellis c R. Hitchen b Hill 6, E. Painter c Stewart-Brown b R. Hitchen 0, S. Osborne b Hill 3, H. Bigford b Harper 1, W. S. Johnson b Harper 0, G. Evans not out 0, D. Black b Hill 0, W. F. Johnstone c Medlicott b Hill 0, extras 3; total 30.

FOSTON AND SCROPTON v. WINSHILL

Played at Foston Hall on Saturday. Winshill: J. O. Niell b F. Sessions 29, C. Warren c Jagg b Watkins 2, J. Ashmore b Plumb 20, V. Strutt c Jagg b Plumb 2, A. Caulton b Plumb 0, B. Bradley run out 0, T. Bloor b Sessions 0, E. Hewitt c Jagg b Sessions 0, J. Earp not out 2, P. Vickers b Sessions 0, J. Harrod c Jagg b Sessions 2, extras 13; total 70.

Foston and Scropton: A. Smith c Caulton b Hewitt 1, M. Barker b Vickers 0, E. Birch c Bloor b Vickers 1, W. Jagg c Strutt b Vickers 9, F. Sessions c Vickers b Earp 24, G. Plumb c Bradley c Earp 31, Eric Birch b Strutt 7, H. Fairs b Strutt 1, G. Lygo hit wicket b Ashmore 1, J. Summersgill not out 0, F. Watkins c and b Strutt 0, extras 7; total 82.

TUTBURY v. DONISTHORPE COLLIERY

Played at Tutbury on Saturday. Tutbury: S. R. Rickman b Newbold 99, J. Billings c Sharpe b Watts 11, W. West b Finch 29, R. Bishop b Finch 0, M. F. Hurdle c and b Newbold 24, G. G. Hodges not out 13, L. Starbuck not out 3, extras 5; total (Swkts. dec.) 184. H. E. Graham, T. L. Coxon, E. Johnson, and A. Bell, did not bat. Bowling: J. Finch two for 59, H. Newbold two for 67, C. Watts one for 30.

Donisthorpe Colliery: W. Goacher b Hurdle 44, J. Shuttleworth c Hurdle b Johnson 6, J. Brown b Bishop 13, C. Watts c Johnson b Bishop 15, H. Newbold b Hodges 8, J. Ramsell c Graham b Hurdle 8, S. Sharpe not out 12, J. Finch not out 30, extras 9; total (for Swkts.) 146. G. Chapman, J. Toon, and J. Ayre, did not bat. Bowling: M. F. Hurdle two for 23, R. Bishop two for 54, G. C. Hodges one for 12, E. Johnson one for 28.

BRERETON v. ABBOTS BROMLEY

Brereton "B" team entertained Abbots Bromley on Saturday and won easily by 112 runs, due chiefly to the batting of T. Howell, who made 62 not out, and the bowling of C. Bull, who took six wickets for 23 runs. Scores:—Brereton: S. Jones 21, A. Griffiths 5, G. Averill 12, C. Bull 0, T. Howell not out 62, D. Myatt 4, J. Gregory 7, B. Allsopp 11, W. Brown 11, H. Brown 9, G. Ikin not out 5, extras 14; total (dec.) 161.

Abbots Bromley: V. Astbury 3, S. Walkeden 5, L. Ball 6, R. Scott 1, H. Kent 11, J. Hill 5, F. Rock 11, T. Rushton 1, B. Grimley 5, R. Myatt not out 0, extras 1; total 49.

ENGLISH ELECTRIC v. NEWPORT

Played at Stafford Saturday, June 11. English Electric: H. Smith c and b Shilton 78, J. Wiltshaw b Taylor 4, J. Evans c Taylor b Shilton 18, K. Boyden c Baracrough b Fowler 33, R. Cragg not out 18, F. Stevens at Barcrough b Fowler 5, A. Worthington b Fowler 0, H. L. Clothier c Barcrough b Fowler 0, W. Parry c Worth b Fowler 0, S. Greenwood b Brooks 8, S. Webb not out 1, extras 17; total (for 8 dec.) 181.

Newport: F. A. Robinson c Parry b Boyden 12, R. J. Butter b Webb 61, D. R. Brooks lbw b Boyden 6, J. C. Williams c Parry b Stevens 15, J. Worth c Greenwood b Stevens 1, G. Gladwell run out 16, R. Elkes not out 3, C. Taylor st Parry b Worthington 0, extras 28; total (for 7) 142.

POLICE CRICKET

The draw for the second round of the Staffordshire County Police Cricket Challenge Cup resulted as follows: Headquarters v. Newcastle, Wednesbury v. Brierley Hill, Tettenhall v. Smetwick, Leek v. Westbromwich.

Matches to be played on the ground of the first-named team by July 15.

FIRST GAME AGAINST DURHAM

FINE BATTING BY ROY SMITH SCORES CENTURY

Staffordshire began their four-day Northern tour by opposing Durham at Norton-on-Tees to-day.

The teams were:—
DURHAM.—D C H Townsend, J H Berrisford, H E Bailey, W Barron, E Manners, Latchford, Carr (J), J Grigor, D Glen, A W Austin, F I Herbert.

STAFFORDSHIRE.—W A Adams, R Smith, A B Hollowood, G Pedley, J T Ikin, C C Clarke, S Crump, R Hammond, E Broderick, B Shardlow, W Stubbs.

Staffordshire won the toss and Roy Smith and A. B. Hollowood opened the innings on an easy paced wicket. The batsmen scored steadily off Latchford and Herbert, but with the score at 10 Hollowood gave a sharp catch to square leg, but it was not accepted. In stealing a short run, Smith was almost run out off the next ball. These escapes made the batsmen more cautious.

Smith, however, drove Latchford for the first four of the game, and he continued to be more aggressive than his partner.

Smith and Hollowood were together when the 50 was signalled in just over an hour, but four runs later Hollowood was l.b.w. to Carr, the Durham professional.

Pedley, who came next, was not happy against Carr, who made the ball swerve appreciably. Grigor, was introduced into the attack at the opposite end and Smith promptly drove his first ball to the square leg boundary.

In his next over, however, Grigor bowled Pedley before he had scored. These two quick wickets placed Staffordshire in a less satisfactory position when Ikin joined Smith.

Ikin had scored two runs only when he played Grigor to Bailey at mid-off. A run was called, but a smart return to the bowler saw the wicket broken before Ikin could regain his crease.

Smith, who was now partnered by Clarke, was still batting splendidly and he reached his half-century with a cut through the slips for two. Clarke quickly settled down and both men were still together at the interval, but Staffordshire's score was 90 for three wickets.

CLARKE'S ESCAPES

After lunch Smith and Clarke put the 100 on the board, but shortly afterwards Herbert confidently appealed for a catch at the wicket against Clarke, but this was answered in the batsman's favour, and then the same batsman ought to have been run out Austin making a poor return.

These incidents did not upset the batsmen, and Smith proceeded steadily towards his individual century.

Smith eventually reached his century, but his innings ended when at 116 he attempted to drive Grigor and was caught in the slips. He hit nine fours during his stay of two and a half hours.

Meanwhile, Clarke had shown fine form and he, too began to attack the bowling, despite many changes.

When joined by Crump, Clarke scored freely, but after reaching his half-century, he played forward to Latchford and gave an easy catch. Hammond did not survive long, being bowled by Herbert, and Broderick survived a slip catch in his first over.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| R SMITH c Herbert b Grigor | 116 |
| A B HOLLOWOOD lbw b Carr | 17 |
| G PEDLEY b Grigor | 0 |
| J T IKIN run out | 2 |
| C C CLARKE c Townsend b Latchford | 51 |
| S CRUMP not out | 39 |
| R HAMMOND b Herbert | 4 |
| E BRODERICK not out | 0 |
| Extras | 2 |
| Total (for 6 wkts) | 231 |

UPHILL TASK FOR DURHAM

INNINGS DEFEAT AVOIDED

VISITORS' KEEN ATTACK

Staffordshire succeeded in compelling Durham to follow on when the Minor Counties match was resumed at Norton-on-Tees to-day.

Yesterday Durham had scored 81 for six wickets in reply to Staffordshire's first innings total of 294, and in less than an hour the remaining four batsmen were dismissed for the addition of 52 runs. The innings thus closed for 133, giving Staffordshire a first innings lead of 161.

Only Durham's last wicket caused any trouble, A. W. Austin and F. I. Herbert adding 30 before being separated. B. Shardlow (three for 12) and G. Pedley (three for 32) were the most successful Staffordshire bowlers.

D. C. H. Townsend and Berisford started the home county's second innings against the bowling of Broderick and Stubbs, and they began so confidently that they put on 40 in 25 minutes. Adams then made his first bowling change, Crump and Shardlow being called upon. The batting had been without incident except that Townsend twice drove no-balls from Stubbs into the hands of fielders.

Staffordshire claimed their first success at 60, when Townsend, who had made 41, was out l.b.w.

With the total advanced to 70, Staffordshire made further progress, Bailey being out l.b.w. in Ikin's first over. Beresford and Barron remained together to the lunch interval, when the score was 82 for two.

After lunch, Beresford and Barron carried the score to 116, when Barron, who had been overhauling his partner at a rapid rate, played forward to Broderick and was bowled.

When joined by Manners, Beresford played one of Broderick's deliveries without confidence and was caught by Hammond at the wicket, the total now being 131 for four.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| R SMITH c Herbert b Grigor | 116 |
| A B HOLLOWOOD lbw b Carr | 17 |
| G PEDLEY b Grigor | 0 |
| J T IKIN run out | 2 |
| C C CLARKE c Townsend b Latchford | 51 |
| S CRUMP b Herbert | 44 |
| R HAMMOND b Herbert | 4 |
| E BRODERICK c Manner b Carr | 25 |
| W A ADAMS b Manners | 0 |
| B SHARDLOW c Beresford b Grigor | 33 |
| W STUBBS not out | 0 |
| Extras | 2 |
| Total | 294 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| D C H TOWNSEND c Smith b Stubbs | 19 |
| J BERESFORD lbw b Ikin | 10 |
| H E BAILEY c and b Shardlow | 28 |
| W BARRON c Stubbs b Crump | 6 |
| E MANNERS b Shardlow | 0 |
| LATCHFORD b Pedley | 6 |
| J GRIGOR b Pedley | 16 |
| J CARR c Shardlow b Pedley | 9 |
| D GLEN b Crump | 2 |
| A W AUSTIN c Ikin b Shardlow | 15 |
| F I HERBERT not out | 12 |
| Extras | 10 |
| Total | 133 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| D C H TOWNSEND lbw b Crump | 41 |
| J BERESFORD c Hammond b Broderick | 41 |
| H E BAILEY lbw b Ikin | 3 |
| W BARRON b Broderick | 35 |
| E MANNERS c Broderick b Pedley | 8 |
| LATCHFORD b Crump | 7 |
| J GRIGOR not out | 17 |
| J CARR b Crump | 20 |
| D GLEN not out | 0 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total (for 7 wkts) | 180 |

| Staffordshire—First Innings | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|----|----|----|
| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
| Herbert | 17 | 2 | 57 | 2 |
| Latchford | 17 | 4 | 52 | 1 |
| Glen | 8 | 1 | 24 | 0 |
| Manners | 15 | 3 | 34 | 1 |
| Carr | 28 | 9 | 58 | 2 |
| Grigor | 15.4 | 2 | 67 | 3 |
| Durham—First Innings | | | | |
| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
| W Stubbs | 13 | 4 | 31 | 1 |
| E Broderick | 6 | 1 | 10 | 0 |
| S Crump | 17 | 7 | 19 | 2 |
| J T Ikin | 6 | 1 | 19 | 1 |
| B Shardlow | 8.2 | 4 | 32 | 3 |
| G Pedley | 9 | 0 | 12 | 3 |

STAFFS. WIN BY SEVEN WICKETS

FINE VICTORY OVER DURHAM

SHARDLOW'S GOOD BOWLING

Staffordshire gained their second victory of the season when they defeated Durham by seven wickets at Norton-on-Tees yesterday.

Durham, dismissed for 133 in their first innings, had to follow-on 161 runs behind. They gave an improved display at the second attempt, but, although they avoided an innings defeat, Staffordshire had only to score 55 for victory.

In obtaining these runs, Staffordshire lost three wickets for 38 before Smith and Pedley settled the issue.

The bowling honours were fairly evenly divided, but Shardlow had the splendid match record of six for 29. Scores:—

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| R SMITH c Herbert b Grigor | 116 |
| A B HOLLOWOOD lbw b Carr | 17 |
| G PEDLEY b Grigor | 0 |
| J T IKIN run out | 0 |
| C C CLARKE c Townsend b Latchford | 2 |
| S CRUMP b Herbert | 51 |
| R HAMMOND b Herbert | 44 |
| E BRODERICK c Manner b Carr | 25 |
| W A ADAMS b Manners | 0 |
| B SHARDLOW c Beresford b Grigor | 33 |
| W STUBBS not out | 0 |
| Extras | 2 |
| Total | 294 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| R SMITH not out | 24 |
| J T IKIN c Glen b Grigor | 10 |
| C C CLARKE c Austin b Latchford | 0 |
| S CRUMP c Austin b Carr | 5 |
| G PEDLEY not out | 10 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total (for 3 wkts) | 55 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| D C H TOWNSEND c Smith b Stubbs | 19 |
| J BERESFORD lbw b Ikin | 10 |
| H E BAILEY c and b Shardlow | 28 |
| W BARRON c Stubbs b Crump | 6 |
| E MANNERS b Shardlow | 0 |
| LATCHFORD b Pedley | 6 |
| J GRIGOR b Pedley | 16 |
| J CARR c Shardlow b Pedley | 9 |
| D GLEN b Crump | 2 |
| A W AUSTIN c Ikin b Shardlow | 15 |
| F I HERBERT not out | 12 |
| Extras | 10 |
| Total | 133 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| D C H TOWNSEND lbw b Crump | 41 |
| J BERESFORD c Hammond b Broderick | 41 |
| H E BAILEY lbw b Ikin | 3 |
| W BARRON b Broderick | 35 |
| E MANNERS c Broderick b Pedley | 8 |
| LATCHFORD b Crump | 7 |
| J GRIGOR not out | 17 |
| J CARR b Crump | 20 |
| D GLEN b Shardlow | 0 |
| A W AUSTIN c Clarke b Shardlow | 4 |
| F I HERBERT b Shardlow | 0 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 215 |

N.S. CRICKET LEAGUE

BURSLEM STRENGTHEN HOLD ON LEADERSHIP

NORTON'S CHALLENGE CHECKED BY PORTHILL PARK

Rain caused considerable interference with the Senior "A" matches in the North Staffordshire League on Saturday, and only three reached a definite result.

Gaining an easy victory over Silverdale, Burslem strengthened their hold on the leadership, and have now a clear lead of seven points, Norton, their nearest challengers, being defeated at home by Porthill Park. Stone were successful against Blythe Colour Works and the Calter club is now at the foot of the table.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE LEAGUE Senior Division—Section "A"

NORTON v. PORTHILL. Porthill, A. A. Bickerton b F Hodson 24, J Bentley b S Welch 17, Ikin (J T) b F Hodson 0, J S Heath b S Welch 29, H F Wood lbw b F Hodson 0, N W White lbw b R Hill 0, R Hammond c Birch b S Welch 35, K Gleave b S Welch 12, H G Castles b S Welch 23, H Thornhill b F Hodson 10, D L White not out 2, extras 8; total 190. S Welch five for 00; F Hodson four for 41.

Norton.—R Birch c D L White b Ikin (J T) 8, Smith (A) c Hammond b Ikin (J T) 17, G Lancaster b H Thornhill 5, G Birch c Ikin (J T) b H Thornhill 11, S Smith b D L White 13, R Hill run out 6, F Hodson c and b Ikin (J T) 2, J Rhead b H Thornhill 15, W Martin b H Thornhill 0, S Welch not out 7, W Deakin c and b Ikin (J T) 17, extras 21; total 118. Ikin (J T) four for 35; H Thornhill four for 28.

LEEK v. KNPERSLEY. Knypersley.—Greenwood (H W) c Harrison b Bonsall 12, L Lowe c Broderick b Bonsall 3, W Boon c Harrison b Bonsall 8, A Cooper c Harrison b Bonsall 0, L Lowe lbw b Birch 23, W Winkskill b Bonsall 1, W Butler c Reg Halton b Broderick 1, A Reynolds b Birch 8, T C Maynard c Herdern b Reg Halton 5, P Green c Rider b Bonsall 5, D Robinson not out 8, extras 3; total 82. C Bonsall six for 29.

Leek.—Reg Halton c Winkskill b Butler 17, E Herdern c Winkskill b Butler 3, Ron Halton b Reynolds 1, H Birch c Green b Reynolds 4, L Crump not out 26, A Threlfall not out 3, extras 4; total (for 4 wkts) 58.

GREWE ALEXANDRA v. CAVERSWALL

Caverswall.—O T Doran c Tortington b Hossack 3, R Smith c Prince b Dawson 20, A Massey c Cooke b Hossack 34, J H Ragsdale c Prince b Dawson 3, H H Whalley b Hossack 11, E Wakelin c Kirkham b Poate 28, A Piekard c Kirkham b Parker 1, J E Beswick b Prince 5, A Buckley c Hossack b Prince 15, A T V Dennis c Dawson b Poate 8, J Tabbitor not out 2, extras 1; total 155.

Grewe Alex.—D Kirkham c Doran b Wakelin 0, F C Shreeve c Massey b Wakelin 1, J Prince b Piekard 4, A Poate not out 6, J Broad c Ragsdale b Wakelin 2, H Tortington not out 1, extras 1; total (for 4 wkts) 13. E Wakelin three for 2.

BLYTHE COLOUR WORKS v. STONE

Blythe C.W.—A Bennett c Wenger b Hancock 7, W Hurst c Jarvis b Hancock 5, A Broadington c Jarvis b Hancock 29, F Barber c Wenger b Snardlow 2, A Moore c Preston b Wood 14, R Snardlow c Hancock b Snardlow 18, C Turner b Snardlow 11, G Sherwin run out 0, E Eaton b Hancock 2, Mayer (G H) not out 0, W Massey c Hancock b Snardlow 5, extras 0; total 94. B Snardlow five for 28.

Stone.—F Ravenscroft c Turner b Moore 48, B Preston lbw b Davies 0, A Jarvis c Turner b Davies 17, E D Slynm c Hurst b Davies 27, H H Wood not out 5, Hancock (H) not out 15, extras 1; total (for 4 wkts) 109.

LONGTON v. NANTWICH

Longton.—G B Edge lbw b W T Maybury 3, G Pedley b W T Maybury 8, R H Platt st, McTurk b Maybury 0, A J Chadwick not out 59, W Bourne c Spivoston b Maybury 2, Broadhurst (G) bt wkt b Maybury 15, E D Dennis lbw b Maybury 0, I Peaton c McTurk b Maybury 8, E Payne not out 0; total (for 7 wkts dec.) 90. W T Maybury seven for 37.

Nantwich.—A McTurk not out 12, G Ball not out 30; total (for no wkts) 52.

BURSLEM v. SILVERDALE

Silverdale.—C F Rushton lbw b Hollowood 3, J Bloor c Brammer b Taylor 15, A Ward c Birch b Taylor 0, R Barnett c and b Hollowood 10, A Wyatt b Hollowood 3, P Bloor b Hollowood 0, A Bythelway b Hollowood 1, H Porton c Boardman b Taylor 0, J Cooke b Taylor 1, J Boon b Taylor 0, F Vardy not out 0, extras 4; total 35. Taylor (F) five for 17, R R Hollowood five for 14.

Burslem.—A Birch b Porton 4, C Brammer b Porton 0, J Fenton c Barnett b Porton 19, G Wardle run out 55, W Boardman c P Bloor b Vardy 10, C G Dexter c Rushton b Porton 2, A B Hollowood c and b Vardy 15, F Bailey st Cooke b Vardy 7, R R Hollowood c Fenton b Vardy 0, Taylor (F) c Bythelway b Porton 17, A Meigh not out 0, extras 4; total 111. H Porton five for 30.

Senior Division—Section "B"

GREAT CHELL v. SNEYD COLLIERY. Great Chell.—R Goodwin 39, C Clowes 15, H Averill 2, R Davies 0, W Mould 0, J Madeley 5, F Vodely 11, W J Mould 5, F Wishaw not out 11, J Snape 4, J Pedley 22; total 112. F Owen seven for 23.

Sneyd Colliery.—E Mayer 19, A Broadbent 14, J Shaw 2, R Hickman 0, S Dawson 22, A Wright 8, E Heaton 0, A Boulton 0, H Higgins not out 2, F Owen 0, F Curwen 0, extras 11; total 78. F Wishaw four for 15.

CHEADLE v. HARTSHILL. Hartshill.—J Peake 15, J C Martin 25, A Deavall 22, C Bates 2, W Tunncliffe not out 55, W Johnson 1, J Turner 12, E Binns 0, W Bailes not out 5, extras 16; total (for 7 wkts dec.) 199.

Cheadle.—J Kerr 9, A B Hurst 0, B Whitehurst 40, A Harris 18, E Cutchlow 11, J Beardmore 3, C Chandler 2, J Keates 0, H Capewell 5, G Thorley not out 3, K Crook not out 0, extras 3; total (for 9 wkts) 112. E Binns five for 35.

ALSAGERS BANK v. CHEDDLETON. Cheddleton.—F Bailey 30, M Eve 7, R K Shaw 26, Vine 22, L Kirkham 0, R Arrowsmith 0, A Garner 9, A Maddison 16, F Hamnett 0, E Cutts not out 2, J Kirkham 15, extras 9; total 176. W T Sumnall five for 63.

Alsagers Bank.—I Shuffelbotham 0, H Lea 5, W Moore 2, R Downing 4, E Jones 1, L Jones 0, H B Green 15, W T Sumnall 1, W Beech 1, W Alton 2, L Downing 1, extras 9; total 39. J Kirkham four for 13; L Kirkham three for 7.

SIGNAL END v. FENTON. Signal End.—A W Ikin 35, K W Platt 15, D Riley 0, T B Hassall 34, L Ikin 40, G Harrison not out 58, A Whalley 0, J Downing 6, H Mayer not out 5, extras 29; total (for 7 wkts dec.) 222. A Smith five for 92.

Fenton.—J Booth 9, Rev J Wallace 15, A White 35, A Smith 0, S Degge 35, W Rawlingson 8, W B Leese 0, H Wainwright 2, T Mann 4, P McArdle not out 1, A Scarratt 1, extras 12; total 120.

WHITCHURCH v. AUDLEY. Whitchurch.—L E Norton 19, C Coffin 2, Rev D B Allen 29, J Lennon 8, R E B Smith 0, H Smith 28, H Casewell 27, S Jackson 10, K J Slater 1, Major W Worthington not out 17, H Madeley 2, extras 8; total 151.

Audley.—J Hancock 15, W White 0, R Dale 10, L Mizzell 48, H Fryer 12, M Tapley not out 7, C Fryer not out 5, extras 19; total (for 5 wkts) 114.

Ascombe Park v. Kidsgrove match abandoned.

Junior Division—Section "A" Norton 170 for 9 dec. (H Lowell 50, R Hallen 28, L Stonier 34). Porthill 129 for seven (J Brown 53, H Cooper 25). Burslem 104 (T Hollowood 29, T Johnson 41, W Lowe seven for 25, including hat-trick); Silverdale 111 for nine (L Taylor 38, W Fenton four for 55). Knypersley 111 (F Lawton 37, F Butler 29, F W V Dare four for 22, F T Boulton four for 35), Leek 118 for six (E Haywood 34, J Pedlar 23, H Kidd 27). Crowe 153 for 8 dec. (G Garrett 27, S Broad 37, J Middleton 26, G V McCandless 23, J Utting four for 53), Caverswall 45 (T Hassall five for 10, including hat-trick). Longton 169 (A Hodson 31, W Hine 32, A Jackson 25, T Pedley 24). Nantwich 141 for seven (D Ridyard 51, S W Cooper 37). Blythe C.W. 97 (H Amison 32, W Shenton eight for 31), Stone 61 (G Amison five for 14).

Junior Division—Section "B" Signal End 119 (J Lovatt 27, E Taylor 31, L Riley 28, W Bradbury four for 27, J Sutton five for 27), Fenton 61 (L Gibbons three for 8, H Mayer three for 16). Madeley 97 (A Salmon 49, A Eyres three for 9), Audley 44 (A Beech four for 23, H Phillips six for 19). Sneyd Colliery 145 (S Powell 21, J Mountford 24, G Rhodes four for 29), Great Chell 142 (F Wateis 52, A Barton four for 16, including hat-trick). Bottley 150 (T Burgess 57, J Ikin 30, N Bates three for 16, T Mullineux three for 20), Hartshill 130 (H Furey 49, B Madden seven for 29). Ashcombe Park 179 (F K Alcock 35, N Gordon 76, N Dean four for 12), Kidsgrove 102 (F Fryer 24, R Baynham 20, F K Alcock six for 37). Scot May 107 (A Wrench 55, F Harding 10), R Bollington 67 for 11, Cheddleton M.H. 57 for nine (J Haggart five for 21).

SCOT HAY LEAGUE

Madeley 66 (W Edwards five for 15), Levett 60 (A Hadcock 25, T Young six for 29), Wrennott 26, J J Beckett three for 11, G Cooper seven for 12; Halmerend 84 for eight (J Leech 20, T Whitby three for 29, F Maddock three for 12).

Alsagers Bank 68 (R Norcup 24, J Rhodes four for 27, J Sumnall three for three); Scot Hay 26 (A Dean six for 18, G Farnell four for eight).

LEEK AND TUNSTALL LEAGUE

Leek "A" 65 (G Imber 30, S Hollinstead four for 11, E Beech four for 12); Ball Hay Green 50 for nine (G Holden five for 25).

Harrishead 109 (E Stanier 25, F Lymer four for 21, A Hulme four for 20); Burslem Co-op 68 (G Beech six for 20), Goldenhill Dale-street 55 (S Evans six for 25); Butt Lane 38 (R Clarke eight for nine).

STONE LEAGUE—Division I.

Chesterton Congs. 51 (R Gent five for 17), Electricity S.C. 32 (H Sproston four for 14, R Howard six for 17).

Stone Lotus 133 for 8 dec. (J Williamson 20, W Farnell 25, B Tams 25, J Norris five for 35); Sideway 89 (H Williamson four for 25).

Aston-by-Stone 46 (G Mayer seven for 15, N Mayer three for 11), Moddershall 74 (J Tomkinson 21, F Riley 20, T Greatrex seven for 29).

Division II.

Carlton 41 (H Amison five for 16, S E Boden four for 16), Caverswall "A" 57 for eight (J Jordan five for 7).

Crecent Pottery 35 (D Clutton seven for 9), Longton G.W. 55 for six (D Clutton 25).

Platts Tiles 118 (C Llewellyn 35, W Jones 28, J Havascroft five for 30), Mintons 53 (J Poole three for 14, C Llewellyn three for 16), Skellam three for 7).

Newton 130 (F Edwards 29, W Ball 20, G Stevenson 22, B Buckley four for 57, E Hulme three for 27), Fenton Ams. 45 (W Leese six for 18).

Fenton G.D. 60 (M Penkethman 28, T Leech four for 27, A Parr three for 14); Butterton 42 (M Penkethman five for 16).

Division III.

Newcastle Wesley 118 (G Leese 24, G Wainwright 44, J Sumner four for 15), Caudon Tiles 73 (G Wainwright six for 15, J Clay three for 12, including hat-trick).

Sidway 97 (R Leese 25, N Windsor four for 36); Wolstanton St. John's 72 (F Cartledge four for 22, W Taylor five for 19).

Trent Social 59 (K Salmon five for 30); Butterton 14 (C T Stanier six for 4, W Wilson three for 10).

Carlton 65 (C Broad three for 28, G Thompson three for 17, E Myatt three for 11), L.M.S. Signals 62 (S Brookes four for 11, J Woodings five for 24).

Division IV.

Stone Lotus 28 (A Obrey three for 14, E Hardy five for 5); Mossley Colliery 59 (N Harris five for 20, A Clarke five for 26).

IKIN'S PART IN STAFFS. RALLY

| STAFFORDSHIRE | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| R SMITH b Booth | 7 |
| A B HOLLOWOOD c Dixon b Booth | 1 |
| Q PEDLEY b Robson | 40 |
| J I KIN b Lee | 76 |
| C O CLARKE b Booth | 13 |
| A CRUMP c Shield b Robson | 21 |
| R HAMMOND c Goulden b Robson | 18 |
| BRORDERICK not out | 23 |
| B SHARDLOW c Lee b Booth | 10 |
| W A ADAMS not out | 25 |
| Extras | 5 |
| Total (for 8 wkts) | 239 |

NORTHUMBERLAND ATTACK DEFIED

ADAMS HITS OUT

Staffordshire began the second match of their Northern tour by opposing Northumberland on the County ground, Newcastle-on-Tyne, to-day.

Staffordshire played the same team which defeated Durham, but Northumberland made two changes, H. C. Lee and N. Dixon coming in for Usher and Hunting.

Staffordshire had first use of what appeared to be a good wicket, but they made a bad start, Hollowood being smartly caught by Dixon behind the wicket off Booth in the second over with only two runs scored.

Pedley helped Smith to take the score to 21, but with his total at seven, Smith was well beaten by a ball from Booth which came through quickly.

Here Northumberland's success ended. Ikin joined Pedley and the pair watched the ball very carefully. They picked out the right ball to hit, however, and the score grew steadily, 50 going up after an hour's play.

Numerous bowling changes were tried without effect. Bad fielding gave Pedley a couple of lucky fours in one over from Robson. First, White failed to hold a square cut which went straight to him, and the next ball Goulden allowed to slip through his hands.

The partnership put on 66 for the third wicket before it was broken, but a good ball from Robson removed Pedley's bails after he had scored 40, including five fours.

The total was then 87, the result of 90 minutes' play. Five minutes later, Ikin sent up the hundred with a fine drive to the boundary off Robson. Clarke stayed with Ikin until lunch, which was taken with the score 110 for three.

IKIN'S FIFTY

Ikin reached his 50 shortly after the resumption by driving Allan to the boundary, but without further addition to the score Clarke was well beaten by Booth after scoring 13.

Crump came next, and after a quiet spell, Ikin set the crowd cheering with a mighty drive for six off Booth. White made numerous changes in the attack in an attempt to break up the partnership and eventually succeeded by transferring Lee from one end to the other. With his second ball, Lee bowled Ikin, who had played a grand innings of 76, including a six and seven fours. The effort occupied two hours.

Crump attempting to pull Robson to leg was well caught by Shield, six wickets being down for 163. Hammond and Broderick batted steadily, until Hammond was dropped in the long-field by Shield. He only added one more before he was well taken by Goulden on the boundary. Seven wickets were down for 194.

The second 100 had been passed before Shardlow was caught by Lee at backward point off Booth. Adams quickly started hitting and soon had four boundaries to his credit. Next he hit Allan for six and had 25 in quick time, passing Broderick's total.

STAFFS. CRICKET
SMITH JUST
MISSES HIS
CENTURY

RUN OUT AFTER
FINE INNINGS

FAST SCORING

Staffordshire's match with Northumberland in the Minor Counties Championship was continued at Jesmond, Newcastle, today, and in a little more than an hour's play the home county, who had scored 167 for three wickets overnight in reply to Staffordshire's 256, had gained first innings lead.

Stubbs and Crump opened the bowling, but at 195 Ikin replaced Stubbs. He soon met with success, getting Lee caught by Adams at deep mid-off. It was a brilliant catch. The score was now 199 for four. In his innings of 54, Lee hit one six and four 4's.

The 200 went up when Robson, the new batsman, hit a single off Ikin, but in his next over Ikin dislodged Robson's off stump with a good length ball. The score was now 213 for five.

Murray found an enterprising partner in T. A. W. White, the Northumberland captain, who promptly lifted Ikin to the leg boundary for four and then took a four off Crump.

At 255, Murray survived a confident appeal by Hammond for stumping. In the next over, after Murray had scored a single, a leg bye gave Northumberland the lead. White was then clean bowled by Ikin, who had taken the first three wickets to fall this morning.

The innings took a sensational turn after Shardlow was brought on for Crump. Almost immediately, he got Saunders caught by Pedley and in rapid succession Murray, Allan and Booth were sent back to the pavilion.

Shardlow took the last four wickets for seven runs in 2.3 overs. The Northumberland total was 270, giving them a first innings leading of 14 runs.

A BAD START

Staffordshire's second innings began badly when Saunders bowled Pedley with the second ball of his first over without a run on the board.

With the score at nine, Ikin was caught at the wicket by Dixon, off Booth, but Smith and Clarke defended steadily and the lunch interval was reached without further loss, the scoring being 31 for two.

After lunch, Smith and Clarke quickly sent up the 50 and Northumberland then tried a double bowling change, Lee taking over from Saunders and Robson relieving Booth.

At 2.30, a heavy shower drove the players to the pavilion. The score was then 79 for two.

On the resumption, Smith and Clarke hit out in fine style, and in 20 minutes Staffordshire put on 50 runs. At 137, Clarke was bowled by Saunders, his 67 including one six and ten 4's. The partnership had put on 128 runs for the third wicket, and Smith reached his 50 in the next over.

Smith was run out when only nine runs short of his century. He hit 12 fours. With the score at 200, Crump was caught and bowled by Booth, and 19 runs later Hollowood was l.b.w. to Booth, and Broderick was bowled by Saunders. Staffordshire were now 21 for seven.

STAFFORDSHIRE

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| First Innings: 256 | |
| Second Innings | |
| R SMITH run out | 91 |
| G PEDLEY b Saunders | 0 |
| J T IKIN c Dixon b Booth | 4 |
| O C CLARKE b Saunders | 67 |
| A B HOLLOWOOD lbw b Booth | 23 |
| S CRUMP c and b Booth | 2 |
| E BRODERICK b Saunders | 9 |
| R HAMMOND not out | 0 |
| Extras | 23 |
| Total (for 7 wkts) | 219 |

NORTHUMBERLAND

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| W S SHIELD c Hammond b Stubbs ... | 0 |
| T GOULDEN b Ikin | 37 |
| W G MACKAY b Pedley | 89 |
| H C LEE c Adams b Ikin | 54 |
| I MURRAY c Hollowood b Shardlow ... | 48 |
| ROBSON b Ikin | 2 |
| T A W WHITE b Ikin | 20 |
| O H SAUNDERS c Pedley b Shardlow ... | 1 |
| N DIXON not out | 8 |
| J L ALLAN b Shardlow | 2 |
| BOOTH st Hammond b Shardlow | 1 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 270 |

Staffordshire
in Drawn
Game

Scoring quickly in their second innings Staffordshire declared at the tea interval in their match with Northumberland at Newcastle yesterday, but rain prevented them making a bid for victory and the home side took points for a first innings lead.

Northumberland passed Staffordshire's first innings' total with five wickets in hand, but Shardlow finished off the innings so quickly that Staffordshire's arrears were only 14.

The visitors started badly in their second venture but Smith and Clarke completely changed the outlook. Clarke scored 67, including a 6 and ten 4's, and Smith was only nine short of a century when he was run out.

STAFFORDSHIRE

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| First Innings: 256 | |
| Second Innings | |
| R SMITH run out | 91 |
| G PEDLEY b Saunders | 0 |
| J T IKIN c Dixon b Booth | 4 |
| O C CLARKE b Saunders | 67 |
| A B HOLLOWOOD lbw b Booth | 23 |
| S CRUMP c and b Booth | 2 |
| E BRODERICK st Dixon b Robson | 9 |
| R HAMMOND lbw b Robson | 0 |
| R SHARDLOW not out | 18 |
| Extras | 24 |
| Total (for 8 wkts, dec.) | 244 |

NORTHUMBERLAND

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| W S SHIELD c Hammond b Stubbs ... | 0 |
| T GOULDEN b Ikin | 37 |
| W G MACKAY b Pedley | 89 |
| H C LEE c Adams b Ikin | 54 |
| I MURRAY c Hollowood b Shardlow ... | 48 |
| ROBSON b Ikin | 2 |
| T A W WHITE b Ikin | 20 |
| O H SAUNDERS c Pedley b Shardlow ... | 1 |
| N DIXON not out | 8 |
| J L ALLAN b Shardlow | 2 |
| BOOTH st Hammond b Shardlow | 1 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 270 |

Second Innings

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| T GOULDEN c Ikin b Stubbs | 5 |
| W G MACKAY c Ikin b Shardlow | 11 |
| W S SHIELD not out | 16 |
| H C LEE not out | 15 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total (for 2 wkts) | 53 |

COUNTY CRICKET

Staffordshire Team in the North

SPLENDID START AGAINST DURHAM

Roy Smith's First Century

By THE CRITIC

The Staffordshire team made the long journey North on Sunday in order to meet Durham at Norton-on-Tees on Monday and Tuesday, and Northumberland at Newcastle on Wednesday and Thursday. There were five changes from the side which had such an unhappy experience at Porthill last week against Yorks. H. R. S. Patterson, V. T. Tro-man, Reg. Halton, L. Lowe, and F. Taylor being replaced by C. C. Clarke, E. Broderick, G. Pedley, R. Hammond, and W. Stubbs. It could not, of course, be classed as the county's best XI, but it was the best that could be secured for the trip, and it was a useful all-round team. Indeed, it proved itself such by a meritorious day's work against Durham on Monday. Neither was the home side entirely representative, without A. H. Parnaby, W. T. Charlton, and the brothers Adamson. I believe it was the first time Staffordshire have played at Norton, a village with quite a good ground, and a strong league club, near to Stockton-on-Tees. The wicket was dry and fast, and looked likely to break up to some extent before the end of the match, in the absence of rain, though cricket pitches often belie their appearance in actual play. So it was impossible to say what advantage the side batting first would enjoy, but it seemed fairly certain that they would have an advantage if the pitch remained dry. In these circumstances the Staffordshire captain ought, of course, to have lost the toss, but, strange to say, he won it when it looked worth something.

A USEFUL START

Roy Smith and Bernard Hollowood went out to open the batting in cold and rather threatening weather, and had the task of withstanding the onslaught of F. I. Herbert, fast left-arm, and Latchford, medium, with the new ball. On the hard pitch Herbert looked really fast, and he twice hit Hollowood on the left thigh, blows which must have been painful, but the batsman just rubbed it and carried on. He was tied down to very slow scoring, but Smith progressed quicker, and the pair successfully wore some of the edge off the bowling, scoring 54 for the first wicket in 65 minutes. Carr had just previously been called up, and Hollowood got a bit mixed with one that went through quickly and was low. Geo. Pedley played Carr so comfortably for a few minutes that he seemed likely to be another good partner for Smith, but he made a dreadful hash of an ultra-slow off-break from a left arm bowler, J. Grigor, and let it bowl him. He shaped to go forward to it, changed his mind, stopped halfway, and made no stroke at all. It was a pity, for he looked like getting runs and probably would have done but for that fatal moment of indecision. But when Ikin mishit another of the slows towards cover and did not respond promptly to Smith's call for a run, with the result that he just failed to get in, it was even a greater pity. John was evidently interested in watching the ball which he had not got hold of properly and was unprepared for a sharp single. If he had sent his partner back Smith would probably have been run out, so he made an unsuccessful dash for it. If he had been ready to go at once he would have got there, but even so it was a risky run, and it was the striker's call, so Roy was not free from blame.

AN EXCELLENT PARTNERSHIP

With three wickets down for 67 things were not so good, but Smith and Clarke proceeded to put Staffordshire on velvet by adding 109 for the fourth wicket in an hour and three-quarters, and doing it by really good batting. Carr bowled very steadily, varied his pace, and tested the batsmen more than anyone else, but both maintained a sound defence and scored as opportunity offered, at the same time getting most of their runs at the other end. Smith had got his 50 out of 70 in just under an hour and a half without a mistake, and when eventually he reached the century for the first time in his career in any class of cricket the same stroke sent up 150. He had then batted two hours and 40 minutes, and his only possible chance was one late in his innings, which many fielders would not have touched. By an aerobic effort the fielder got his left hand to it, but could not grip it. His only other stroke of fortune was when the umpire gave him the benefit of the doubt in respect to an appeal for a low catch by the wicket-keeper standing back to Herbert. His score was then 65. It was the slow left hander who at last ended Smith's great innings, or I would rather say he ended it himself, for standing back to make a forcing shot on the off-side he failed to middle the ball and put a soft catch into the hands of point. The number of fours in his long score, viz. 9, was not much guide to the power of his strokes, for being always "on the carpet," many glorious shots were fielded near the boundary. He put his full strength behind his square cuts and off-drives, and got most of his runs on that side of the wicket. He batted in all just three hours.

A VIGOROUS TAIL

Clarke used to reach an excellent 50, a polished and chanceless innings, which showed the Burton player at his best, and that is very good. He showed facility in late cutting and gliding, and occasionally drove with plenty of power, and except for getting rather dangerously on top of one or two balls from Carr he timed everything to a nicety, and made his first mistake when Latchford seemed to deceive him with a slower ball which he put up to deep mid-off. He left at 200 after batting nearly an hour and three-quarters, and Hammond kept Stanley Crump company while another 31 were added, his defence being straight and sound until he pulled a short one on to the bottom of the leg stump, in a most curious way in trying to hook it. Crump was in aggressive mood, and hooked and drove so well that he soon had a quartet of fours and a magnificent hook for six. After another four for a smash past cover, he indulged his love of hooking to the extent of picking one that was not short enough, and so missed his 50 when he looked certain to get it.

The skipper has struck a very bad patch, and he failed again, but the ninth wicket took the score from 251 to 290 in 20 minutes. Broderick might have been caught in the slips, but had then hit five fours, two being capital straight drives, and Shardlow went for the bowling with great gusto. Grigor's slows were greatly to his liking, and besides several boundaries he straight drove the left-hander clean over the sight screen for six. Altogether Staffordshire batted four hours and 20 minutes.

A WELL VARIED ATTACK

Durham had rather more than an hour and three-quarters to bat before the close, and though the wicket still played well the varied and accurate Staffordshire bowling, skilfully managed by W. A. Adams, made such in-roads that when stumps were drawn they wanted 115 runs to save the follow-on with only four wickets in hand. Stubbs got a fine pace at the start, and was commendably accurate, whilst Broderick was at his best at the other end, bowling with vim

though he got no wickets. Townsend, the Durham captain, made two or three good strokes, and then gave an easy catch at mid-on in trying to hook the fast bowler. Beresford stayed 56 minutes for 10, and then Ikin trapped him leg before, and Crump, who in two short spells, one at each end, bowled 11 overs for eight runs, got Barron, a left-hand bat, easily caught at short leg. Bailey, a forcing bat new to county cricket, was rather severe on Ikin, but Shardlow came on to take a sharp return, and in the same over had Manners with an egregious long-hop, which the batsman tried to hit square, but which kept low and bowled him, to the amusement of everyone, except the batsman. Latchford and Grigor, by stone-walling, seemed likely to play out time, but a brain-wave of the captain's gave the last over to Pedley, and Latchford played his third ball on. That was the end of a perfect day from a Staffordshire point of view.

DURHAM DIE FIGHTING

The weather held fine on Tuesday, but the strong, cold wind persisted. By getting rid of the four outstanding Durham wickets in three-quarters of an hour for an addition of 52 runs Staffordshire almost assured ultimate victory, for the home county followed on 161 behind. Carr, the big hitter, accompanied Grigor to the wicket, and should have been stumped off Pedley before scoring, but Hammond was not quick enough, and allowed him to get back. Carr then straight drove Pedley out of the ground, across the adjacent railway, and through a window of one of the station buildings. Hollowood failed to hold a fast ball at point off the slow bowler, but Pedley had some compensation when Shardlow made a remarkable one-handed catch at the second attempt near the long-on boundary. Pedley's spin beat the left-handed, Grigor, and Crump, relieving Stubbs, bowled Glen with his first ball. The last wicket gave some trouble and added 30 before Shardlow came on to get Austin cleverly snapped up at short leg. Both the last two batsmen had been previously missed at the wicket, Austin offering a catch off Pedley, and Herbert a chance of stumping off Crump's leg-break. Crump's analysis testifies to his steadiness, and Shardlow and Pedley came out extremely well, though the last-named would have had better figures but for missed chances.

BAD LENGTH BOWLING

The expectations that the dry wicket would crumble were entirely falsified, for it played equally well right to the end. Fast bowlers could get no life out of it, but it was always moderately responsive to spin. After the roller it was as easy as at any stage of the game, and Townsend and Beresford put up 63 in 45 minutes before Crump got rid of the Durham skipper, who, curiously enough, was at one point caught off two consecutive no-balls from Stubbs. Ikin followed with a useful wicket, but Barron hit well while Beresford plodded slowly on, and the pair added 54 for the third wicket. The breaking of this partnership by Broderick was followed by something of a collapse. Beresford, who was at the wicket an hour and 50 minutes, soon fell to a very smart catch, low down on the off side, by Hammond, but Grigor and Carr added 30 in 15 minutes, both taking advantage of too many slow balls of bad length. Crump, who took the wickets of three dangerous men, and Shardlow, who proved effective amongst the later batsmen, prevented any chance of Durham saving the game, though the left-hander, like Pedley, served up some short ones, and such bad balls gave Grigor nearly all his runs. The fielding was not as keen as usual.

In wiping off the arrears and setting Staffordshire 55 runs to get, the Northerners did better than was expected, and better than they would have done if the bowling had been more consistent in length. Most of the bowlers, however, did something useful, and Shardlow's six wickets in the match for under five runs a-piece was an important contribution to the victory, as was Crump's steadiness whilst spinning the ball both ways.

ROCK-LIKE ROY SMITH

Staffordshire lost three wickets before Pedley made the winning hit. Clarke, who opened because Hollowood was slightly indisposed, had the bad luck to touch a ball that swung late and was caught at the wicket; Ikin mishit a ball he would normally have scored four runs from, and Crump tried to cut a ball he could hardly reach, and gave the wicket-keeper another chance. All the time Smith was as steady as a rock, and had the satisfaction, though facing the new ball in both innings, of scoring 140 runs in the match for once out, which put into the shade anything he had previously done in county cricket.

Scores and analysis:—

STAFFORDSHIRE.—1st Inns.

| | |
|----------------------------------------|-----|
| R. Smith c Herbert b Grigor | 116 |
| A. B. Hollowood lbw b Carr | 17 |
| G. Pedley b Grigor | 0 |
| J. T. Ikin run out | 2 |
| C. C. Clarke c Townsend b Latchford .. | 51 |
| S. Crump b Herbert | 44 |
| R. Hammond b Herbert | 4 |
| E. Broderick c Manners b Carr | 25 |
| W. A. Adams b Manners | 0 |
| B. Shardlow c Beresford b Grigor ... | 33 |
| W. Stubbs not out | 0 |
| Extras | 2 |
| Total | 294 |

2nd Inns.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| R. Smith not | 24 |
| G. Pedley not out | 10 |
| J. T. Ikin c Glen b Grigor | 10 |
| C. C. Clarke c Austin b Latchford ... | 0 |
| S. Crump c Austin b Carr | 5 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total (3 wkts.) | 55 |

DURHAM.—1st Inns.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| D. C. H. Townsend c Smith b Stubbs .. | 19 |
| J. Beresford lbw b Ikin | 10 |
| H. E. Bailey c and b Shardlow | 28 |
| W. Barron c Stubbs b Crump | 6 |
| E. Manners b Shardlow | 0 |
| Latchford b Pedley | 6 |
| J. Grigor b Pedley | 16 |
| Carr c Shardlow b Pedley | 9 |
| D. Glen b Crump | 2 |
| A. W. Austin c Ikin b Shardlow ... | 15 |
| F. I. Herbert not out | 12 |
| Extras | 10 |
| Total | 133 |

2nd Inns.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| D. C. H. Townsend lbw b Crump ... | 41 |
| J. Beresford c Hammond b Broderick .. | 41 |
| H. E. Bailey lbw b Ikin | 3 |
| W. Barron b Broderick | 35 |
| E. Manners c Broderick b Pedley .. | 8 |
| Latchford b Crump | 7 |
| J. Grigor not out | 39 |
| Carr b Crump | 20 |
| D. Glen b Shardlow | 9 |
| A. W. Austin c Clarke b Shardlow .. | 4 |
| F. I. Herbert b Shardlow | 0 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 215 |

Staffordshire v. Northumberland

HEAVY SCORING AT JESMOND

By THE CRITIC

Going on from Norton to Newcastle, Staffordshire commenced a match with Northumberland on the excellent county ground at Jesmond on Wednesday. The pitch was in perfect condition for run-getting, and by the end of the day 423 runs had been scored for the loss of 13 wickets. The home county had an advantage at the close of play, getting within 89 of the visitors' score with seven wickets in hand. Northumberland can command a powerful side, especially in batting, and they were at practically full strength with the exception of Usher, a hard-hitting amateur, whose place was taken by Horace Lee, one of the most brilliant batsmen in the Minor Counties. They included an old stalwart in Mackay, a fine young batsman in Goulden, now in his second season of county cricket, and Murray, an 18-years-old batsman, who had created a mild sensation by scoring 175 runs in his first three innings for the county, including a century and a half-century, without once losing his wicket. As the Jesmond wicket is always full of runs in the absence of rain, the Staffordshire bowlers were likely to be severely tested.

A BAD START AND RECOVERY

The Staffordshire captain won the toss, but there was no advantage in batting first unless there was a change in the weather. Bernard Hollowood (not fully recovered from a bad cold) and Roy Smith opened the Staffordshire innings, and as both had gone with only 21 runs scored, the start was disastrous. Hollowood was caught at the wicket, and Smith bowled in trying to get Booth, slow left arm, away to the on. Pedley showed how useful he would be if he could play more county cricket, by playing the fast bowling of Allan, the cleverly mixed slows of Booth, and three change bowlers, without difficulty or mistake, for an hour and 23 minutes. At the other end Ikin was master of all the bowling, and the pair added 66 runs for the third wicket. Then Pedley fell to a slow yorker. He was especially neat in his late cutting and gliding, and made several straight drives that never left the ground.

Clarke helped Ikin to put on 30, and was then beaten by a choice leg-break. A further 42 came from the association of Ikin and Crump, the young left-hander hitting a six and seven fours in a stay of two hours and 10 minutes, and losing his wicket in the same way as Pedley by hitting over a Yorker. Crump soon followed him as the result of a hesitant stroke which presented backward short-leg with an easy catch. Six wickets for 163 was not good enough on such a wicket, but the later batsmen showed up well. Hammond and Broderick added 31 runs by good batting if a little slow, and when Hammond was caught on the boundary, Shardlow hit a four and a six to send up the second hundred. By a bad stroke he made way for the captain, who had the depressing

record of two runs in five innings. He broke the spell by starting off with a fine low drive for four, followed by two more boundaries. A little later he drove a glorious six clean over the trees into the cemetery, and from the other end got another six with an off drive into the pavilion enclosure. Besides his two sixes, his hits were four fours, a three, a two, and two singles, and he scored his 37 out of 43 in 25 minutes. He might well have got more if he had continued to use his reach and hit straight, but he tried to mow a leg-break with fatal result. Broderick carried his bat after batting correctly for an hour and 23 minutes. The Staffordshire innings lasted practically four hours.

GOOD BATTING AND GOOD FORTUNE

Northumberland lost Shield, caught at the wicket with only six runs scored, but Mackay and Goulden put on 77 in 75 minutes, both batting well, though the Staffordshire players were dissatisfied with a couple of decisions. Mackay was early given the benefit of the doubt, if such there was, in an appeal for lbw by Crump, and when Clarke threw the wicket down there was a loud appeal for run out against Goulden. Ikin effected a separation in his second over, and Lee was extremely fortunate to survive his first quarter of an hour. He could make nothing of Shardlow, who deserved his wicket. First of all he hit Ikin up to long-off, but Pedley apparently lost sight of the ball and did not move to it. Then Shardlow almost bowled him three times, and on one occasion he jumped out and looked much like being stumped, but the decision was in his favour. He had only scored 10 when Adams failed to hold a catch at mid off from Shardlow's bowling, and only just failed to secure it at the second attempt. He lost Mackay at 159, bowled in Pedley's second over, but the bowlers met with no further success. Mackay got his runs in two hours, and hit a six and 10 fours. It was an admirable innings, and was the main feature of the Northerners' strong bid for a first innings lead. Before the close Lee hit a splendid six clean out of the field near the pavilion, but his 38 included no fewer than 16 singles, which must be an unusual proportion for him.

STAFFORDSHIRE DESERVED MORE THAN ONE POINT

Brilliant Batting by Clarke and Smith

Good batting by Lee and Murray, aided by White, secured first innings points for Northumberland, but though the home county passed the Staffordshire score with five wickets in hand, they got a lead of only 14. Shardlow, who had had bad luck, came into his own with four wickets for seven in his last 2½ overs, and Ikin also bowled well.

After two Staffordshire wickets had gone for nine runs, Smith and Clarke shared the most brilliant partnership seen on behalf of the county for a long time. They scored 126 in 63 minutes by splendid hitting without a mistake, until Clarke tried a pull once too often, and the ball keeping low, was bowled. He hit a fine square six and 10 fours, and Smith, with a dozen fours, seemed certain of his second century of the tour until Hollowood called him for an ill-judged second run which cost him his wicket, a piece of extremely bad luck. He was another great innings,

and the only flaw was a possible chance of stumping on the leg side just before he was out.

Forcing the pace Staffordshire lost more wickets, but the captain was able to declare at tea time, and set the home side 231 to get in two hours. Two good wickets were soon captured, but Shield and Lee held up for a time, and Ikin put an end to the match about half-past five.

Though they got only one point out of six, which reduced the percentage from 66.66 to 54.16, they were by no means disgraced, and gave a creditable show against what may be the most powerful side in the Minor Counties' competition.

STAFFORDSHIRE.—1st Inns.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| R. Smith b Booth | 7 |
| A. B. Hollowood c Dixon b Booth | 1 |
| G. Pedley b Robson | 40 |
| J. T. Ikin b Lee | 75 |
| C. C. Clarke b Booth | 13 |
| S. Crump c Shield b Robson | 21 |
| H. Hammond c Goulden b Robson | 13 |
| E. Broderick not out | 24 |
| R. Shardlow c Lee b Booth | 10 |
| W. A. Adams b Robson | 37 |
| W. Stubbs c and b Robson | 4 |
| Extras | 5 |
| Total | 235 |

2nd Inns.

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| R. Smith run out | 51 |
| A. B. Hollowood lbw b Booth | 23 |
| G. Pedley b Saunders | 0 |
| J. T. Ikin c Dixon b Booth | 4 |
| C. C. Clarke b Saunders | 67 |
| S. Crump c and b Booth | 2 |
| R. Hammond lbw b Robson | 6 |
| E. Broderick st Dixon b Robson | 9 |
| B. Shardlow not out | 13 |
| Extras | 24 |
| Total (inns. closed) | 244 |

NORTHUMBERLAND.—1st Inns.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| W. S. Shield c Hammond b Stubbs | 0 |
| T. Goulden b Ikin | 37 |
| W. G. Mackay b Pedley | 39 |
| H. C. Lee c Adams b Ikin | 54 |
| I. Murray c Hollowood b Shardlow | 48 |
| Robson b Ikin | 2 |
| T. A. White b Ikin | 20 |
| C. H. Saunders c Pedley b Shardlow | 1 |
| N. Dixon not out | 5 |
| J. L. Allan b Shardlow | 2 |
| Booth st Hammond b Shardlow | 1 |
| Extras | 3 |
| Total | 270 |

2nd Inns.

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| W. S. Shield not out | 15 |
| T. Goulden c Ikin b Stubbs | 5 |
| W. G. Mackay c Ikin b Shardlow | 11 |
| H. C. Lee not out | 15 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total (2 wkts.) | 53 |

BOWLING ANALYSIS

| Staffs.—1st Inns. | O. | M. | R. | W. | 2nd Inns. | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|---------------------------|-------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|----|
| Allan | 33 | 6 | 80 | 0 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Booth | 26 | 10 | 75 | 4 | 13 | 3 | 53 | 3 | — |
| Robson | 18.35 | 56 | 5 | — | 3.50 | 54 | 2 | — | — |
| Saunders | 7 | 1 | 24 | 0 | 17 | 2 | 31 | 2 | — |
| Lee | 7 | 2 | 16 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 32 | 0 | — |
| Northumberland.—1st Inns. | O. | M. | R. | W. | 2nd Inns. | O. | M. | R. | W. |
| Stebbs | 14 | 3 | 33 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 13 | 1 | — |
| Crump | 24 | 1 | 66 | 0 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 0 | — |
| Broderick | 7 | 2 | 15 | 0 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Shardlow | 23.37 | 68 | 4 | — | 4 | 0 | 19 | 1 | — |
| Ikin | 20 | 1 | 66 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 14 | 0 | — |
| Pedley | 3 | 0 | 14 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 0 | — |

STAFFORDSHIRE'S MATCH WITH YORKSHIRE II.

Rain Causes Early Suspension

ONLY TWO OVERS BOWLED

A. W. Ikin, the Bignall End cricketer who last played for Staffordshire in 1931, was recalled to the county team to-day when the return match with Yorkshire II. was begun at Wakefield.

Following the changes which had to be made in the Staffordshire team on Saturday, Fred Taylor, the Burslem professional, was unable to play, and A. W. Ikin was called upon to fill the last-minute vacancy.

Staffordshire, who were hoping to gain revenge for their defeat at Porthill early last month, included two players who were making their first appearance in Minor Counties' cricket. They were T. R. Deighton, the wellknown Staffordshire golfer, who is a master at Denstone College, and J. E. Blair, the Stafford wicket-keeper. In the absence of W. A. Adams, Staffordshire were captained by L. E. Gale.

THE TEAMS

Yorkshire II. were strongly represented under the captaincy of E. J. H. Dixon, the Oxford Blue. Colonel R. C. Chichester-Constable, the usual captain, was suffering from an injured shoulder. In the Yorkshire side was the Cambridge Blue, M. A. C. P. Kaye. Teams:—

Yorkshire.—E. J. H. Dixon, M. A. C. P. Kaye, Halliday, Wetherill, Watson, Beaumont, Hamer, Cawthray, Tomlinson, Crick, Vickers.

Staffordshire.—L. E. Gale, R. Smith, R. S. Patterson, C. C. Clarke, T. R. Deighton, S. Crump, A. W. Ikin, E. Broderick, J. E. Blair, B. Shardlow, W. Stubbs.

The wicket had been covered over the week-end and appeared to be in excellent condition. Staffordshire won the toss and took first innings, but hardly had play started when rain began to fall and the players were driven back to the pavilion. Two runs had been scored in two overs. The rain persisted and it was quickly decided that no further play was possible before lunch.

The rain had ceased after lunch, but an inspection of the wicket revealed it unfit for play. A further inspection, it was announced, would be made at 4.15 p.m.

STAFFORDSHIRE

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| R SMITH not out | 1 |
| R S PATTERSON not out | 1 |
| Total (for no wkt) | 2 |

No further play yet.

COUNTY CRICKET

Staffordshire v. Yorkshire II.

DISAPPOINTMENT AT WAKEFIELD

By THE CRITIC

Staffordshire began the return match with Yorks. II. at Wakefield on Monday. It is literally true to say they began, but it would not be correct to say they did anything more than that, for after precisely five minutes play, during which one uneventful over was bowled at each end, rain drove the players back to the pavilion, and continued long enough to make the already soft wicket unplayable for the day. The captains and umpires inspected the pitch many times during the long wait, and the hope of getting some cricket was not abandoned until 5-30. The weather continued dull with little wind, and there was nothing to dry the saturated pitch, occasional light rain also delaying the process of recovery. It was a pity, for the wicket was a beauty, a perfect piece of natural turf. Having won the toss L. E. Gale gained an advantage that might have been decisive if the match could have proceeded, for the pitch at the start was soft enough to play easily for some time, with the prospect of becoming difficult as it dried out. But the rain wiped that advantage out, for however it might play on Tuesday there was little chance of finishing the match in one day, and first innings points would do nothing to improve Staffordshire's percentage. But for that brief start, the match would have been played as a one-day match, and decided on the first innings.

In the absence of W. A. Adams, Leslie Gale acted as captain, and there were several late changes in the constitution of the team. R. Hammond was unable to play, and the Stafford wicket-keeper, J. E. Blair, obligingly filled the vacancy. J. T. Ikin was required to play in a league match in Lancashire on Tuesday, and F. Taylor met with an accident at home late on Saturday night. T. R. Deighton, one of the Denstone College masters, also responded to a late invitation, and A. W. Ikin was on Sunday secured to take the place of his son after an absence from the county team of seven years.

In the five minutes' play two runs were scored by R. Smith and R. S. Patterson.

A SATURATED WICKET

Further disappointment was in store on Tuesday, for though there was no rain after 8 a.m. beyond just a few drops in the forenoon, the already wet wicket had been saturated by a heavy shower between 7.0 and 8.0, and in the absence of either sun or wind to dry it there was practically no improvement up to lunch time. In the hope that some play would be possible an early lunch was taken, but a further inspection resulted in the abandonment of the match just before 2 o'clock, when it was obvious that play would not be possible for several hours if at all. For all the players it was, of course, an exasperating experience, and it was especially regrettable in the case of T. R. Deighton and J. E. Blair, who had responded to late invitations to play for the county for the first time.

Five minutes' play on Monday morning produced the following scores:—

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| STAFFORDSHIRE | |
| R. Smith not out | 1 |
| R. S. Patterson not out | 1 |
| — | |
| Total | 2 |
| C. C. Clarke, L. E. Gale, T. R. Deighton, S. Crump, A. W. Ikin, E. Broderick, J. E. Blair, B. Shardlow, and W. Stubbs did not bat. | |

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE CRICKET LEAGUE

"The Enemy" at Large

BAD LUCK OF LONGTON AND PORTHILL

By THE CRITIC

BAD weather, that arch enemy of cricket, made a sad mess of last Saturday's programme. There was so much rain in the latter part of the week, and such frequent and drenching showers on Saturday morning, that the wonder was not that play was greatly interfered with, but that there was any play anywhere. My own visit to Longton was a fruitless journey, for there was no play at all, and the same disappointment was experienced at Porthill, where Knypersley were the visitors. All the clubs have suffered more or less severely in a financial sense this season from the fact that the summer has so far produced only one or two days when cricket could be watched in warm, summery conditions, but Longton and Porthill, and perhaps some others, have been specially unfortunate. Both have had the "gate" ruined at their most attractive matches.

To take the case of Longton, bad weather has intervened for their home matches with the two top clubs, Burslem and Nantwich, and their nearest neighbours and local rivals, Caverswall, and the loss would probably be understated at £50. The case of Porthill is somewhat similar, for though, prior to Saturday, they have always been able to play during some part of the afternoon or evening, the conditions have been so bad for their best drawing fixtures that the receipts have been almost negligible. Following upon a disastrous season in the same sense in 1937, this kind of experience makes it extremely difficult for clubs to pry their way. Generally speaking, however, they face their misfortunes philosophically, and raise money by a variety of extraneous efforts, both in summer and winter.

CHOICE OF INNINGS

Fortune smiled on Nantwich and Blythe Works, at least comparatively, for they were the only competitors who were able to play and win. And the Cheshire town was the only place where there was no interference. With a wet wicket and a drying wind one would have thought batting first would be likely to prove a definite advantage. According to all one's own experience such wickets generally play easily at first, and less easily after two or three hours of a drying wind, besides which the natural cutting up of the wicket during the first innings is a factor of some importance.

So the decision of the Silverdale captain on winning the toss to give the home side the first innings sounds like mistaken policy, and the result appears to bear out the idea, for I understand that the ball was nipping more quickly off the pitch late in the afternoon, to the discomfiture of the Silverdale batsmen. It is, in fact, significant that the team batting last had the worse of the argument in three of the four games, the exception being at Leek, where the pitch

remained easy-paced throughout. Here also Burslem, on winning the toss, sent the home team in first, but I suspect the consideration was the threat of more rain, and the hope that their effective bowling would enable them to snatch a win while the weather held. It did not rain and Leek were able to declare, but Burslem had no difficulty in holding their own, and even finished in a strong position.

CREWE'S PRECARIOUS POSITION

Stone had a struggling time at Norton, but succeeded in saving a valuable point, and as the Alexandra were beaten at Cresswell they drop to the bottom of the table instead of being bracketed with two competitors in that position. The Crewe side have made their situation much more precarious by losing consecutive matches to two of their lowly rivals.

There was a long wait at Longton, but the plot was so saturated and muddy that even the preparation of a fresh wicket held out little hope of play. It was nearly 5 o'clock when the captains gave it up, and a few minutes later there was another considerable shower.

RESULTS IN BRIEF:

Blythe Works 116, Crewe Alexandra 70.
Nantwich 179, Silverdale 61.
Leek 150 for 6 (dec.), Burslem 81 for 2.
Norton 120 for 6 (dec.), Stone 42 for 7.
Porthill v. Knypersley, no play.
Longton v. Caverswall, no play.

LEAGUE TABLE

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | Pts. |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|------|
| Burslem | 14 | 11 | 2 | 1 | 34 |
| Nantwich | 14 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 26 |
| Knypersley | 14 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 24 |
| Norton | 14 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 24 |
| Caverswall | 14 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 22 |
| Leek | 14 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 21 |
| Longton | 14 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 21 |
| Porthill | 14 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 18 |
| Blythe Works | 14 | 4 | 9 | 1 | 13 |
| Silverdale | 14 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 11 |
| Stone | 14 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 11 |
| Crewe Alex. | 14 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 10 |

ARTHUR SMITH'S HIGHEST SCORE OF THE SEASON

Though he has only twice been out for a single figure score, Arthur Smith, the Norton professional, had prior to Saturday only once reached 50-54 against Leek on Whit Monday. So carrying his bat through against Stone for 75 of the 129 for six at which the Norton innings was declared, he made his highest score of the season. It was only the third time that he had scored as many as 50, which is remarkable; and he ought really to have been out at about that score on this occasion, for he jumped in to Shardlow without connecting and should have been stumped. That was the only chance he offered in an innings of much charm which lasted two hours. The consistency with which

he has made between 20 and 30 is indicated by an average of almost 29 with no not out innings to help it until Saturday.

There was a late start and several interruptions, and Stone had no great difficulty in playing out time, in spite of an almost sensationally successful spell by the Norton captain, W. Deakin. He tried most of his bowlers before going on himself, and Stanley Welch had bowled well without making any great impression. The Stone batsmen appeared to be so obsessed with the need for caution that several were caught from unnatural and tame strokes, and in seven overs Deakin secured five wickets for six runs. On the soft pitch he turned the ball back, but was inclined to be short and was a little flattered by such outstanding figures.

ERIC BRODERICK IN BATTING FORM

Rain played an unpleasant part in the game in which the League leaders figured at Highfield. The start was not much delayed, but the wicket was soft, the out-field slow, and the ball wet most of the time. Just when the ground was beginning to dry under the influence of the strong wind, rain storms supervened to delay the game and wet the surface again. One such shower help up the proceedings for the greater part of an hour, and after a shorter interval during the Burslem innings an unpleasant drizzle persisted without being sufficiently heavy to send the players in again.

So bowlers had a rather thankless task. Batting two hours Leek put together 150 for six before declaring, and giving the visitors about an hour and a-half to bat. The feature of the Leek innings was the excellent batting of E. Broderick, who went in first in the absence of Len Crump and took out his bat for 75. He played Taylor and Roy Hollowood with skill and confidence, and made only one slight error. At 26 he played Taylor to leg without keeping the ball down, but Arthur Birch, fielding very close in at short leg, found the ball too quick to make a catch. Otherwise he was in no difficulty, made no faulty stroke, and scored neatly all round the wicket. His chief helper was Harold Birch, who contributed 29 towards a sixth-wicket partnership of 66.

Hollowood secured three of the wickets which raised his aggregate for the season to exactly 50, but Taylor found the pitch too lifeless, and his two wickets cost him 48 runs. Burslem were never within sight of getting the runs. C. G. Dexter made 23, not out, and T. G. Hollowood 22.

VALUABLE WIN FOR BLYTHE WORKS

The match at Cresswell was fraught with fateful consequences for both sides. It was the second consecutive away match of the Alexandra against other teams also in the relegation zone, and their experience at Silverdale was repeated with curious exactitude. Whereas Silverdale scored 114 against them and dismissed them for 76, the Works totalled 116 and got rid of their visitors for 70. The only difference was that they were sent in first at Silverdale, and the home team lost only seven wickets in scoring their 114, whereas Blythe Works batted first and were all out.

A. E. Bennett again proved himself a dependable opening bat by a more than useful innings of 28, and C. Turner later helped materially with 27. J. Hosack's off-spinners brought him five wickets for 31, and J. Prince, with similar bowling except that being a left-arm

bowler he was turning them the other way, got four for 27. The Works attack was always a little too good for the visitors, and again it was off-breaks that did a good deal of the mischief, for George Mayer came out with four wickets for 24.

NANTWICH AS RUNNERS-UP

Nantwich, profiting by the generosity of Silverdale in giving them first use of a soft wicket, rubbed two points off the long lead of Burslem, and as Kypersley and Norton had to be content with a point, became for the time being undisputed runners-up. They did not give early promise of a big score, but J. E. Smith (33) and G. Bull (38) greatly improved matters, and J. Sproston later hit up 30. F. Vardy was nearly the only Silverdale bowler who could get wickets, and eight fell to him, but he was terribly expensive, no fewer than 96 runs being scored from him.

Silverdale batsmen were at sea with Maybury's cleverly mixed bowling, and the Nantwich captain took his total of victims for the season to 58 by capturing seven wickets for 32. Fred Steele, of football fame, batted nicely in collecting 20 of Silverdale's modest 61.

ERDINGTON V. LICHFIELD

Lichfield visited Erdington on Saturday and won with a margin of 10 runs. F. Oram, for the visitors, took five wickets for 30. Scores:—

Lichfield: Plant 6, Strivens 6, Codling 6, Ashpole 6, Strivens 39, Lidwell 6, Shelton 13, Stockley 6, Codling 6, Strivens 6, Brown 6, Sutton 4, Temple 1, Sutton 0, Mellor 1, Sutton 19, Ellett 6 and 6, Strivens 1, Hamilton 1, Sutton 0, Oram not out 1, Marlow 1, Clements 1, Strivens 2, extras 5; total 96.

Erdington: L. V. Strivens 6, Mellor 14, Clements 6, Temple 6, Oram 3, M. R. Strivens 6, Ashpole 6, Mellor 14, Gwinnett 6, Oram 1, Codling 1, Temple 6, Ashpole 12, G. C. Strivens 6, Ashpole 6, Oram 0, Hindson 6, Oram 13, Power 6 and 6, Ashpole 7, Sutton not out 9, Dr. Daly 6, Mellor 2, Howard 6, Oram 1, extras 10; total 86.

DISMISS NORTHUMBERLAND FOR 157 RUNS

STAN. CRUMP TAKES THE BOWLING HONOURS

Playing for the first time on the Michelin Athletic Club's ground at Stoke, Staffordshire accomplished a fine performance in dismissing Northumberland for 157 on an easy paced wicket. Although E. J. Wakelin had one fine spell in which he dismissed three batsmen, Stan Crump took the bowling honours with a return of four wickets for 34 runs.

Playing their second home match of the season in the Minor Counties cricket championship, against Northumberland to-day, Staffordshire tried a new venue, allotting the game to the ground of the Michelin Athletic Club.

The spacious Michelin ground is ideal for county cricket, and the members of the club had shown their appreciation of the County Club's action by helping assiduously in the provision of extra seating accommodation.

In their away games this season, Staffordshire had done well and before to-day's match occupied sixth position in the table, immediately behind Northumberland. The latter team, who gained a first innings points win against Staffordshire last month, were beaten for the first time in a slow scoring game again Yorkshire II yesterday.

LAST MINUTE CHANGE

The weather, fortunately, was fine and warm, and a prompt start was possible. The wicket was rather slow and soft after the recent rain, but Northumberland, winning the toss, had no hesitation in batting first.

The visitors were represented by the same team which lost to Yorkshire II., but Staffordshire had to make a last minute change. R. S. Patterson, the Walsall batsman, playing in a club match yesterday, was hit in the face so severely that he had to be taken to hospital for attention. He had to withdraw from to-day's team and L. Crump, of Leek, took his place.

E. J. Wakelin, the Caverswall fast bowler, assisting the county for the first time this season, opened the bowling for Staffordshire with Taylor, against Mackay and Murray.

Though Mackay square-cut Wakelin for four and a late cut off Taylor brought Murray a couple, the bowling was hostile. Murray, in particular, was uncomfortable against Taylor, while Mackay survived an l.b.w. appeal from Wakelin. After 25 minutes play, only 13 runs had been scored.

SHARDLOW'S SUCCESS

So far the wicket had played easily, but the batsmen only made slow progress until Mackay hooked Wakelin for a six.

Following this, with the score at 27, Shardlow relieved Wakelin, and his first over dismissed Mackay l.b.w., after a similar appeal the previous ball had been negatived. Mackay had scored 19 of the 28 runs obtained in three-quarters of an hour.

Staffordshire's fielding was good and Newman, who followed, just escaped being run out off the last ball of the over. At 32, Taylor, who had bowled without any luck for eight overs, while conceding eight runs, was relieved by Crump.

Crump also kept the batsmen defending, and when, at 38, he dismissed Murray for a patient 14, the innings had been in progress for 65 minutes.

When eventually Lee got four off Shardlow, it was a lucky hit, for it went off the edge of the bat past point. After this, however, Lee began to show the best batting of the morning, driving Crump straight and cutting Shardlow beautifully for fours, and at 72 Ikin and Taylor represented a double change. They were unable to end the partnership, which at lunch had taken the score to 88 and had put Northumberland in a sound position.

WAKELIN'S SUCCESS

Quickly Captures Three Wickets

Staffordshire quickly improved their position after lunch, when Wakelin, resuming with S. Crump, captured three wickets. First of all, at 99, he had Lee l.b.w. This player had batted about an hour for his 41 runs, which included four boundaries, and his aggressiveness was in sharp contrast to the defensive play of his colleagues.

Wakelin, in his next over, bowled Goulden with a ball of perfect length. This was at 103, and Wakelin, continuing his deadly spell, took another wicket at 112.

This third victim, secured in three overs at a cost of 14 runs, was Newman, whose innings had been so much a defensive one that after an hour and a half at the wicket he had scored only 21 runs.

Newman was smartly caught at the wicket after touching a rising ball, and thus Blair, the Staffordshire wicket-keeper, making his debut for the county, as was T. R. Deighton, signalled his first appearance. He had kept wicket well throughout the match.

WHITE'S SIX

Robson and White prevented any further collapse, White hitting Wakelin for a six and four off successive balls. Taylor was recalled in place of the fast bowler at 132, but it was Crump who got the next wicket, Robson playing on at 138.

Northumberland's innings, which had fluctuated considerably, ended on a note of collapse, the last four wickets falling in 10 minutes. The quick fall of wickets

started at 150 when Taylor gained reward for consistently good bowling by taking his first wicket. It was that of White, who had a six, three fours and a three in his 29, and who was well taken at the wicket. One run later, Taylor bowled Hunting and then Crump finished off the innings by dismissing Saunders and Allen in successive overs.

Eight wickets had fallen in 80 minutes after lunch, while 69 runs were being scored.

Wakelin had one fine spell, but the bowling honours went to Crump, whose four wickets cost just over eight runs each.

STAFFORDSHIRE'S REPLY

Northumberland set an attacking field when L. H. Crump and R. Smith opened Staffordshire's reply. The batsmen opened confidently, but with 10 scored in three overs Smith was brilliantly caught in the slips.

Ikin had a bright knock before being caught and bowled. In contrast to Northumberland, Staffordshire scored 29 runs in 20 minutes.

| NORTHUMBERLAND | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| W G MACKAY lbw b Shardlow | 19 |
| I MURRAY lbw b Crump (8) | 14 |
| N A NEWMAN c Blair b Wakelin | 21 |
| H O LEE lbw b Wakelin | 41 |
| T GOULDEN b Wakelin | 1 |
| ROBSON b Crump (8) | 11 |
| T A W WHITE c Mayer b Taylor | 29 |
| O P M HUNTING b Taylor | 4 |
| O H SANDERS b Crump (8) | 7 |
| J L ALLEN c and b Crump (8) | 0 |
| BOOTH not out | 0 |
| Extras | 10 |
| Total | 157 |

| STAFFORDSHIRE | |
|------------------------|----|
| R SMITH c Lee b Allen | 7 |
| L H CRUMP not out | 9 |
| J T IKIN c and b Booth | 15 |
| O O CLARKE not out | 0 |
| Total (for 2 wks) | 31 |

| BOWLING ANALYSIS | | | | |
|------------------------------|------|----|----|----|
| Northumberland—First Innings | | | | |
| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
| Wakelin | 13 | 1 | 51 | 3 |
| Taylor | 17 | 1 | 25 | 2 |
| Shardlow | 12 | 3 | 25 | 1 |
| S Crump | 22.3 | 6 | 34 | 4 |
| Ikin | 3 | 0 | 12 | 0 |



STAFFORDSHIRE, led by W. A. Adams, taking the field for their Minor Counties cricket fixture against Northumberland at the Michelin ground, Stoke, to-day.

TRIUMPH BY FIVE WICKETS

NORTHUMBERLAND COLLAPSE

TAYLOR'S FINE BOWLING

Largely because of the brilliant batting of C. C. Clarke, who in an innings of 92 hit a six and 14 fours, Staffordshire were in a sound position when they resumed their Minor Counties cricket match with Northumberland on the Michelin Athletic ground, Stoke, to-day.

When Clarke went in last night, Staffordshire had lost three wickets for 36 in response to a score of 157, but when play ended they were 41 ahead with two wickets in hand.

This morning, in fine weather, Staffordshire quickly strengthened their position, for Wakelin and Shardlow, the overnight not outs, scored freely. Shardlow, who last night hit a six, quickly drove Booth straight for another, and he and Wakelin took fours off both bowlers, Booth and Saunders.

The result was that they added 36 in under half an hour before Wakelin was caught at the wicket at 234. Just previously, Shardlow had been missed on the boundary, and when he was last out at 243, he had two sixes and two fours in his 33. Staffordshire, therefore, had the comfortable lead of 86.

DEIGHTON'S SUCCESS

When Northumberland commenced their second innings, the bowling was opened by Wakelin and T. R. Deighton, the Denstone College master, who swings the new ball. Wakelin was rather erratic, but Deighton secured an early success, for in his third over, with 12 scored, he knocked Mackay's off-stump out of the ground, the batsman playing too late and being beaten by the swerve.

Newman, who next partnered Murray, opened shakily and almost gave a chance off a half hit forward stroke off Wakelin. The latter was relieved by Taylor at 31, and seven runs later Newman was easily run out when his partner refused to run a risky single.

Taylor puzzled Lee and twice beat him, but just missed the stumps, and when, at 49, Crump went on for Deighton, scoring became very slow.

Lee remained uncomfortable, and after almost giving a return catch to S. Crump, was bowled in the same over at 64.

At this total, Shardlow relieved Taylor, and the new bowler, who was able to turn the ball appreciably, needed careful watching. At lunch, Northumberland were still two runs in arrears, with seven wickets in hand.

Murray cleared off Northumberland's arrears when he turned Wakelin's first ball after lunch to leg for his fourth boundary in 43, but without any addition he was bowled in the same over by a ball which kept low, and half the side was out when Robson was bowled by Taylor at 109.

MORE WICKETS FALL

Staffordshire made further progress when Taylor bowled White at 117, and he took his third wicket in three overs, at the cost of three runs, when he bowled Goulden at 120. At this total, Shardlow relieved Wakelin and dismissed Saunders in his first over with the help of a catch on the boundary by Deighton.

The last two wickets, one each for Sharlow and Taylor, fell at 124, and since lunch seven wickets had fallen for 48 runs, the last five having dropped for seven runs.

Taylor deserved the bowling honours with four for 28.

Staffordshire were left to score 39 to win.

Staffordshire did not win without some shocks, for they lost five wickets before doing so.

NORTHUMBERLAND

First Innings: 157

Second Innings

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| W G MACKAY b Deighton | 7 |
| I MURRAY b Wakelin | 43 |
| M A NEWMAN run out | 12 |
| H G LEE b Crump (5) | 8 |
| T GOULDEN b Taylor | 16 |
| ROBSON b Taylor | 17 |
| T A W WHITE b Taylor | 2 |
| C P M HUNTING c L H Crump b Shardlow | 4 |
| O H SAUNDERS c Deighton b Shardlow | 0 |
| J L ALLEN not out | 2 |
| BOOTH b Taylor | 0 |
| Extras | 12 |
| Total | 124 |

STAFFORDSHIRE

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| R SMITH c Lee b Allen | 7 |
| L H CRUMP b Booth | 12 |
| J T IKIN c and b Booth | 15 |
| C C CLARKE c Lee b Allen | 92 |
| T R DEIGHTON c Mackay b Allen | 19 |
| S CRUMP c Mackay b Allen | 19 |
| E J WAKELIN b Hunting b Saunders | 14 |
| J E SLAIN b Booth | 2 |
| W A ADAMS b Booth | 0 |
| B SHARDLOW c Hunting b Saunders | 23 |
| F TAYLOR not out | 6 |
| Extras | 24 |
| Total | 248 |

Second Innings

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| L H CRUMP c Saunders b Allen | 4 |
| R SMITH b Allen | 2 |
| J T IKIN b Booth | 6 |
| C C CLARKE b Booth | 12 |
| T R DEIGHTON not out | 10 |
| S CRUMP lbw b Booth | 0 |
| E J WAKELIN not out | 0 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total (for 5 wks) | 40 |

BOWLING ANALYSIS

Northumberland—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|------|----|----|----|
| Wakelin | 12 | 1 | 51 | 3 |
| Taylor | 17 | 1 | 25 | 2 |
| Shardlow | 12 | 2 | 25 | 1 |
| S Crump | 22.5 | 6 | 24 | 4 |
| Ikin | 8 | 0 | 12 | 0 |

Northumberland—Second Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|------|----|----|----|
| Wakelin | 11 | 1 | 22 | 1 |
| Deighton | 9 | 2 | 18 | 1 |
| Taylor | 17.5 | 6 | 28 | 4 |
| S Crump | 7 | 2 | 10 | 1 |
| Shardlow | 8 | 2 | 18 | 2 |
| Ikin | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 |

Staffordshire—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|----|----|----|----|
| Allen | 27 | 5 | 77 | 4 |
| Booth | 31 | 11 | 87 | 4 |
| Saunders | 8 | 0 | 40 | 2 |
| Robson | 9 | 3 | 15 | 0 |

MINOR COUNTIES CRICKET

Staffs. v. Northumberland

FIRST COUNTY MATCH ON MICHELIN GROUND

By THE CRITIC

New ground was struck when a county match between Staffordshire and Northumberland was played on Wednesday and Thursday on the ground of the Michelin Works at Booths, Stoke. I think everyone was pleased with the ground. The wicket was a good one, but rather soft, in spite of having been wholly covered for a few days. The outfield was in nice condition, and the environment is pleasant. Also the County Club was, for a change, favoured by genial weather for the first day's play, though it turned dull and threatening during the afternoon.

It can truly be said that, "taking one consideration with another," a county secretary's life "is not a happy one." For this match Staffordshire had apparently a strong side, but on Monday Mr. L. W. Hancock had to fill a vacancy caused by the withdrawal of L. E. Gale, and at 11 o'clock on Tuesday night he received a notification that R. S. Patterson had been injured while playing in a club match that day, and would not be fit. With such late defections it is, of course, a case of securing not who you would, but who you can, to complete the team, and the task is not by any means an enviable one. The first vacancy was automatically filled as B. Shardlow was holding himself in readiness as first reserve, and on the morning of the match L. H. Crump solved the difficulty by taking the place of Patterson after an absence from the county team of several seasons.

Winning the toss T. A. W. White took first innings for Northumberland on a wicket, which was too soft to be difficult and yet not soft enough to be dead easy. Mackay and Murray opened with considerable caution against Wakelin and Taylor, but Mackay hit a no-ball from the fast bowler square for six. Shardlow and Stanley Crump were called up, and each got a lbw decision to remove the opening pair. Murray, who is a notable "find" for Northumberland, was so subdued that his 14 runs occupied him 65 minutes. Crump appealed against him twice in two balls, and the second was successful. It was only the third time he had lost his wicket in county matches since his debut at the beginning of this season. N. A. Newman, slower even than Murray, and H. C. Lee, considerably subdue-leg hit, but making some characteristic forcing strokes, defied the bowling until lunch, but on the resumption Wakelin started a collapse, and the good work was admirably carried on by Stanley Crump and Taylor.

SKILFUL BOWLING BY CRUMP

The total was up to 99, when a fast ball that went through rather low beat Lee's defence after an hour's good batting, and Wakelin followed on by hitting Goulden's off stump, and getting the plodding Newman finely taken at the wicket. Batting an hour and 40 minutes his defence had been resourceful, but his method tedious. Blair had come up to the wicket to the fast bowler, and he made the catch high up on the off side. First Robson and then White took toll of the fast bowling, the Northumberland skipper hitting him for 17 in two overs, including a six and two fours. Crump was bowling with accuracy and vim and spinning the ball well, and he and Taylor polished off the remainder of the side at low cost. From 99 with only two wickets down to 157 all out was a change that represented really good work against a strong batting side. Stanley Crump's analysis reflects the steadiness and skill of his bowling, but the entire attack, as well as the

general level of the fielding, was of good class. Blair took another excellent catch to get rid of the aggressive captain of the visiting county, and gave quite a classy display on his first appearance behind the sticks for the county. I thought W. A. Adams's captaincy was, as usual, marked by sound judgment.

The struggling time most of the Northumberland batsmen had had is indicated by the fact that their 157 runs took 200 minutes to get.

CYRIL CLARKE'S BRILLIANT

INNINGS

Staffordshire made a bad start and a splendid recovery. With only 10 runs scored Roy Smith had to play at a fast one from Allan which was well up and on the off stump. It swung away, found the edge, and went very low to the right of second slip, where Lee dived to hold a great catch. Ikin began with a confidence that promised well, but trying to drive a full-pitch, hit it straight at the bowler, and Len Crump was beaten by the slow, left hander after batting 35 minutes. Three for 36 was the position when T. R. Deighton joined Clarke for his first test in county cricket. The situation was critical, with the bowlers keyed up, and an imperative necessity for strong resistance at this stage if Staffordshire were to hold their own.

Deighton soon showed his courage by off-driving Booth for a powerful boundary, and defended resourcefully against everything of good length. Clarke had quickly played himself in, and a trio of fours came from excellent strokes followed by three more in succession a little later. These were mainly off-drives and leg hits. Bowling changes were made without effect until, Allan having resumed, Deighton fell to his leg trap, playing a ball off his body into the hands of short leg. The fourth wicket had rescued the home side from a perilous position, and added 64 runs in 52 minutes. The fifth wicket completed the process by adding 80 in 58 minutes, and putting Staffordshire in front with six wickets in hand.

To Clarke, of course, goes the major mead of praise, for he made the bulk of the runs, played all the bowling without apparent difficulty, and scored all round the wicket with equal facility. But Stanley Crump also rendered invaluable service, and batted with skill and resource, using his characteristic footwork in defence and watching the ball on to the bat, until he fell exactly as Deighton had done, and with the same score. In the meantime Clarke had made his only mistake and survived. With his score at 72 he lifted Booth to long-off and Newman failed to hold a plain catch, near the boundary. He showed his appreciation by hitting Booth for a six and two fours in one over, the first being a clean square-leg hit, which cleared the boundary by many yards.

At 180 Staffordshire were 23 runs ahead with only four wickets down, but the last 20 minutes in a bad light saw a good deal of this advantage lost. Crump was the first to go, and Clarke followed five runs later through skying the ball in attempting a hook shot when only eight short of his century. He had made 92 out of 156 in two hours and 10 minutes, hitting a six and 14 fours, had got his highest score for Staffordshire, and was the principal instrument in gaining a first innings lead. In the last few minutes of the day's play Booth's leg spin was fatal to Blair and Adams, but Shardlow promptly hit the slow bowler to leg for six, and Staffordshire wound up 41 runs ahead with two wickets in hand.

FIVE WICKETS WIN FOR STAFFORDSHIRE

On Thursday the Staffordshire team pressed home the slight advantage a smart victory by five wickets after a smart victory by five wickets after having had by no means the best of the wicket. The soft pitch, with the top knocked off, became really difficult

for the first time in the match under the influence of warm sunshine on Thursday afternoon, and if the visitors could have set Staffordshire anything like 100 to get in the fourth innings they would almost certainly have won. But though they won the toss and had first use of the wicket they fell 88 behind the home side on the first innings, and were only able to give Staffordshire a matter of 39 runs to get. Even that began to look more formidable than would be expected when three good wickets fell for 15. But the result was never in doubt, of course.

In the morning Shardlow let way discrimination, and with Wakelin taking up well at the other end, the ninth wicket added 42 invaluable runs. When Northumberland entered upon the task of making 36 to avoid an innings defeat. Deighton shared the bowling with Wakelin, and his first spell for the county was definitely good. He made the ball swing away at a fair pace, and occasionally turned it back a little after swinging in the air. It was one such that found the off stump of the resourceful batsman, Mackay. A patient stand by Murray and Newman was ended by a mix-up in running, and Horace Lee was bowled in trying to drive Crump's leg break. Murray batted admirably for 95 minutes, but one of Wakelin's expresses kept low to rattle his middle stump just after lunch. By that time the pitch was getting difficult, and Taylor and Shardlow had a harvest. Taylor's last 5.5 overs produced four wickets, all clean bowled, for six runs, and Shardlow in his last three overs took two wickets for one run.

One expected funny happenings when Staffordshire set about their light task, and it was a relief when, after the fall of three wickets, Clarke went out boldly for a few runs and got a valuable dozen before one from Booth both turned and shot to bowl him. Stanley Crump fell in the same over, but Deighton was playing good, watchful cricket, and with three runs required Saunders was put on in place of Allan. His first was rather overpitched and Deighton drove it beautifully past mid-off to the boundary, a worthy winning hit.

Deighton had an excellent match and Blair gave a polished display of wicket keeping, giving confirmation to the opinion I have previously expressed that he has no equal at present in the county.

The financial aspect of the experiment of playing on the Michelin ground was satisfactory, for there was a fairly good attendance on both days. In fact the receipts on Thursday were the largest on the second day of any match in North Staffordshire for eight years, except in Stoke Wakes Week.

MINOR COUNTIES CRICKET SCORES

NORTHUMBERLAND.—1st Inns.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| W. G. Mackay lbw b Shardlow | 19 |
| I. Murrey lbw b S. Crump | 14 |
| N. A. Newman c Blair b Wakelin | 21 |
| H. C. Lee lbw b Wakelin | 41 |
| T. Goulden b Wakelin | 1 |
| Robson b S. Crump | 11 |
| T. A. W. White c Blair b Taylor | 29 |
| C. P. M. Hunting b Taylor | 4 |
| C. H. Saunders b Crump | 7 |
| J. L. Allan c and b S. Crump | 0 |
| Booth not out | 0 |
| Extras | 10 |
| Total | 157 |

2nd Innings

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| W. G. Mackay b Deighton | 7 |
| I. Murrey b Wakelin | 43 |
| N. A. Newman run out | 12 |
| H. C. Lee b Crump | 6 |
| T. Goulden b Taylor | 16 |
| Robson b Taylor | 17 |
| T. A. W. White b Taylor | 2 |
| C. P. M. Hunting c Crump b Shardlow | 4 |
| C. H. Saunders c Deighton b Shardlow | 0 |
| J. L. Allan not out | 2 |
| Booth b Taylor | 0 |
| Extras | 13 |
| Total | 124 |

STAFFORDSHIRE.—1st Inns.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| R. Smith c Lee b Allan | 7 |
| L. H. Crump b Booth | 12 |
| J. T. Ikin c and b Booth | 15 |
| C. C. Clarke c Lees b Allan | 92 |
| T. R. Deighton c Mackay b Allan | 19 |
| S. Crump c Mackay b Allan | 19 |
| E. J. Wakelin c Hunting b Saunders | 14 |
| J. E. Blair b Booth | 2 |
| W. A. Adams b Booth | 0 |
| B. Shardlow c Hunting b Saunders | 33 |
| F. Taylor not out | 6 |
| Extras | 24 |
| Total | 243 |

2nd Innings

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| R. Smith b Allen | 2 |
| L. H. Crump c Saunders b Allen | 4 |
| J. T. Ikin b Booth | 6 |
| C. C. Clarke b Booth | 12 |
| T. R. Deighton not out | 10 |
| S. Crump lbw b Booth | 0 |
| E. J. Wakelin not out | 0 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total (5 wks.) | 40 |

Bowling Analysis

| | Northumberland.—1st Inns. | | | 2nd Inns. | | | | | |
|----------|---------------------------|----|-------|-----------|----|-------|----|----|---|
| | O. | M. | R. W. | O. | M. | R. W. | | | |
| Wakelin | 13 | 1 | 51 | 3 | 11 | 1 | 32 | 1 | |
| Taylor | 17 | 1 | 25 | 2 | 17 | 5 | 6 | 28 | 4 |
| Shardlow | 12 | 3 | 25 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 18 | 2 | |
| S. Crump | 22 | 3 | 6 | 31 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 10 | 1 |
| Ikin | 3 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 | |
| Deighton | | | | | 9 | 2 | 19 | 1 | |

| | Staffordshire.—1st Inns. | | | 2nd Inns. | | | | | |
|----------|--------------------------|----|-------|-----------|----|-------|----|---|---|
| | O. | M. | R. W. | O. | M. | R. W. | | | |
| Allen | 27 | 5 | 74 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 16 | 2 | |
| Booth | 31 | 11 | 87 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 14 | 3 | |
| Saunders | 8 | 0 | 40 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Robson | 9 | 3 | 15 | 0 | | | | | |

VALUABLE INNINGS BY REG. HALTON

DENNIS TAKES SIX WICKETS FOR 44 RUNS

VISITORS MAKE GOOD REPLY

Entertaining Cheshire in a Minor Counties match on the Porthill Park ground to-day, Staffordshire were dismissed for 131 runs. After the opening pair had put on 45, the only batsman to withstand an attack in which Dennis took the honours—he had six wickets for 44 runs — were Reg. Halton and the captain, W. A. Adams.

Cheshire made a good reply, gaining the lead before the tea interval.

Staffordshire had prospects of improving their position and drawing nearer the leaders in the Minor Counties Championship when they opened their two-days' fixture against Cheshire on the Porthill ground to-day.

In the earlier fixture between the two counties, Staffordshire were successful in an exciting finish. Cheshire are still without a victory in this season's championship games; and, the match, therefore, was important to both clubs.

Both teams had late changes. W. Stubbs, the Longton fast bowler, pulled a muscle on Saturday, and had to withdraw from the Staffordshire side, his place being taken by E. Binns, of Hartshill, who has some outstanding bowling performances to his credit in North Staffordshire League cricket. This was his first appearance in Minor Counties cricket, and another newcomer to the team was W. M. Arkinstall, the Market Drayton batsman.

Cheshire made three changes. R. M. Dutton, A. E. Edwards and H. Winstanley were unable to play, their places being taken by Barber, the New Brighton professional, J. T. Halliwell, of New Brighton, and G. K. Eaves, of Bowden. The two last named players were making their debut for Cheshire.

CONFIDENT START

Staffordshire winning the toss, had no hesitation in batting first. They opened the innings with L. H. Crump and Arkinstall. It was an ideal day for cricket, and the attendance at the start was encouraging.

The opening over—a maiden from Barber—showed the wicket to be fast, but the batsmen soon found opportunities for scoring off both Barber and Bartley, and runs came at the rate of more than one a minute.

Crump scored faster than his partner, being particularly strong on the leg side, and 30 were scored in 25 minutes. Arkinstall, although overshadowed by Crump's forcing cricket, was making an impressive debut, and his placing of the ball was admirable.

Dennis was introduced into the attack,

in place of Barber, and met with a quick success, having Arkinstall caught at mid-on in his second over, with the total at 45.

Arkinstall had participated in a bright opening stand of half an hour's duration, but his dismissal was the beginning of a minor collapse for Staffordshire, Dennis having an inspired spell during which he took four wickets in the course of five overs, at the cost of 11 runs.

QUICK WICKETS

He had Ikin taken behind the wicket with four runs added to the total, and then dismissed the fast scoring Crump five runs later.

With his last ball, of the same over, he sent back Clarke, that batsman having had only one scoring stroke—a boundary.

When Reg Halton and T. R. Deighton became associated, Staffordshire found another aggressive batsman in the Leek left-hander. He scored a six off Bartley, profiting by an overthrow, late cut the same bowler to the boundary and took his 11th run off the over with an on drive. He showed as little respect for Dennis, turning him to the leg rails and driving him to the on boundary off successive deliveries.

Before Deighton had scored, Halton advanced the score by 20 runs in five strokes. Staffordshire's recovery was checked with the total at 76, Bartley dismissing Deighton and S. Crump with successive balls before either batsman had scored. Halton continued to attack the bowling, but at 89 he lost Shardlow, who touched a rising delivery from Dennis, and was caught at slip.

Halton eventually found a batsman to stay with him when he was joined by W. A. Adams, the pair carrying the total to 100. The innings had then been in progress 90 minutes. At this total, Barber was recalled in place of Bartley, and, although the scoring rate dropped, the total was taken along steadily.

Halton's valuable innings closed with the score at 115, of which his own contribution was 46. Two sixes and four fours were his best scoring strokes, and he gave no chance in a stay of three-quarters of an hour. He was bowled in attempting to drive Barber, who, with his next ball, dismissed Blair, this emulating Bartley's feat of taking two wickets with successive balls.

Adams had a bright knock of 26 before Dennis bowled him. Dennis had the excellent figures of six wickets for 44 runs.

BINNS' QUICK SUCCESS

When Cheshire opened their innings, T. R. Deighton and E. Binns were the bowlers, and Fairbairn almost lost his wicket when he flicked at a ball in Binns's opening over. Dennis cut Deighton to the boundary, and a second boundary followed when Fairbairn drove Binns to the off. Dennis repeated his boundary stroke when facing Deighton again, but Fairbairn provided Binns, against whom he had not been comfortable, with his first wicket in a county game. He attempted a pull, but the ball went off the edge of the bat to give Clarke an easy catch. The total was then 19.

Deighton had sent down seven overs for 25 runs when he was succeeded by Shardlow. Binns was keeping a good length, but twice in the one over Dennis took fours off him. Later Wolstenholme scored 12 runs in one over and the first 75 runs were scored in five minutes under the hour.

Another bowling change was S. Crump for Binns, but Dennis reached his 50 in one hour 20 minutes out of 96.

Dennis straight drove Ikin for six and the partnership put on 100 runs in 78 minutes.

| STAFFORDSHIRE | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| L H CRUMP b Dennis | 30 |
| W M ARKINSTALL c Eaves b Dennis | 13 |
| J T IKIN c Prescott b Dennis | 2 |
| O O CLARKE b Dennis | 4 |
| REG. HALTON b Barber | 46 |
| T R DEIGHTON b Bartley | 0 |
| S CRUMP lbw b Bartley | 0 |
| W A ADAMS b Dennis | 1 |
| W A ADAMS b Dennis | 26 |
| J E BLAIR b Barber | 0 |
| E BINNS not out | 1 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 131 |

| CHESHIRE | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| DENNIS not out | 88 |
| R D FAIRBAIRN c Clarke b Binns | 5 |
| A M WOLSTENHOLME c Arkinstall b Binns | 57 |
| Extras | 12 |
| Total (for 2 wkts) | 162 |

| BOWLING ANALYSIS | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|----|----|----|
| Staffordshire—First Innings | | | | |
| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
| Barber | 8 | 1 | 21 | 2 |
| Bartley | 18 | 0 | 58 | 2 |
| Dennis | 12.3 | 2 | 44 | 6 |

BARTLEY'S FINE BOWLING

SIX WICKETS FOR 31 RUNS

CHESHIRE GAIN FIRST WIN

Staffordshire to-day lost their Minor Counties Cricket Championship match with Cheshire at Porthill by an innings and 92 runs, and thus Cheshire registered their first victory of the season.

Staffordshire faced a formidable task when they continued their Minor Counties Cricket Championship match against Cheshire on the Porthill ground to-day, for, with three men out in their second innings, they were still 192 behind the visitors' total.

After Cheshire had taken their score to 339 last night, Staffordshire were left with 17 minutes' batting, and in that period lost three wickets for 16 runs, Bartley taking all the wickets in his first two overs.

L. H. Crump and T. R. Deighton opened cautiously when they resumed batting this morning against Bartley and Barber, and though the total was advanced steadily, Crump was not comfortable against Bartley, off whom he was missed by Gilbody in the slips when he had scored 12.

Deighton scored faster than his partner, and the total was advanced to 35 before Dennis and Lewis bowled. Crump on-drove Dennis to the boundary off two successive balls, but when he stepped out to drive Lewis, he missed the ball and Prescott easily stumped him.

DEIGHTON'S EFFORT

The partnership had yielded 41 runs at a time when Staffordshire were sadly in need of encouragement.

Deighton continued to score freely off Lewis, straight drives for six and four in the same over sending his own score past 30. In the next over, attempting another big hit, he was dropped by Eades.

Meanwhile, Halton was scoring steadily and the pair carried the total to 84, before Deighton, playing forward to Barber, was bowled for 38. One six and four fours were his best scoring strokes.

With half the side out for 84 runs, Staffordshire had little prospect of avoiding defeat, and when Reg Halton, after scoring 21 runs, was caught at short leg off Barber, the total was still one short of the 100.

S. Crump failed, being caught at the wicket off Bartley at 103, and though Shardlow offered stubborn resistance, W. A. Adams, after pulling Barber to the boundary, was bowled with the last ball of the same over.

Binns left without addition to the score being bowled by Bartley, who finished off the innings by taking Blair's wicket in the same over. Staffordshire's seven outstanding wickets fell to-day for the addition of 100 runs and the last five had fallen for 32.

Cheshire's first success of the season, by an innings and 92 runs, was well deserved.

STAFFORDSHIRE

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| L. H. CRUMP b Dennis | 30 |
| W. M. ARKINSTALL c Eaves b Dennis | 13 |
| J. T. IKIN c Prescott b Dennis | 2 |
| O. O. CLARKE b Dennis | 4 |
| REG. HALTON b Barber | 46 |
| T. R. DEIGHTON b Bartley | 0 |
| S. CRUMP lbw b Bartley | 0 |
| B. SHARDLOW c Bartley b Dennis | 1 |
| W. A. ADAMS b Dennis | 26 |
| J. E. BLAIR b Barber | 0 |
| E. BINNS not out | 1 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 131 |

Second Innings

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| L. H. CRUMP st Prescott b Lewis | 24 |
| W. M. ARKINSTALL lbw b Bartley | 0 |
| J. T. IKIN b Bartley | 0 |
| O. O. CLARKE c Prescott b Bartley | 1 |
| T. R. DEIGHTON b Barber | 38 |
| REG. HALTON c Worthington b Barber | 21 |
| S. CRUMP c Prescott b Bartley | 3 |
| B. SHARDLOW not out | 11 |
| W. A. ADAMS b Barber | 5 |
| E. BINNS b Bartley | 0 |
| J. E. BLAIR b Bartley | 0 |
| Extras | 13 |
| Total | 116 |

CHESHIRE

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|
| DENNIS c Binns b Shardlow | 148 |
| D. R. FAIRBAIN c Clarke b Binns | 5 |
| A. M. WOLSTENHOLME c Arkininstall b Binns | 0 |
| J. D. WORTHINGTON c Ikin b S. Crump | 57 |
| A. GILBODY c Blair b Halton | 0 |
| G. K. EAVES st Blair b Shardlow | 45 |
| J. N. HALLIWELL run out | 29 |
| BARBER c S. Crump b Shardlow | 25 |
| H. G. E. PRESCOTT b S. Crump | 0 |
| BARTLEY not out | 2 |
| J. LEWIS c Arkininstall b Shardlow | 5 |
| Extras | 24 |
| Total | 339 |

BOWLING ANALYSIS

Staffordshire—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|---------|------|----|----|----|
| Barber | 6 | 1 | 31 | 2 |
| Bartley | 18 | 0 | 58 | 3 |
| Dennis | 12.5 | 2 | 44 | 6 |

Staffordshire—Second Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|---------|----|----|----|----|
| Bartley | 15 | 4 | 31 | 6 |
| Dennis | 5 | 0 | 12 | 0 |
| Barber | 12 | 1 | 35 | 3 |
| Lewis | 5 | 0 | 35 | 1 |

Cheshire—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|----|----|----|----|
| Deighton | 18 | 2 | 66 | 0 |
| Binns | 21 | 8 | 73 | 2 |
| Shardlow | 17 | 8 | 63 | 4 |
| S. Crump | 23 | 4 | 55 | 2 |
| Ikin | 4 | 0 | 28 | 0 |
| Halton | 8 | 1 | 25 | 1 |

FALL OF WICKETS

Staffordshire—First Innings

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 45 | 40 | 54 | 55 | 76 | 76 | 89 | 115 | 115 | 131 |

Cheshire—First Innings

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 19 | 102 | 102 | 264 | 273 | 321 | 327 | 328 | 328 | 339 |

COUNTY CRICKET

Staffordshire Eclipsed

DENNIS'S GREAT DAY FOR CHESHIRE

By THE CRITIC

The opening day of Staffordshire's return match with Cheshire at Porthill on Wednesday attracted the best attendance seen at any home match for several years. The weather was ideal, and it was a most unfortunate circumstance that the holiday crowd saw the Lome team completely eclipsed by their neighbours. I have on past occasions stressed the fact that Staffordshire is at a disadvantage on a dry, fast wicket by reason of the lack of available fast bowling, and this was never more strongly emphasized than on Wednesday. Cheshire brought three professional fast bowlers, all of whom can make the new ball swing. Dennis was more pace than Bartley and Barber, but they were considerably faster than anything on the home side. The wicket was inclined to be fiery, though not many balls of good length lifted dangerously. But there was some doubt as to how the ball would come from the pitch, and in those circumstances the pace shook the confidence of the Staffordshire batsmen sufficiently to make their resistance look extremely weak, which, indeed, it was. On the other hand Cheshire batsmen had nothing above medium pace to face, for W. Stubbs, the only fast bowler thought to be available, met with an injury on Saturday, and his place was taken by E. Binns, of the Hartshill club, who has never had experience in the Senior A Section of the North Staffordshire League, to say nothing of county cricket. It was to his credit that he was the most menacing of the Staffordshire bowlers, and with a little luck would have had much better figures than he actually secured.

Cheshire's complete dominance is not entirely accounted for by any one factor, but more than anything else it was due to their fast bowling of good class on a wicket that suited such bowlers and did not suit spin bowlers like Stanley Crump and Shardlow. Also it must be said that they had the luck of the game in the sense that nothing came off for Staffordshire. If Cheshire batsmen edged the ball, as they did a great many times, it invariably went safe. Another drawback was that J. E. Blair was considerably below his best behind the stumps. Until late in the Cheshire innings his handling was uncertain, and he missed one or two chances.

DENNIS, THE DEMON

When W. A. Adams won the toss it seemed that batting first might be an advantage, but there was nothing in it. The pitch, in fact, played better than expectation, and certainly did not deteriorate. Against Barber and Bartley Len Crump and Arkinstall made a useful start, the Market Drayton player shaping well, but when Dennis was introduced in place of Barber the batting went to pieces. The first wicket realized 45, and Crump stayed 30 minutes, being third out at 54. Dennis, bowling at top speed and with accuracy, started with four wickets for 11 in five overs. Ikin was caught by the wicket-keeper in feeling for the ball, and Clarke was bowled by an extra good one that moved a little from the leg. Then Reg Halton stood up to the bowling with a confidence that was sadly lacking in others, and never allowed himself to be intimidated. He made many good strokes, and one or two not so good that went over the heads of the slip fielders.

Bartley got Deighton and S. Crump with following balls, and seven wickets were down for 89. Then the captain had a useful knock, with a couple of skiers that fell safely out of reach, and

helped Halton to add 26 for the eighth wicket. But Barber came on to dispossess Halton and Blair with two consecutive swingers. Halton got his runs by good forcing cricket in 49 minutes, and had two hits for two converted into sixes by overthrows. Binns held up while Adams made a few more hits, driving the terrible Dennis to the sight screen. But the fast bowler had his revenge and completed a fine piece of bowling by beating the skipper.

GREAT INNINGS BY DENNIS

Binns, who opened the Staffordshire bowling with Deighton, had an early success when Fairbairn tried to hook him and gave an easy catch at forward short leg with 19 scored. But the Staffordshire bowlers met with no further success until tea time, when the innings had been in progress two hours. Dennis and Wolstenholme found no great difficulty in any of the bowling, and put on 143 for the second wicket in about 100 minutes. Both men had some luck in edging the ball a good many times, especially the amateur, who skied Binns to the on immediately before the tea interval. However, the batting was of good class, and both men took full advantage of every opportunity offered, and hit well all round the wicket when the length allowed.

After tea another century partnership followed the quick dismissal of the Cheshire captain by means of one of Ikin's lightning catches at forward short leg from a hard drive. For the fourth wicket Dennis and Gilbody scored 102 in just under an hour. Gilbody had a shaky start, and though he hit or nicked eight fours his batting was not as good as that of Wolstenholme. Shortly after Gilbody had been caught at the wicket Dennis mis-hit Shardlow, to be fifth out at 272 after batting 5½ hours. His only real chance that I saw was one of stumping off Binns at 92. He hit two sixes and 18 fours, and played a splendid innings, full of resourceful defence and replete with scoring strokes to all points of the compass. It was a most entertaining innings to watch, and it was not the first century Dennis has hit against Staffordshire. His footwork was flawless, and the placing of his scoring strokes so good that it was difficult to set a field for him. Binns seemed to cause him more trouble than any other bowler, and the Hartshill man occasionally found the edge of his bat, but whenever he made an uncertain stroke he was lucky enough to keep it down, and runs generally accrued. It is correct to say he never looked like getting out. Eaves and Halliwell sent up the third hundred and added 49 for the sixth wicket, but from the time that the former was stumped in Blair's best style Shardlow came into his own, taking his last three wickets for eight runs.

Unfortunately for Staffordshire they had a quarter of an hour's batting before the close of play, and it proved a disastrous wind-up to a disastrous day. Bartley's quick swinger accounted for three good wickets for six runs, and Staffordshire finished 182 runs behind with seven wickets in hand. The state of the pitch afforded no sufficient excuse for the lamentable batting failures, but the Porthill wicket has earned a bad reputation, and I think the explanation really is that most of the Staffordshire batsmen went in thoroughly scared of the fast bowling on it.

AN INNINGS DEFEAT

It was a great pity that an ideal afternoon for cricket was wasted on Tuesday. Had there been a prospect of anything like a full day's play there would certainly have been another large attendance. As it was, with only one or two hours' play to be expected, and the result not in doubt, between 100 and 200 people paid to see it.

The loss of three good wickets overnight was a calamity, and made one regard the sending in of the best batsmen during that fatal quarter of an hour as an error in tactics. If two or three of the tail end batsmen had been out it would not have mattered, for they were out quickly on Tuesday. And if

Arkinstall, Ikin (who was bowled by a ball that reared, struck his elbow, and dropped on the wicket), and Clarke had been there to bat on Tuesday the prospect of prolonging the game into the afternoon would have been good.

With Dennis unable to bowl fast owing to a slight strain, L. H. Crump and Deighton played the bowling comfortably for 40 minutes, and raised the score to 48 before Crump left. J. Lewis, a slow, right-arm bowler, was tried for the first time in the match, and Crump jumped in to drive and missed the ball. But so did the wicket keeper, and the batsman could have got back if he had tried. He did not try until Prescott had picked the ball up off the ground and put the wicket down. Deighton and Halton put on 36, but the Denstone man "lost" one of Barber's swingers at 54 after batting well for 65 minutes, and hitting a six and four 4's. Halton was playing confidently, and the score was taken to 99 with five wickets down, but he failed to keep a forward stroke on the ground, and was snapped up very low at forward short-leg. Stanley Crump, who is batting rather nervously of late, touched a short one as it flashed by waist high, and the Captain, after one good boundary hit, played on to a ball that turned quickly. Shardlow was batting as well as anyone, but Bartley took the last two wickets in one over. Blair, who is struggling through a very bad patch, got a "pair." Most of the Staffordshire batting was timid and irresolute, for which there was little or no excuse in the state of the wicket. Cheshire won by an innings and 92 runs.

Scores and analysis:—

STAFFORDSHIRE

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| L. H. Crump b Dennis | 30 |
| W. M. Arkinstall c Eaves b Dennis | 13 |
| J. T. Ikin c Prescott b Dennis | 2 |
| C. C. Clarke b Dennis | 4 |
| Reg. Halton b Barber | 46 |
| T. R. Deighton b Bartley | 0 |
| S. Crump lbw b Bartley | 0 |
| B. Shardlow c Bartley b Dennis | 1 |
| W. A. Adams b Dennis | 25 |
| J. E. Blair b Barber | 0 |
| E. Binns not out | 1 |
| Extras | 8 |
| Total | 131 |

Second Innings

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| L. H. Crump at Prescott b Lewis | 24 |
| W. M. Arkinstall lbw b Bartley | 0 |
| J. T. Ikin b Bartley | 0 |
| C. C. Clarke c Prescott b Bartley | 1 |
| T. R. Deighton b Barber | 53 |
| Reg. Halton c Worthington b Barber | 21 |
| S. Crump c Prescott b Bartley | 5 |
| B. Shardlow not out | 3 |
| W. A. Adams b Barber | 11 |
| E. Binns b Bartley | 5 |
| J. E. Blair b Bartley | 0 |
| Extras | 13 |
| Total | 115 |

CHESHIRE

| | |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|
| Dennis c Binns b Shardlow | 145 |
| D. R. Fairbairn c Clarke b Binns | 5 |
| A. M. Wolstenholme c Arkinstall b Binns | 57 |
| J. D. Worthington c Ikin b S. Crump | 0 |
| A. Gilbody c Blair b Halton | 45 |
| G. K. Eaves st Blair b Shardlow | 29 |
| J. N. Halliwell run out | 25 |
| Barber c S. Crump b Shardlow | 2 |
| H. G. E. Prescott b S. Crump | 0 |
| Bartley not out | 2 |
| J. Lewis c Arkinstall b Shardlow | 5 |
| Extras | 24 |
| Total | 339 |

Bowling

| Staffs.—1st Inns. | O. | M. | R. | W. | 2nd Inns. | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|-------------------|------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|----|
| Barber | 6 | 1 | 21 | 2 | 12 | 1 | 35 | 3 | |
| Bartley | 13 | 0 | 58 | 2 | 15 | 1 | 31 | 5 | |
| Dennis | 12.3 | 44 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 12 | 0 | | |
| Lewis | | | | | 5 | 0 | 25 | 1 | |

Cheshire.—1st Inns.

| O. | M. | R. | W. | |
|----------|----|----|----|---|
| Deighton | 13 | 2 | 66 | 0 |
| Binns | 21 | 3 | 73 | 2 |
| Shardlow | 17 | 3 | 63 | 4 |
| S. Crump | 22 | 4 | 55 | 2 |
| Ikin | 4 | 0 | 23 | 0 |
| Halton | 8 | 1 | 35 | 1 |

STAFFORDSHIRE DISMISSED FOR 135 RUNS

DISAPPOINTING DISPLAY AGAINST DURHAM

HERBERT'S FIVE WICKETS

Opposing Durham at Walsall to-day in their last Minor Counties fixture of the season, Staffordshire batsmen gave a disappointing display and were dismissed shortly after lunch for 135.

Herbert, the Durham fast bowler, was mainly responsible for this moderate total, claiming five wickets for 39 runs, while Carr supported by taking three for 23.

After a lapse of four seasons, Staffordshire visited Walsall to-day for their last Minor Counties fixture of the season against Durham.

Staffordshire, with a chance of finishing higher in the competition than for several years, were hopeful of completing a double at Durham's expense and had a much stronger team than for the Cheshire game. Lockett, the spin bowler, and A. Smith, Norton's batsman, were available for the first time this season and Stubbs, the Longton fast bowler, was recalled. J. D. Beevers, of Aston Unity, made his first appearance with the county as wicket-keeper.

The weather was fine, but hazy, and the wicket good, and it was, therefore, an unexpected move when Durham, winning the toss, sent Staffordshire in to bat.

The innings opened in disastrous style, for in the first over the brothers Smith were parted, Arthur being well beaten and bowled by a fast swinger from Herbert, which was almost a full toss.

The total was only one and with Herbert and Townsend maintaining a hostile and fast attack, R. Smith and Patterson showed great care. Eventually, Smith drove Townsend to the off for four, but in the same over, at 13, Patterson was caught high up in the slips by Close at the second attempt.

MORE SETBACKS

Play had been in progress for 35 minutes for 15 runs before Durham made a double bowling change, Close and Carr being tried. Slower than the opening pair, they still kept the batsmen defending, and just as Ikin was beginning to feel confident he was out to a bad shot at 24. He tried to pull a ball from Carr across from the off to leg, missed it, and saw the off stump uprooted. In Close's next over, with the score at

25, Deighton was bowled and thus Staffordshire were once again in difficulties.

With four wickets down in less than an hour, Durham's decision to send Staffordshire in to bat seemed justified, but actually it was bad batting which was chiefly responsible for the home county's poor position.

All this time, Smith, though not always comfortable, had been batting patiently, but Clarke was quickly off the mark with a leg glance for four off Close.

Herbert returned to the attack in place of Carr at 38. Clarke continued to provide the best batting of the morning and perfect off-shots brought him nine runs in one over from Close.

In a quarter-of-an-hour he scored 20 runs and was quickly overhauling Smith, who had been batting nearly an hour longer.

There was a marked contrast in the attack when Olsen partnered Herbert, for he was very slow and set a field with five men on the boundary.

It was, however, Herbert who broke a stand which added 33 in half-an-hour. Smith being well caught in the slips after batting 80 minutes for a patient 27.

CLARKE DISMISSED

Neither Clarke nor S. Crump could quite make up their minds how to treat Olsen's well-flighted bowling, and at 75 Clarke's entertaining innings ended with Herbert sending his leg stump flying ten yards.

Clarke, who was acting captain, had hit four boundaries in an aggressive innings of 29 and it was largely due to him that there had been even a partial recovery.

Crump showed steadiness, but Lockett had only scored one when he was missed in the slips off Herbert. Profiting by this escape, Lockett played confidently and quickly followed Crump to double figures.

Further bowling changes were made, but the batsmen were still together at lunch

when the total had reached 108 for six wickets—a much more presentable score. Only six runs were added on the resumption before Lockett was out, unluckily playing on against Herbert. His share of the best partnership of the innings was 23.

Beevers failed, caught at square leg, and at 133, Crump, who had become leading scorer, failed to time Herbert properly and was caught at mid-off. The innings ended at 135, a far better score than seemed likely early on.

Herbert's five wickets for 39, the best bowling performance, indicated Staffordshire's weakness against fast bowling.

DURHAM'S REPLY

Durham opened their reply with Townsend and Parnaby against the bowling of Stubbs and Deighton, and in the latter's second over Parnaby, who has an average of 100 in League cricket this season, was missed at the wicket.

Although Lockett, Shardlow and Crump were all given trials, there was nothing outstanding in the bowling. Although early on, both Parnaby and Townsend occasionally edged the ball, they settled down to steady scoring, 60 runs coming in a little over 50 minutes before Crump bowled Parnaby.

| STAFFORDSHIRE | | |
|---------------|----------------------|-----|
| R SMITH | c Close b Herbert | 27 |
| A SMITH | b Herbert | 0 |
| R S PATTERSON | c Close b Townsend | 1 |
| J T IKIN | b Carr | 5 |
| T N DEIGHTON | b Close | 0 |
| O O CLARKE | b Herbert | 29 |
| S CRUMP | c Townsend b Herbert | 34 |
| A LOCKETT | b Herbert | 23 |
| J D BEEVERS | c Adamsen b Carr | 0 |
| B SHARDLOW | c Collins b Carr | 5 |
| W STUBBS | not out | 0 |
| Extras | | 11 |
| Total | | 135 |

| DURHAM | | |
|-------------------|---------|----|
| D O H TOWNSEND | not out | 26 |
| A M PARNABY | b Crump | 32 |
| J H BERESFORD | not out | 0 |
| Extras | | 2 |
| Total (for 1 wkt) | | 60 |

| BOWLING ANALYSIS | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|----|----|----|
| Staffordshire—First Innings | | | | |
| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
| Herbert | 17 | 5 | 39 | 5 |
| Townsend | 5 | 2 | 8 | 1 |
| Close | 9 | 2 | 33 | 1 |
| Carr | 10.2 | 2 | 23 | 3 |
| Olsen | 8 | 0 | 20 | 0 |

MINOR COUNTIES

STAFFORDSHIRE'S FIGHT TO AVERT DEFEAT

J. T. IKIN SCORES CENTURY AGAINST DURHAM

The two defeats which Staffordshire have sustained this season in the Minor Counties cricket championship have both been primarily due to inability to play fast bowling.

To-day, when the county resumed the match against Durham at Walsall, they faced the prospect of a third defeat and again the initial cause was weak batting against fast bowling.

Staffordshire's first innings total of 135 was shown up in its proper light when Durham replied yesterday with 267 for six wickets. The batsmen had their quiet spells against an attack whose chief merit was steadiness, but it was obvious that none of the bowlers could make the ball turn at all on an easy wicket, and Staffordshire's total was exceeded for the loss of only one wicket. Townsend went on to complete his century and Beresford made a patient half century.

There had been a shower of rain during the night, but the pitch was not affected at all when Durham continued their innings this morning. At once, Staffordshire got another wicket, Close being taken in the slips in Deighton's first over without any addition to the overnight score.

Olsen provided Lockett with his first success at 284, but Gibson batted brightly until, when three short of his 50, he was caught on the square leg boundary at 295.

Without addition, Crump, who had the best bowling figures, came on to dismiss Herbert and finish the innings.

Durham had batted about half-an-hour this morning, while adding 28 runs, and thus they gained a lead of 160.

A BAD START

It was a bad start which Staffordshire made when they began their big task with R. Smith and J. T. Ikin. Herbert, swinging the ball appreciably in a strong cross wind, hopelessly beat Smith with his fifth ball, which uprooted the middle stump. Not a single run had been scored—an even worse start than in the first innings.

The bowling of Herbert and Townsend remained so accurate that Ikin and Patterson, who succeeded R. Smith, could only get five singles in seven overs. When Close relieved Townsend, Ikin at once drove him straight for three.

Ikin batted in stylish manner, but Patterson made little progress until Olsen, with his slow lob, relieved Herbert. The Walsall man then pulled him twice for fours. Despite this, the score was only 30 after three-quarters of an hour's play.

The batsmen continued to make steady progress, Ikin batting in a style which emphasised the poverty of yesterday's efforts, and, when the score reached 50, Herbert was recalled and Carr brought on at the other end.

While no risks were being taken, the bowling was being well mastered, and



J. T. IKIN

Ikin took seven off one over from Carr. The Porthill player was easily out-pacing his colleague, and two beautiful shots to the leg boundary took him into the forties. He was within three of his 50 when he had his first escape, Briggs missing an easy chance of stumping him when he stepped out to drive Collin and missed the ball.

With Patterson also beginning to look for runs, the scoring rate gradually improved, and, when Ikin, after batting an hour and a half, reached his 50, the total was 90. Ikin, at this point, had hit four fours and a two, and the fine partnership had, at least, given Staffordshire a good chance of avoiding defeat.

At lunch, Staffordshire were 95 for one wicket, their arrears having been reduced to 65.

PATTERSON OUT

The interval proved fatal for Patterson, who was bowled by Close with the second ball after the resumption. Although never so free as Ikin, he had played a valuable innings in a partnership which had done much to rehabilitate Staffordshire's batting.

Joined by Deighton, Ikin went on batting with fine skill, showing power in his driving—he hit both Herbert and Close straight for fours—and placing the ball with fine judgment for a series of safe singles. Deighton, too, drove well, and runs began to come as freely as at any time in the match.

In one over, Herbert was hit for ten runs, and in less than 25 minutes the total was increased by 35.

To-day's effort was Ikin's fifth of over 50 this season, and probably his best. He was master of all the bowling, and, with

another hard-driven boundary through the covers and an easy single, he not only carried his aggregate for the season to 400, but passed his previous best score of 86.

So quickly were Ikin and Deighton now scoring that, in the first 40 minutes of their association, the 65 runs required to make Durham bat again were obtained.

To have rubbed off 160 runs for the loss of two wickets was a particularly notable performance.

Ikin knocked off the last of the arrears when he hit the twelfth four of his innings, and in the same over he reached his century with a single after batting two hours and 25 minutes. Since lunch, he had scored at the rate of one a minute. Eight of his fours were included in his second 50.

Hitting out at Olsen, he was eventually dismissed with the total at 178, and his dominance of the game was indicated by the fact that, out of these, he had scored 110 and there were 12 extras.

MORE WICKETS

Without addition, Deighton was out in the same over, an l.b.w. victim, but C. C. Clarke, partnered by A. Smith, kept the score moving quickly. He pulled Olsen for six, and then took eight in an over from Parnaby before Herbert returned to make a hash of his stumps at 199.

The match had again turned in Durham's favour, for Staffordshire, with five wickets down, were only 39 runs ahead.

Clarke was out to an unworthy stroke, and his dismissal was quickly followed by that of Crump and Smith. With seven men out, Staffordshire were only 57 ahead.

Herbert sprained an ankle while bowling, and could not complete the over.

STAFFORDSHIRE

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| R SMITH c Close b Herbert | 27 |
| A SMITH b Herbert | 0 |
| R S PATTERSON c Close b Townsend | 0 |
| J T IKIN b Carr | 100 |
| T R DEIGHTON b Close | 5 |
| O C CLARKE b Herbert | 0 |
| B CRUMP c Townsend b Herbert | 29 |
| A LOCKETT b Herbert | 34 |
| J D BEEVERS c Adamson b Carr | 23 |
| B SHARDLOW c Collins b Carr | 0 |
| W STUBBS not out | 0 |
| Extras | 11 |
| Total | 135 |

Second Innings

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| R SMITH c Beresford b Olsen | 0 |
| J T IKIN c Beresford b Olsen | 110 |
| R S PATTERSON b Close | 31 |
| T R DEIGHTON lbw b Olsen | 26 |
| A SMITH c Carr b Close | 8 |
| O C CLARKE b Herbert | 9 |
| B CRUMP c and b Parnaby | 17 |
| A LOCKETT b Close | 4 |
| J D BEEVERS not out | 13 |
| B SHARDLOW not out | 13 |
| Extras | 5 |
| Total (for 8 wkts) | 16 |

DURHAM

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| D O H TOWNSEND run out | 112 |
| A H PARNABY b Crump | 32 |
| J H BERESFORD c Lockett b Deighton | 54 |
| J A ADAMSON c Beavers b Stubbs | 5 |
| M GIBSON c R Smith b Lockett | 5 |
| T COLLIN c Crump b Lockett | 47 |
| J CARR c Patterson b Stubbs | 7 |
| J A CLOSE c Lockett b Crump | 23 |
| J H OLSEN lbw b Lockett | 3 |
| A BRIGGS not out | 0 |
| F I HERBERT b Crump | 0 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total | 295 |

BOWLING ANALYSIS

| Staffordshire—First Innings | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|----|----|
| | O. | M. | R. |
| Herbert | 17 | 5 | 39 |
| Townsend | 5 | 2 | 9 |
| Close | 9 | 2 | 33 |
| Carr | 10.2 | 2 | 23 |
| Olsen | 6 | 0 | 20 |
| Durham—First Innings | | | |
| | O. | M. | R. |
| Stubbs | 18 | 3 | 62 |
| Deighton | 17 | 3 | 48 |
| Lockett | 28 | 6 | 72 |
| Shardlow | 8 | 0 | 40 |
| Ikin | 5 | 0 | 24 |
| Crump | 13.5 | 0 | 43 |

LAST OVER DEFEAT IN FINAL MATCH

Durham beat Staffordshire at Walsall yesterday in the latter's concluding match in the Minor Counties Cricket Championship after an exciting finish, the winning hit being made off the second ball of the last over.

Durham were set the task of scoring 99 in their second innings in 90 minutes, including the extra half hour, but the early batsmen were kept so quiet in the opening stages that, with 20 minutes to go, 40 runs were needed, and 20 were still required with only 10 minutes to play.

To lose only by five wickets after their first innings failure represented a splendid recovery, but, actually, Staffordshire should easily have avoided defeat.

Ikin, who scored a masterly century, Paterson and Deighton all batted so confidently that the first innings arrears of 160 were cleared off for the loss of two wickets. Afterwards, however, the batting was not convincing, and the total of 258 was not too impressive in view of the fine read-off.

That Durham had to struggle so hard for their success was due to some steady and accurate bowling by Lockett and Crump, who, however, could not gain any assistance from the easy wicket.

An aggressive innings of 21 by Carr was the deciding factor.

STAFFORDSHIRE

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| R SMITH c Close b Herbert | 27 |
| A SMITH b Herbert | 0 |
| R S PATTERSON c Close b Townsend | 1 |
| J T IKIN b Carr | 0 |
| T R DEIGHTON b Close | 6 |
| C C CLARKE b Herbert | 29 |
| S CRUMP c Townsend b Herbert | 34 |
| A LOCKETT b Herbert | 23 |
| J D BEEVERS c Adamson b Carr | 0 |
| B SHARDLOW c Collins b Carr | 6 |
| W STUBBS not out | 0 |
| Extras | 11 |
| Total | 135 |

Second Innings

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| R SMITH b Herbert | 0 |
| J T IKIN c Beresford b Olsen | 110 |
| R S PATTERSON b Close | 31 |
| T R DEIGHTON lbw b Olsen | 26 |
| A SMITH c Carr b Close | 9 |
| C C CLARKE b Herbert | 17 |
| S CRUMP c and b Parnaby | 4 |
| A LOCKETT b Close | 13 |
| J D BEEVERS lbw b Olsen | 16 |
| B SHARDLOW not out | 14 |
| W STUBBS lbw b Close | 0 |
| Extras | 18 |
| Total | 258 |

DURHAM

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| D C H TOWNSEND run out | 112 |
| A H PARNABY b Crump | 32 |
| J H BERESFORD c Lockett b Deighton | 54 |
| J A ADAMSON c Beevers b Stubbs | 5 |
| M GIBSON c R Smith b Lockett | 47 |
| T COLLIN c Crump b Stubbs | 7 |
| J CARR c Paterson b Crump | 23 |
| J A CLOSE c Lockett b Deighton | 3 |
| J H OLSEN lbw b Lockett | 6 |
| A BRIGGS not out | 0 |
| F I HERBERT b Crump | 0 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total | 295 |

Second Innings

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| D C H TOWNSEND c Deighton b Crump | 23 |
| A H PARNABY run out | 17 |
| J H BERESFORD not out | 27 |
| J A ADAMSON c Beevers b Lockett | 1 |
| M GIBSON lbw b Lockett | 1 |
| J CARR c Crump b Lockett | 21 |
| J H OLSEN not out | 5 |
| Extras | 7 |
| Total (for 5 wks) | 102 |

BOWLING ANALYSIS

Staffordshire—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|------|----|----|----|
| Herbert | 17 | 5 | 39 | 5 |
| Townsend | 5 | 2 | 9 | 1 |
| Close | 8 | 2 | 33 | 1 |
| Carr | 10.2 | 2 | 23 | 3 |
| Olsen | 6 | 0 | 20 | 0 |

Second Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|------|----|----|----|
| Herbert | 17 | 2 | 55 | 2 |
| Townsend | 4 | 2 | 5 | 0 |
| Close | 18.5 | 4 | 34 | 4 |
| Olsen | 9 | 0 | 40 | 3 |
| Carr | 18 | 4 | 57 | 0 |
| Collin | 6 | 0 | 19 | 0 |
| Parnaby | 9 | 1 | 30 | 1 |

Durham—First Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|------|----|----|----|
| Stubbs | 18 | 3 | 62 | 2 |
| Deighton | 17 | 3 | 48 | 2 |
| Lockett | 28 | 6 | 72 | 2 |
| Shardlow | 8 | 0 | 40 | 0 |
| Ikin | 5 | 0 | 24 | 0 |
| Crump | 13.5 | 0 | 43 | 3 |

Second Innings

| | O. | M. | R. | W. |
|----------|------|----|----|----|
| Deighton | 1 | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| Stubbs | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Lockett | 14 | 3 | 37 | 6 |
| Crump | 13.2 | 3 | 49 | 6 |

MINOR COUNTIES CRICKET

STAFFORDSHIRE'S IMPROVED PLAYING RECORD

J. T. IKIN AND F. TAYLOR HEAD THE AVERAGES

HANDICAP OF CONSTANT CHANGES

Although suffering defeat in the last two matches, Staffordshire's record in the Minor Counties Cricket Championship shows a substantial improvement on last season, the county's average being 45.23 against 31.66. Batting weakness against fast bowling has proved a big failing, while constant changes in personnel have handicapped the team. J. T. Ikin (Porthill Park) and F. Taylor (Burslem) have the distinction of heading the batting and bowling averages.

(By COVER-POINT)

Although Staffordshire have materially improved their record in the Minor Counties Cricket Championship — their average is 45.23 against 31.66 last season—the summer finished on a disappointing note, successive defeats at the hands of Cheshire and Durham spoiling a great chance of finishing among the leaders for the first time for several years.

When six of the eight fixtures had been fulfilled, Staffordshire's average of 63.33 left them highly placed, and as their opponents in the last two games, Cheshire and Durham, had already lost to Staffordshire once this season, there were great hopes of a notable record.

Defeats in the last two games were primarily traceable to batting weakness against fast bowling—the only other defeat of the season, against Yorkshire II, was also largely due to the same cause—and this feature, and the absence of a really good fast bowler in the side have been the chief failings.

Staffordshire's chance, of course, would have been greatly improved if the strongest side could have been chosen regularly, but, unfortunately, as in previous seasons, repeated changes had to be made.

For instance, Lockett, who has been outstandingly successful with his bowling for several years, was not available until the last match of the campaign, while F. Taylor, the Burslem player, could only give his services in three games.

How much his absence has meant can be gauged from the fact that in those three games he took 18 wickets at a cost of 242 runs, figures which give him the bowling honours at the expense of Shardlow, who has considerably improved on his record of last season when his 11 wickets cost him 244 runs.

Apart from these two, the bowling strength has rested chiefly on S. Crump, who had the distinction of taking most wickets. A record of 27 for 513 runs is far better than last season, but not so good as in 1936 or 1935.

The batting has depended far too much on J. T. Ikin, R. Smith and C. C. Clarke. Ikin, whose loss to Staffordshire when he has qualified for Lancashire, will be a severe blow, has topped the averages for the first time, and for the third successive year he has scored more runs than any other player.

His record of 431 runs is only 11 fewer than last season when he had one innings more, and it was his brilliant century yesterday against Durham which enabled him to beat R. Smith, the Caverswall player, for both aggregate and average distinctions.

Ikin, apart from his century, has had four innings of more than 50, while Smith's best efforts have been 116 and 91.

After these two, the success of C. C. Clarke (Burton) has been most notable, his aggregate of 329 for an average of 27.41

surpassing anything he has done previously.

Fielding honours were taken by J. T. Ikin, who, apart from accepting five catches, set a brilliant standard throughout the season. Four wicketkeepers were tried during the year, L. Lowe stumping three and catching two; R. Hammond stumping one and catching two; Blair stumping one and catching three; and Beever's catching two. Other catches were taken by S. Crump 4; Hollowood and Shardlow three each; R. Smith, Clarke, Arkinstall, Deighton and Lockett two each; and Reynolds, Taylor, Stubbs, Broderick, Adams, Pedley, Patterson and L. H. Crump, one each.

THE AVERAGES

| | BATTING | | BOWLING | |
|------------------|---------|-------------|---------|-----------|
| | Inns. | Not Highest | Score | Avg. Ave. |
| J. T. Ikin | 14 | 0 | 110 | 30.78 |
| R. Smith | 13 | 2 | 116 | 30.09 |
| R. S. Patterson | 6 | 1 | 62 | 29.20 |
| E. Broderick | 5 | 1 | 25 | 29.00 |
| C. C. Clarke | 13 | 1 | 92 | 27.41 |
| Reg. Halton | 4 | 0 | 46 | 23.50 |
| T. R. Deighton | 6 | 1 | 38 | 18.60 |
| B. Shardlow | 10 | 3 | 33 | 18.57 |
| L. H. Crump | 4 | 0 | 30 | 17.50 |
| G. Pedley | 4 | 1 | 40 | 16.66 |
| A. B. Hollowood | 5 | 0 | 27 | 16.66 |
| S. Crump | 14 | 1 | 44 | 16.20 |
| R. Hammond | 3 | 0 | 18 | 12.84 |
| W. A. Adams | 9 | 0 | 37 | 9.33 |
| F. Taylor | 5 | 2 | 8 | 7.77 |
| L. Lowe | 4 | 0 | 9 | 6.00 |
| W. Stubbs | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4.25 |
| J. E. Blair | 5 | 0 | 2 | 2.00 |
| Also Batted— | | | | |
| E. Binns | 1* | 0 | 2 | 0.66 |
| L. E. Gale | 10 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| R. H. Plant | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| A. Reynolds | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| V. T. Troman | 6 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| E. J. Wakelin | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| W. M. Arkinstall | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| A. Lockett | 23 | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| J. D. Beever's | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

* Denotes not out.

BOWLING

| | O | M. | R | W. | Avg. | |
|---------------------------|-----|-------------|-----|----------|------------|---|
| F. Taylor | 124 | 1 | 32 | 18 | 13.44 | |
| B. Shardlow | 86 | 4 | 21 | 18 | 15.51 | |
| G. Pedley | 20 | 0 | 9 | 5 | 18.00 | |
| S. Crump | 250 | 2 | 36 | 513 | 19.00 | |
| A. Lockett | 42 | 9 | 16 | 9 | 21.80 | |
| A. Reynolds | 27 | 4 | 76 | 3 | 25.53 | |
| J. T. Ikin | 65 | 6 | 240 | 7 | 34.28 | |
| W. Stubbs | 62 | 14 | 185 | 5 | 37.00 | |
| T. R. Deighton | 40 | 7 | 141 | 3 | 47.00 | |
| Also bowled: V. T. Troman | 5 | 0 | 18 | 0 | E. | |
| Broderick | 30 | 7 | 72 | 2 | L. E. Gale | |
| 16 | 1 | Reg. Halton | 8 | 1 | 35 | 1 |
| 21 | 3 | 73 | 2 | E. Binns | | |

MATCH RESULTS

Results of the matches were as follows:
Cheshire at Oxtou.—Staffordshire 179 and 174; Cheshire 139 for nine dec. and 200; won by 14 runs.
Yorkshire II., at Porthill.—Staffordshire 86 and 171; Yorkshire II. 208 and 51 for one; lost by nine wickets.
Durham, at Norton-on-Tees.—Staffordshire 294 and 55 for 3; Durham 133 and 215; won by seven wickets.
Northumberland, at Newcastle-on-Tyne.—Staffordshire 256 and 244 for eight dec.; Northumberland 270 and 53 for two; lost on first innings.
Yorkshire II., at Wakefield.—Staffordshire two runs for no wickets; match abandoned owing to rain.
Northumberland, at Micheln ground, Stoke.—Staffordshire 243 and 40 for five; Northumberland 157 and 124; won by five wickets.
Cheshire, at Porthill.—Staffordshire 131 and 116; Cheshire 339; lost by an innings and 92 runs.
Durham, at Walsall.—Staffordshire 135 and 258; Durham 295 and 102 for five; lost by five wickets.

COUNTY CRICKET

Staffordshire Fail At Walsall

POOR BATTING AND MISSED CHANCES

By THE CRITIC

The Staffordshire team had another disappointing day at Walsall on Monday. At Norton-on-Tees in June they scored 284 against practically the same bowling. The return match saw the side dismissed in 2½ hours for 135. And there was nothing in the state of the pitch to account for it. The fact is that after a most encouraging start to the season the batting has gone to pieces in the later matches. True the Durham captain, on winning the toss, sent Staffordshire in first, and though in the event it paid, there was little or no change in the wicket, which played remarkably well all day. The early morning dew may have given it just a shade more life in the first hour or so, but if so it was not perceptible. It has to be recorded that Staffordshire made a disastrous start, that worthy efforts to effect a recovery were too short-lived, and that when Durham batted early chances were missed behind the wicket, which had they had been taken would have made a vast difference to the game.

Arthur Smith and Aaron Lockett turned out for the county for the first time this year, and J. D. Beevers, the Aston Unity wicket-keeper, was a newcomer to the team. R. B. Proud, the Winchester captain, and the most talked-of schools batsman of the year, did not appear for Durham as announced, preferring to play for Hampshire.

A SHOCKING START

The brothers Smith opened the batting for Staffordshire, and in the first over the Norton professional played on to the last left-arm bowler, Herbert. It was virtually a yorker, and probably swung just enough in to the batsman to cause him to edge it on to the leg stump. Patterson was inclined to "nibble" at Townsend's off-theory from the first, and at 13 he fell in the slips from a harmless ball which he should have left alone. Before he could settle down Ikin was out to an incredible shot. He tried to sweep a straight ball round to leg with an agricultural mow, missed it, and turned it off the leg-stump on to the off with his pad. Deighton played late at a straight one well up to him, and four wickets had gone for 25.

Roy Smith had been batting soundly, and made most of the runs, and he and Clarke, acting captain, made the bowling look easy while adding 33 runs, but Smith then cut a short ball without keeping it down sufficiently, and was out to a low catch in the gully. Clarke was playing beautiful cricket, at least as good as any seen during the day, and had four splendid fours, but at 75 he lost a fast ball which sent his leg-stump somersaulting several yards. Crump and Lockett also showed that the bowling had no special terrors, and stayed together until lunch, but another collapse took place after the resumption. Lockett failed to connect with a fast ball that grazed the leg-stump. Beevers gave a soft catch at short-leg, and at 135 Crump skied the ball to mid-off in trying to drive. He and Lockett added 39, and he batted well for an hour and five minutes. Shardlow was rather unfortunate to be caught on the long-leg boundary from what looked a likely four, and so the Staffordshire team had for the most part got themselves out for a wretchedly poor score. It was a repetition of the first day in the recent Cheshire match, almost the same inadequate total followed by an afternoon's leather hunting.

DURHAM CAPTAIN'S CENTURY

From 3 o'clock until 7, except for a 20 minutes' tea interval, Staffordshire bowlers toiled for small reward, and fielders tried in vain for hours to check the tip-and-run propensities of Townsend, Parnaby, and Beresford. Beevers had the misfortune to miss two catches which would have changed the whole trend of the game if they had been taken. Having scored five of the first six runs, Parnaby, who averages over 100 in league cricket this season, offered a chance to the wicket-keeper standing back to Deighton, which was as easy as any catch in that position can be, but he failed to hold it. Instead of one wicket for six, the first wicket fell at 60. And long before that, with his score at 22, Townsend was missed at the wicket off Shardlow.

Crump was called upon at 56, and bowled Parnaby's leg-stump in his first over, but Townsend and Beresford, both enjoying some luck in the way of snicks on each side of the wicket, but otherwise playing well, stayed together an hour and 40 minutes, and added 137 for the second wicket. The pair took an extraordinary number of short runs, some of them daring, and as long as their understanding was perfect, the fielders could not stop their merry and audacious little game, but there was almost certain to be a flaw some time, and when it came Clarke threw the captain's wicket down. He had played a dominant innings of two hours and 40 minutes duration, giving only the one actual chance mentioned, and had hit ten fours. Beresford stayed to complete a well-played half-century, and was caught in the slips at 208.

Then Stubbs returned to get a couple of quick wickets, but made the mistake of serving up half-volleys to Carr and was driven for three fours in four balls. However, Crump got the hitter to sky the ball to cover, and Durham finished the day in the commanding position of having a lead of 132 with four wickets in hand.

CENTURY BY JOHN IKIN

Staffordshire wound up the season with a splendid recovery, but the first day's failure was such that defeat could not be avoided though it was achieved by Durham in the last over one minute from the expiration of extra time. In the day's play nine Durham wickets were captured for 130 runs, and Staffordshire played a second innings of 258.

Durham's last four wickets added only 28 runs, but at 11.50 Staffordshire entered upon their second innings, requiring 160 to avoid being beaten in a single innings. They lost Roy Smith without a run scored, but from that point they steadily improved their position. Ikin and Patterson scored 85 for the second wicket in as many minutes, and Ikin and Deighton 84 in 53 minutes. Ikin played a characteristic innings, wonderfully sound in defence and replete with choice scoring strokes. His driving, which was hard and perfectly timed, was the chief source of his runs, but he had all the strokes, and there were hardly any flaws in his two hours and 35 minutes' batting. He reached the boundary 13 times, and was eventually caught in the long field when he lifted a drive from the slow leg-break bowler. The only blemish was a chance of stumping when he had scored 47, for a possible chance he offered later to Carr with a terrific return could hardly be described as such.

Patterson played the right game in keeping Ikin company for an hour and 45 minutes, and Deighton stayed 55 minutes and batted well. Clarke hit the only six of the match, getting Olsen on the half-volley for a fine on-drive, and Lockett, Beevers, and Shardlow all helped the score along. But these late batsmen did not stay quite long

enough to prevent Durham winning outright.

The visitors had 82 minutes in which to score 99 runs, a comparatively easy task. But so steadily did Lockett and Crump bowl that for a long time the batsmen were pegged down. The fourth wicket fell at 58, and Carr joined Beresford with 41 required in 20 minutes. This would not have been accomplished in spite of Carr's eagerness to hit, but for one or two fluky fours. Beresford jumped in to drive Lockett and snicked the ball just wide of his leg stump for four, and another ball went for four byes. Then Carr skied the ball and was cleverly caught four minutes from time with five runs wanted. Olsen hurried in, and in the last over with a minute to go made the winning hit.

Staffordshire had had a good day, but just failed to save a point. The attendance at the match was disappointing.

STAFFORDSHIRE.—1st Inn.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| R. Smith c Carr b Herbert | 27 |
| A. Smith b Herbert | 0 |
| R. S. Patterson c Close b Townsend | 1 |
| J. T. Ikin b Carr | 5 |
| T. R. Deighton b Close | 0 |
| C. C. Clarke b Herbert | 0 |
| S. Crump c Townsend b Herbert | 29 |
| A. Lockett b Herbert | 24 |
| J. D. Beevers c Adamson b Carr | 3 |
| B. Shardlow c Collin b Carr | 0 |
| W. Stubbs not out | 5 |
| Extras | 11 |
| Total | 135 |

2nd Innings

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| R. Smith b Herbert | 0 |
| A. Smith c Carr b Close | 9 |
| R. S. Patterson b Close | 31 |
| J. T. Ikin c Beresford b Olsen | 110 |
| T. R. Deighton lbw b Olsen | 28 |
| C. C. Clarke b Herbert | 17 |
| S. Crump c and b Parnaby | 4 |
| A. Lockett b Close | 13 |
| J. D. Beevers lbw b Olsen | 16 |
| B. Shardlow not out | 16 |
| W. Stubbs lbw b Close | 4 |
| Extras | 18 |
| Total | 258 |

DURHAM.—1st Inn.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| D. C. H. Townsend run out | 112 |
| A. H. Parnaby b Crump | 32 |
| J. H. Beresford c Lockett b Deighton | 54 |
| J. A. Adamson c Beevers b Stubbs | 5 |
| M. Gibson c R. Smith b Lockett | 47 |
| T. Collin c Crump b Stubbs | 7 |
| Carr c Patterson b Crump | 23 |
| J. A. Close c Lockett b Deighton | 3 |
| J. H. Olsen lbw b Lockett | 6 |
| A. Briggs not out | 1 |
| Herbert b Crump | 0 |
| Extras | 6 |
| Total | 295 |

2nd Innings

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| D. C. H. Townsend c Deighton b Crump | 23 |
| A. H. Parnaby run out | 17 |
| J. H. Beresford not out | 27 |
| J. A. Adamson c Beevers b Lockett | 1 |
| M. Gibson lbw b Lockett | 21 |
| Carr c Crump b Lockett | 1 |
| J. H. Olsen not out | 5 |
| Extras | 7 |
| Total (5 wkts.) | 102 |

BOWLING

Staffordshire—1st Innings

Herbert 17-5-39-5; Townsend 5-2-9-1; Close 9-2-33-1; Carr 10.2-2-23-3; Olsen 6-0-20-0.

2nd Innings

Herbert 17-2-55-2; Townsend 4-2-5-0; Close 18.5-4-34-4; Olsen 8-0-40-3; Carr 18-4-57-0; Collin 6-0-19-0; Parnaby 9-1-30-1.

Durham—1st Innings

Stubbs 18-3-62-2; Deighton 17-3-48-2; Lockett 28-6-72-2; Shardlow 8-0-40-0; Crump 13.5-0-43-3; Ikin 6-0-24-0.

2nd Innings

Deighton 1-0-8-0; Stubbs 1-0-4-0; Lockett 14-3-37-3; Crump 13.2-2-46-1.

COUNTY CRICKET REVIEW

Improved Percentage

BUT GOOD SEASON MARRED BY POOR FINISH

By THE CRITIC

The Staffordshire players do not appear to be good stayers. They repeated exactly last year's experience by losing the last two matches and spoiling what up to that stage was a good record. A year ago in the holiday week they were heavily beaten by Cheshire, who repeated the castigation in the corresponding match at the beginning of the present month. Last year the team went on to give a weak display at Manchester, and this time they were similarly afflicted at Walsall, though a splendid recovery on the second day to some extent saved their credit without accomplishing anything more tangible. There was another respect in which history repeated itself. Prior to the last two matches in 1937 the average runs scored per wicket for Staffordshire was higher than that of opponents, but the last two games put the balance on the other side. This season the average before the last two defeats was 20.27 for and 18.90 against, but the margin swung round in favour of opponents again at the finish. However, considering all the difficulties, the results are not at all discreditable, and the form shown has been encouraging. It must be remembered that Aaron Lockett was not available until the last match, that Taylor only played in three, and that Ernest Hawley and L. E. Gale, successful opening batsmen last season, were both absent. The Dudley captain took part in the first match, and was captain for the washed out match at Wakefield, but otherwise he could not spare the time, and Hawley was incapacitated by illness throughout. These are very severe handicaps, and the hon. secretary and his committee are to be congratulated on the success of their efforts to surmount them and maintain the all-round strength of the side.

The programme was reduced to eight matches this year, the time-honoured fixtures with Lancashire II. being discontinued. One match was rained off after five minutes play, and so does not count in the competition. Of the other seven three were won (Cheshire, Durham, and Northumberland), three lost (Yorks. II., Cheshire, and Durham), and one lost on the first innings (Northumberland). These results yielded 19 points of a possible 42, and a percentage of 45.23, compared with 31.66 last year. The last time the championship was won was in 1927 with a percentage of 90, and the figures for each succeeding year up to 1936 were: 66.66, 56.60, 57.14, 68.57, 37.50, 37.50, 30.95 and 53.33.

Batting 15 times including the brief start at Wakefield, Staffordshire lost 123 wickets for 2,384 runs, an average per wicket of opposing teams were captured at a cost of 2,286 runs, average per wicket of 18.92, and 107 wickets of opposing teams were captured county was therefore 2.44 per wicket, compared with 1.12 last year, when the results were not so good. Last year the average was 17.99, and that of opponents 19.11. The batting shows a gain of a run per wicket, and the bowling a loss of over two runs per wicket.

The season will be remembered as the first in which the old County Ground at Stoke has not been available for cricket. And I hope there will also be occasion to remember it as the first in which county cricket has been played on the ground of the Michelin Works at the Boothen end of Stoke. In other words, it is to be hoped that the encouraging experiment made this year will prove to be the start of a long and successful association of county cricket with this new venue. It seems futile to look for support for county cricket

in the south of the county. This week served to prove once more that the people in large numbers who attend Saturday afternoon matches at centres like Walsall cannot spare a full working day for a county match. The charge for admission at Walsall was reduced to 6d. specially to cater for the working-class followers of the Walsall club, but the object in view was not attained. Only about £10 was taken, and most of those present would have paid the customary shilling for admission. And they would have had their money's worth on both days. In such favourable weather the match would have attracted a much larger "gate" in the north of the county.

The matches, both home and away, have furnished thoroughly entertaining cricket. Two centuries were scored for Staffordshire, by R. Smith and John Ikin, and C. C. Clarke and Smith got near to making the number four. Dennis and D. C. H. Townsend scored centuries against the team. Ikin, in spite of a luckless period during which he scored only 32 runs in six consecutive innings, got within a dozen runs of his last year's aggregate, which was the largest by any Staffordshire batsman for 26 years. Roy Smith has also batted well, and Cyril Clarke never batted quite so well before. These three have been the chief run-getters, and Stanley Crump, fortunately able to play in all the matches this year, has been a steady and dependable bowler, with Taylor doing well in the few matches he has participated in, and B. Shardlow becoming a regular player, and sometimes bowling extremely well. These three have taken most of the wickets.

Some new players have been introduced, and the county may prove to have found a batsman of value in the 18-years-old Walsall player, R. S. Patterson. T. R. Deighton, of Denstone College, has been of service as an all-round player since he joined the team, and R. Halton, the Leek left-hander, has improved his batting so much that more may be heard of him. In the endeavour to discover a satisfactory wicket-keeper, three men new to the team have been tried in L. Lowe, J. E. Blair, and J. D. Beevers, but none of them has been able to produce his best club form, and the problem does not appear to be quite satisfactorily solved as yet.

In a second article next week I shall have more to say about individual form. Details:—

June 8 and 9, at Oxtou, Staffs. 179 (R. S. Patterson 62 not out, J. T. Ikin 56) and 174 (Ikin 86); Cheshire 139 for 9, dec. (S. Crump 4 for 38) and 200 (Taylor 5 for 65, Crump 4 for 65). Won.

June 13 and 14, at Porthill, Staffs. 86 and 171 (Ikin 51); Yorks. II. 208 (Watson 63, Taylor 7 for 72) and 51 for one. Lost.

June 20 and 21, at Norton-on-Tees, Staffs. 294 (R. Smith 116, C. C. Clarke 51, S. Crump 44) and 65 for 3; Durham 133 (B. Shardlow 3 for 12, G. Pedley 3 for 32) and 215 (Shardlow 3 for 17). Won.

June 22 and 23, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, Staffs. 256 (Ikin 76, G. Pedley 40) and 244 for 8 dec. (Smith 91, Clarke 67); Northumberland 270 (W. G. Mackay 89, Ikin 4 for 68, Shardlow 4 for 68) and 53 for 2. Lost on 1st innings.

July 11 and 12, at Wakefield, Staffs. 2 for 0; Yorks. II. did not bat. Rain, no decision.

July 20 and 21, at Michelin ground, Stoke, Staffs. 243 (Clarke 92) and 40 for 5; Northumberland 157 (S. Crump 4 for 31), and 128 (Taylor 4 for 28). Won.

Aug. 3 and 4, at Porthill, Staffs. 131 (Reg. Halton 48, Dennis 8 for 44) and

118 (Bartley 6 for 31); Cheshire 339 (Dennis 145, Shardlow 4 for 63). Lost. Aug. 15 and 16, at Walsall, Staffs. 135 and 258 (J. T. Ikin 110); Durham 285 (D. C. H. Townsend 112, J. H. Beresford 54), and 102 for 5 (Lockett 3 for 37). Lost.

FEATURES OF THE PLAY

The season opened at Oxtou, where Staffordshire won an exhilarating match after an exciting finish. Ikin got off the mark in great style with scores of 58 and 86, though the later was rather lucky, for he gave several chances. The most pleasing feature was the debut of R. S. Patterson, of Walsall, then just 18. His 62, not out, in the first innings against good fast bowling constituted a notable beginning to a career which I hope will be long and successful as a Staffordshire batsman. C. C. Clarke gave evidence of the improved form which was to be a gratifying feature of the season, but there was rather an elongated tail to the batting. Levi Lowe, of Knypersley, was tried as a wicket-keeper, and had a good match. Stanley Crump, Taylor, and Reynolds bore the brunt of the bowling and did their job well, and one or two catches that will long be talked about were made. It was a brilliant rally when a great stand by Wolstenholme and Dutton seemed to have won the match for Cheshire that finally gained the points. When the two had put on 108 for the fourth wicket the home county needed only 35 more to win, but inspired bowling by Crump and Taylor, brilliantly supported in the field, pulled the game out of the fire.

Then came the first of the two matches at Porthill that were destined to spoil the season's record, and extinguish championship chances. The ban on the use of water was probably responsible for the pitch becoming dangerous after a few hours' play. Yorkshire II. were fortunate enough to be batting during those few hours before the wicket broke up, and beyond all question the Yorkshire captain won the match when he won the toss. Falling 122 runs behind on the first innings, Staffordshire were in a hopeless position, but Ikin and Patterson, in a valiant stand for an hour and a quarter producing 79 runs, effected a second innings improvement and compelled the visitors to bat again. Several Staffordshire players were temporarily laid out on the first afternoon, when the pitch was at its worst, and L. Lowe had a finger broken while batting, which kept him out of the game for a month or more. In Yorkshire's first innings Taylor bowled 40.2 overs for 72 runs and seven wickets, and Crump took two for 56 in 35 overs.

On their Northern tour the Staffordshire team, though short of Taylor, and still without Lockett, gave an excellent account of itself. Durham were comfortably beaten, and the Northumberland match drawn in Staffordshire's favour though first innings points were narrowly lost. In the two matches the team scored 849 runs for the loss of 31 wickets, giving an average of over 27 runs per wicket. The tour was something of a triumph for Roy Smith, who scored 140 for once out out at Norton and 88 at Newcastle. His 116 against Durham was the first century he had ever scored, and he had the bad luck to miss another by being run out for 91 at Newcastle. Clarke shared two century partnerships with Smith, the pair adding 109 in 105 minutes at Norton, and 126 in 63 minutes when runs were wanted quickly at Newcastle. They were not the only batting successes, for Ikin, Crump, Pedley, Shardlow, Broderick, Hollowood, and Adams all had a share in the good work. The bowling was cleverly managed by the captain, and Shardlow, Crump, Ikin, Pedley, and Stubbs, all rendered useful service.

After a complete wash-out at Wakefield, the first county match on the ground of the Michelin works at Stoke was favoured by nice weather and proved a success. Except for the abortive match at Wakefield T. R. Deighton, of Denstone College, and J. E. Blair, the Stafford wicket keeper, made their first appearance in the county team, and both did well in their respective roles,

while E. J. Wakelin made his only appearance of the season. Good bowling by Crump, Taylor, Wakelin, and Shardlow got rid of a strong batting side cheaply, and a fine innings of 82 by Clarke was a prime factor in giving Staffordshire a first innings lead of 86, which proved decisive, though five wickets were lost on a difficult, drying wicket in getting 40 runs to win.

Back to Porthill for the return with Cheshire in holiday week Staffordshire suffered from three major disabilities, viz., a sadly depleted team, a total lack of fast bowling, and a bad attack of nerves. "Give a dog a bad name and hang him." The Porthill wicket had earned a bad repute in the Yorkshire match, when such remarks as "Fancy Dennis on this" were heard. Well, the pitch was dry and fast for the Cheshire match, and it didn't look well. But it played quite reasonably well, and fear of what it might do had a good deal to do with the failure of the batting. That is one explanation. Another is that the wicket suited fast swing bowlers and did not respond to spin. Cheshire had the first variety; Staffordshire had the second. In other words, in the prevailing conditions Cheshire were much the better side.

W. M. Arkinstall, of Market Drayton, assisted Staffordshire for the first time and shaped well though not getting many runs. The only batsmen to earn much credit were Reg Halton, L. H. Crump, and Deighton. Dennis had a great match, following up six wickets for 44 with the best innings of the season against Staffordshire and the only century. Others scored well, and the total of 339 gave Cheshire an innings victory. E. Binns, of Hartshill, a junior club, filled a late vacancy, and there was a certain amount of vim and menace in his fast-medium bowling. With Crump and Shardlow he bore the brunt.

The final match of the season is reported in this issue.

The following are the season's averages:-

BATTING

| | Inns. | Not out | Ttl. runs | Bat. | |
|-----------------|-------|---------|-----------|------|-------|
| | | | | sc. | av. |
| J. T. Ikin | 14 | 0 | 431 | 110 | 30.78 |
| R. Smith | 13 | 2 | 331 | 116 | 30.09 |
| R. S. Patterson | 7 | 2 | 147 | 62* | 29.00 |
| E. Broderick | 3 | 1 | 58 | 25 | 29.00 |
| C. C. Clarke | 12 | 0 | 328 | 82 | 27.33 |
| R. Halton | 4 | 0 | 94 | 46 | 23.50 |
| T. R. Deighton | 6 | 1 | 83 | 38 | 18.60 |
| B. Shardlow | 10 | 3 | 130 | 33 | 18.57 |
| L. H. Crump | 4 | 0 | 70 | 30 | 17.50 |
| G. Pedley | 4 | 1 | 50 | 40 | 16.63 |
| A. B. Hollowood | 5 | 0 | 81 | 27 | 16.20 |
| S. Crump | 14 | 1 | 167 | 44 | 12.84 |
| R. Hammond | 3 | 0 | 28 | 18 | 9.33 |
| W. A. Adams | 9 | 0 | 70 | 37 | 7.77 |
| F. Taylor | 5 | 2 | 18 | 8 | 6.00 |
| L. Lowe | 4 | 0 | 17 | 9 | 4.25 |
| W. Stubbs | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2.00 |
| J. E. Blair | 3 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0.66 |

Batted Twice: A. Lockett 23 and 13;

E. J. Wakelin 14, 0*; J. D. Beevers 0, 16; W. M. Arkinstall 13, 0; R. H. Plant 11, 0; L. E. Gale 10, 1; V. T. Troman 6, 5; A. Reynolds 9, 0*; A. Smith 0, 9; A. Binns 11*, 0. Did not bat, A. W. Ikin.

BOWLING

| | O. | M. | R. | W. | Av. |
|-------------|-------|----|-----|----|-------|
| F. Taylor | 124.1 | 32 | 242 | 18 | 13.44 |
| B. Shardlow | 96.4 | 21 | 276 | 18 | 15.33 |
| G. Pedley | 20 | 0 | 90 | 5 | 18.00 |
| S. Crump | 230.2 | 46 | 513 | 27 | 19.00 |
| A. Lockett | 42 | 9 | 109 | 5 | 21.80 |
| J. T. Ikin | 63 | 6 | 240 | 7 | 34.28 |
| W. Stubbs | 62 | 14 | 185 | 5 | 37.00 |

Also Bowled: E. J. Wakelin 24-2-83 -4, A. Reynolds 27-4-76-3, T. R. Deighton 40-7-141-3, E. Broderick 30-7-72 -2, A. Binns 21-3-73-2, L. E. Gale 6-1-16-1, R. Halton 8-1-35-1, V. T. Troman 5-0-18-0.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE CRICKET LEAGUE

Stone's Great Safety Bid

NO CHANGE AT EITHER END OF THE TABLE

By THE CRITIC

FINE, but cold, sums up the weather conditions in North Staffordshire on Saturday, the temperature having dropped at least 10 degrees in two days. As the sun was generally obscured by heavy clouds it was not a congenial afternoon, and the light was poor, but it was fine, and all the matches were finished except one, which went the full five hours without a decision. As a result of the day's play there was little change in the order of merit in the League table. In fact, the only alteration was an advance of two places by Longton by reason of their fourth consecutive victory. But the most fateful result was Stone's third victory in a row, for it practically assured the retention of their place in Section A. With only nine more points at stake they established a lead of nine points over Silverdale and seven points over Crewe. Both the bottom clubs being defeated, and both the top clubs gaining full points, the position at both ends of the table was unchanged. The leaders did not allow their challengers to creep any closer. They gained the most convincing victory of the day, completely overwhelming Knypersley. The defeats at Norton and Nantwich have evidently not destroyed their morale. By defeating their neighbours at Crewe Nantwich recorded a sequence of five wins, broken only by a blank day owing to rain. While maintaining their challenge to Burslem, the Champions made the situation of the Alexandra no easier. However, a hard struggle by Silverdale brought no reward, so Crewe's two points advantage was not disturbed. Blythe Works gained a point by the skin of their teeth, but none of the three bottom clubs has an easy programme to fulfil, so the relegation problem is still unsolved.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

Burslem 182 for 5 dec., Knypersley 61.
Crewe Alexandra 88. Nantwich 110 for 5.
Longton 137, Silverdale 95.
Norton 114, Leek 118 for 6.
Caverswall 63, Stone 132 for 7.
Porthill 159 for 9 dec., Blythe Works
139 for 9.

LEAGUE TABLE

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | Pts |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Burslem | 19 | 14 | 4 | 1 | 43 |
| Nantwich | 19 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 29 |
| Longton | 19 | 10 | 6 | 3 | 33 |
| Knypersley | 19 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 31 |
| Norton | 19 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 31 |
| Leek | 19 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 29 |
| Porthill | 19 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 26 |
| Caverswall | 19 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 23 |
| Stone | 19 | 6 | 10 | 3 | 21 |
| Blythe Works | 19 | 4 | 11 | 4 | 16 |
| Crewe Alex. | 19 | 3 | 11 | 5 | 14 |
| Silverdale | 19 | 3 | 13 | 3 | 12 |

DANGER OVER FOR STONE

Skillful Bowling Beats Caverswall

Three weeks ago Stone were in a highly dangerous position. They had not won a match for five weeks. Since then they have gained full points (nine), whilst Crewe have picked up three, Blythe Works one, and Silverdale none, and the trio of victories has killed the relegation bogey. One more point will make them absolutely safe. But if they fail to get it Silverdale will require the full nine points in the last three matches to get level.

Softened pitches have given Bert Shardlow his chance, and his clever spin bowling, and the accurate attack of Hancock, have been the prime factor in the triple success of the team. This combination was altogether too good for the Caverswall batsmen after the invaluable wicket of Roy Smith had been thrown away at the start. R. M. Bradbury, who opened the batting with the professional when E. J. Wakelin had won the toss, played a hard stroke to mid-on. Smith started for a run, was sent back, and had gone too far. It was a near thing, but he was given out, probably correctly. It was the striker's call, and if Smith dashed off without a call it was his own fault; if he was called and then sent back it was his partner's fault. Anyway, there was no run, and if Bradbury had attempted it he would have been run out. That, of course, would have been preferable to wasting Smith's wicket. It was a grievous blunder on somebody's part, and it may have had a decisive effect on the result of the game. It was the third time Smith has been out in the same way. I stated last week that being three times run out had reduced the average of R. H. Plant from 40 to 30. In Roy Smith's case it has reduced his average from 30 to 24.

SMART WICKET-KEEPING

Shardlow's leg-break quickly had Bradbury and D. A. Harper stumped, Jervis being very quick in both cases, but especially in that of Harper, who only raised his foot for a split second. Three wickets were down for eight, but E. Rowley (16) and J. H. Ragsdale (22) added 31. With better placing of the field for Shardlow both might have had a short stay, and even as it was there were possible chances off the left-arm bowler. Shardlow was turning the ball very abruptly from leg, frequently too much to hit the wicket, and it was when he pitched a little wider after completely beating bat and wicket several times, that he was hit square for an occasional four. Hancock was keeping the runs down by his accuracy, and it seemed hardly wise to take him off in favour of H. H. Wood. However, Shardlow bowled Rowley and Ragsdale, the

latter with a lovely leg-break that hit the top of the off-stump instead of just missing it as so many did, and Hancock resuming there was no further check to the bowlers. A. Pickard was out to quite a good glide off Hancock, Jervis, standing back about three yards, diving full length to make a remarkable catch. Wakelin stayed 35 minutes, and had the best hit of the innings in his 16, a square leg hit off Shardlow. He was ninth out at 63, when one of Shardlow's was too good for him and again found the off-stump. The left-hander was not flattered by his analysis of 7 for 41. It might easily have been much better. Hancock's accuracy was reflected in his analysis 12-7-7-2. In the last three matches he has taken 12 wickets for 41 runs, an average of 3.41. He has taken 54 wickets, and Shardlow 62.

PICKARD'S SPINNERS WERE TROUBLESOME

Wakelin opened the bowling for Caverswall with Pickard, but it was the slow bowler who caused trouble. The wicket was rather too dead for the captain, who was accurate but could get no life out of the pitch. After F. Ravenscroft had been trapped by Pickard's off-break under the new rule with only four runs scored, R. W. Harris and K. D. Slynn showed the best class of batting seen in the match. Slynn maintained a correct defence, and Harris collected the bulk of the runs by good strokes used with discrimination. He made 33 out of 39 and caused Wakelin to give way to J. Tabbinor, but fell to a mid-on catch off the new bowler. Hancock was at sea with an off-break (leg-break to a right-hander) from Pickard, Wood played inside a straight ball from Tabbinor without scoring, and Slynn was beaten by an off-spinner from Pickard and stumped after a valuable resistance of 68 minutes for 9 runs. Jervis and Shardlow came together with five wickets down for 63, and the wicket-keeper skied a ball back to Tabbinor which the bowler made hardly any attempt to catch. If he had accepted a palpably easy catch Stone would have had six wickets down with 11 runs still required. Caverswall's last faint hope went with that mistake.

Pickard's next over yielded 13 runs, a fine off-drive by Shardlow being the winning hit. Thereafter numerous bowlers tried their hand, and received castigation from the two batsmen, who added 59 in under half an hour. Shardlow, badly missed once, hit seven fours in his 39, and Jervis had scored 35, not out, when stumps were drawn with seven wickets down. Pickard bowled 14 overs for 38 runs and three wickets, and Tabbinor had two for 18.

LEADERS IN CHAMPIONSHIP FORM

Knypersley were crushed at Cobridge. Their bowling had no terrors for Burslem batsmen. T. G. Hollowood (44) and C. G. Dexter (20) hit up 41 for the first wicket, and Hollowood and A. Birch (34) added 52 for the second. Then F. Bailey (34) had another useful partnership with Birch, and only five wickets had been captured when the closure was applied at 182. Though Roy Hollowood was absent he was not missed, for the visitors could do nothing with Taylor, who took six of their wickets at the trifling cost of 17 runs.

Similarly Nantwich had no great difficulty in accounting for the Alexandra at Crewe, though, but for their own desire to give nothing away in chasing the leaders, they would probably not have begrudged their neighbours the points. However, the Crewe men were not equal to the task, and lost their first six wickets for 26. G. Garrett (33) was mainly responsible for some improvement, but a total of 88 was not good enough, and

Nantwich won by seven wickets. It was the familiar combination of E. H. Steventon and W. T. Maybury that upset the home team, and their respective records were five for 34 and five for 44.

EXCITING FINISH AT CRESSWELL

Blythe Works had the help of E. Hawley for the first time this season, and he showed that his illness has not affected his batting, for he played a good and valuable innings of 44 when the Works went in against the declaration of Port-hill. J. S. Heath (36) and N. W. White (30) batted well for the visitors, and J. W. Brown and Ikin gave useful aid, but scoring was not very brisk, and the Works held up so well that they looked like playing out time with wickets to spare. A sensational last over by Ikin almost snatched a victory, however, for with the last three balls of the match he took two wickets and beat the last batsman to miss the wicket by an inch. He took six wickets for 51.

Norton batting failed at Leek until F. J. Smith (30) and G. T. Lancaster (24) put on 52 for the ninth wicket. Even so the total was inadequate, and Leek had a four wickets' margin. Pat. Charnock again played a stylish innings of 21, and C. Bonsall (21) and H. Birch (20) helped to put Leek in a winning position.

J. Whalen, after several years of retirement, turned out again to help Silverdale in their extremity. Longton were their visitors, and the home team were not disgraced though beaten once more. They had a taste of the quality of R. H. Plant's batting, for the Longton captain hit a chanceless 54, and with W. Bourne (38) added 88 for the third wicket. The rest of the Longton batting was not distinguished, and F. Vardy made his season's "bag" into 66 wickets (after missing the first two matches) by taking six for 56.

It was not a big score for Silverdale to face, and with their team of a few years ago they would probably have made light of it, but it proved too much, Broadhurst doing the damage with six for 35.

MARKET DRAYTON v. STAFFORD

Played at Market Drayton on Saturday. Scores:—

STAFFORD

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|----|
| W. T. White c A. C. Lees b O'Brien | 11 |
| D. J. Powell c Livock b Bryan | 22 |
| J. Whitfield c and b O'Brien | 8 |
| N. H. Read c R. Arkinstall b A. C. Lees | 39 |
| J. E. Blair b Bryan | 27 |
| H. O. Beck b M. Arkinstall | 10 |
| E. C. Kenworthy c M. Arkinstall b O'Brien | 22 |
| E. W. Redshaw b M. Arkinstall | 1 |
| R. Barnwell b A. C. Lees | 10 |
| J. Hutchinson not out | 7 |
| Extras | 17 |

Total (9 wkts.)174

R. Rogers did not go in

Bowling: Lees 2 for 36, Bryan 2 for 38, O'Brien 3 for 39, M. Arkinstall 2 for 20.

MARKET DRAYTON

| | |
|----------------------------------------|----|
| M. T. Sutthery b Redshaw | 59 |
| M. Arkinstall c Hutchinson b Whitfield | 44 |
| Capt. Livock b Redshaw | 1 |
| C. McMorran c and b Redshaw | 10 |
| S. Bryan st Blair b Redshaw | 3 |
| R. R. O'Brien not out | 38 |
| R. Arkinstall b Redshaw | 7 |
| R. Furnival b Whitfield | 1 |
| R. H. Greener b Redshaw | 1 |
| G. Lees not out | 16 |
| Extras | 12 |

Total (8 wkts.)182

Bowling: Redshaw 6 for 61, Whitfield 2 for 58.

STAFFORD II. v. MARKET DRAYTON II.

Played at Stafford on Saturday. Stafford won by 149 runs.

Stafford II.: D. E. Bloor run out 4, G. H. Greatorex lbw b Griffiths 6, K. C. Wood not out 112, J. R. Bithell c Newall b Walton 7, C. H. Yeates not out 42, extras 36; total (for 3 wkts. dec.) 208.

J. F. Herbert, I. G. Fletcher, A. J. Holford, H. Flavell, J. J. Hatchett, C. E. P. Holford, did not go in.

Market Drayton II.: E. Love c Fletcher b Hatchett 15, C. Hilditch b Hatchett 6, A. Barnes c A. J. Holford b Hatchett 10, J. Griffiths b Yeates 4, E. Barnett c Yeates b C. E. P. Holford 2, H. S. Hiles b Yeates 5, W. Newell c Bithell b Yeates 3, G. Walton b Yeates 4, B. Manning b C. E. P. Holford 0, F. Vernon b Holford 2, J. Eardley not out 4, extras 3; total 57. J. J. Hatchett 3 for 20, C. H. Yeates 4 for 15, C. E. P. Holford 4 for 3.

TUTBURY v. DERBY GRASSHOPPERS

At Tutbury on Saturday. Scores:—

Tutbury: S. R. Rickman b Abell 15, W. West c and b Abell 4, J. Powell run out 18, T. L. Coxon b Barnett 18, R. Bishop b Barnett 4, M. F. Hurdle c Chase b Young 40, J. Billings b Barnett 5, J. Hope b Barnett 0, S. Billings b Young 1, L. Starbuck b Young 0, F. Wilson not out 3, extras 12; total 120.

Derby: D. G. Young c Bishop b Hurdle 8, R. Bryn-Owen c Hope b Hurdle 8, B. Trubshaw c S. Billings b Bishop 5, W. F. Jacques b Hurdle 16, F. W. Barnett c Bishop b Hope 3, E. Chase b Rickman 15, R. Frost not out 43, C. E. Wood b Hurdle 4, K. Pennington not out 11, extras 8; total (for 7) 121.

SHUGBOROUGH PARK v. CANNING POTTERY

At Shugborough on Saturday. Scores:—

Shugborough: B. Billington b Brain 20, R. Stubbs run out 21, B. Higginbotham run out 8, A. Marsden c and b Rutter 0, S. Hopper run out 2, H. Houghton b Brain 2, K. Bamford b Brain 6, J. Walker b Rutter 8, A. Appleby not out 2, R. Chapman not out 0, extras 2; total 71 for 8.

Canning Pottery: J. Bridgett b Stubbs 22, W. Waters b Stubbs 0, S. Rutter lbw b Stubbs 0, W. Atkinson b Stubbs 11, J. Spruce b Walker 3, N. Brain c Walker b Stubbs 5, B. Rutter c Higginbotham b Hopper 8, T. Martin c Appleby b Stubbs 2, E. Mould c Billington b Hopper 1, L. Greatbatch not out 0, extras 3; total 61 for 9 declared.

COUNTY CRICKET REVIEW

SECOND ARTICLE

A Scrutiny of Form

OLD PLAYERS WHO WERE MISSED, AND NEW ONES WHO MADE GOOD

By THE CRITIC

IN the season which has just closed Staffordshire's resources as a cricketing county were put to a drastic test for the second year in succession. Last year the entire attack on which the county had very largely relied in several preceding seasons was not available for most of the matches, and new bowlers had to be found. The most successful of these was F. Taylor, with B. Shardlow also promising well. Taylor played that year in every competition match, and took 33 wickets, a number equalled by Aaron Lockett when he came in for the later matches. This year Taylor played in three matches only and Lockett in one. The point is this, that last year the county had to manage for the most part without bowlers who took 130 out of 148 wickets the previous season, and this season they had in most of the matches to do without the two who last year took 68 wickets, while all other bowlers, ten in number, took 36. That is part of the drastic test I mentioned. That it was possible to field an attack of anything like the quality required in the Minor Counties' Competition was surprising and creditable.

But that is not all. Last year L. E. Gale and Ernest Hawley were highly successful opening batsmen, scoring over 700 runs between them. This time Hawley's illness prevented his playing at all, and Gale could not play after the first match, except for that at Wakefield, which was rained off. To replace two dependable opening batsmen was the other part of the drastic test. These difficulties should be borne in mind in judging the performances of the Staffordshire team.

SOME STATISTICS

Before coming to a survey of individual form a few statistics are not without interest. The number of players called upon was 29, which is eight fewer than last year, but about an average number. Stanley Crump alone took part in every match, but Roy Smith, John Ikin, C. C. Clarke, and B. Shardlow missed only one. The captain, W. A. Adams, took part in six, and R. S. Patterson, W. Stubbs, and T. R. Deighton in four. Ten players came into the team for one match only, compared with 15 last year.

On the Staffordshire side 54 players were bowled, 48 caught, 12 l.b.w., 5 stumped, and 7 run out, while 38 opponents were bowled, 43 caught, 15 l.b.w., 5 stumped, and 6 run out. Those who took the most catches were Ikin 5, S. Crump 4, and Hollowood, Shardlow and Blair 3 each. Blair kept the wicket in three matches, or would have done but for the rain at Wakefield. Lowe and Hammond in two each, and Beevers in one. Lowe caught two and stumped 3 batsmen, Blair caught 3 and stumped one, Beevers caught two, and Hammond caught two and stumped one.

The extras scored against Staffordshire numbered 117, made up of 55 byes, 45 leg-byes, 15 no-balls, and two wides, and those credited to the team were 134, viz., 84 byes, 35 leg-byes, 9 no-balls, and 6 wides.

As some statistics got rather mixed up in my first article, I will repeat that Staffs. scored 2,384 runs for 126 wickets, average 18.92, and 2,286 runs were scored against the county for 107 wickets, average 21.33.

THREE CHIEF RUN-GETTERS

It meant a great deal to Staffordshire that Ikin, R. Smith, and Clarke were able to play in all the matches except one, for they scored between them 1,090 of the 2,250 runs obtained from the bat. Ikin, who played by courtesy of the Lancashire County Club while qualifying for that county, had an unaccountably bad spell in which he was dismissed six times consecutively for 32 runs, but batted so well on other occasions that he heads the averages by a fractional advantage over Roy Smith, and his aggregate is only 11 runs short of that of last year, which, as I stated last week, was the highest compiled by any Staffordshire player since 1911. When set Ikin bats so well that he never seems likely to get out, and it is generally in trying to force the pace that he does go. His defence is almost impervious when he gets going, and very few hittable balls escape the right sort of punishment. He may presumably have one more season with his native county, for he will not be qualified for Lancashire until 1940.

Roy Smith has proved the soundness of my contention for several years that he ought never to be omitted from the team when available. His batting was the feature of the northern tour, and one's only criticism would be that he sometimes gives the impression that he is not particularly fond of fast bowling. Bad wickets are probably responsible for that. Slow bowlers have claimed his wicket twice this season, and fast bowlers eight times. I am not suggesting that all these have been on bad wickets, but when confidence has been shaken by facing fast bowling on one dangerous pitch it is liable to affect a batsman's play against similar bowling for some time, though perhaps quite unconsciously. And absolute confidence is an essential in playing fast bowling. Cyril Clarke, playing more regularly than ever before, has been of great value to the side. I think his batting improves every year, and he has enjoyed a splendid season in club as well as county cricket.

THE SEASON'S DISCOVERIES

Those are the three leading batsmen of the past season, but new players of value have made their appearance, and the one claiming first notice is the Walsall boy, R. S. Patterson. He was tried in the opening match a few days after his 18th birthday, and by defying Cheshire's professional fast bowlers for 2½ hours and scoring 62 not out in his first innings he made a striking impression. There is not much style about his play, and forcing strokes in front of the wicket form no part of his game as yet, but, sound and straight in defence, he scores with facility behind the wicket, and can get a shortish ball away to

square leg with certainty and considerable power. He was unable to make the journey north, and missed the next two matches owing to injury, but one saw enough of his play on different types of wicket to suggest that young "Bob" is a valuable recruit to the county team.

A batsman of entirely different type is the Leek left-hander, Reg. Halton, who appears to have improved his game and batted well in both his matches at Porthill, well enough, indeed, to create the impression that he may be a successful county player of the future. He may prove to be the left-hand bat whom Staffs. will need to take the place of Ikin. His Leek colleague, Eric Frederick, probably selected mainly for his bowling for the northern tour, showed that while he seems to have gone back in his bowling he is developing into a very useful bat.

Two new-comers were T. R. Deighton, of Denstone College, and W. M. Arkinstall, of Market Drayton. The latter named had only one game, but the former became a useful member of the team in the last three matches, batting nicely on two or three occasions. I should like to be proved wrong in regarding his defence as slightly suspect. He has the strokes and gets on with the job. For the rest all that need be said, perhaps, is that S. Crump rarely did himself justice, and Shardlow showed that he is liable to get runs as well as wickets. I had hopes that R. H. Plant, by playing throughout the short programme, would accustom himself to county cricket, and bat as he does for his club. If he did he would be a great asset to Staffordshire. But he chanced to fail in the first match, and did not play again, which was a pity, for he is naturally both a sound and a brilliant bat.

BOWLING PROBLEMS

Ten players were called upon to bowl during the season, but three of them, Halton, Gale and V. T. Troman had only one brief spell. If Taylor had played throughout, as he did last year, there would have been less anxiety for the selectors, especially if Lockett's club engagements had not clashed so persistently. At the same time the need is still there for a good fast bowler. E. J. Wakelin might fill the bill if he could command the time, but he played only once, and it appears useless to look to him, even if he maintained his best form. The only other bowler of real speed is W. Stubbs, and he is not able to make much use of the new ball, besides which he only bowled in three matches, and was not present when the wickets were most suitable to fast bowling. He was not nearly so successful as last year.

So the county had to rely almost entirely on medium-pace and slow bowling, and on the whole it was not a good season for spin bowlers. In the circumstances Taylor's fast-medium attack was acutely missed. He can move the ball about a bit, and his record of 18 wickets for 13.44 runs each in his 3 matches is indication sufficient that he would have far surpassed his last year's aggregate of 33, though there were three fewer matches, if he had played regularly. In his absence the brunt of the work fell on Stanley Crump, with effective assistance from Shardlow, but the advent of Deighton for the last three matches was interesting.

Crump bowler steadily for long spells on wickets that gave him no help, and Shardlow, turning the ball extremely well, was a difficult bowler to play except when his control of length was defective, which it was occasionally. Someone who could swing the new ball was badly wanted, and that was where the Denstone College master came in. Bowling at fast-medium pace he did swing the new ball, and if the chances offered from his bowling had been accepted he would have removed one or two good men at the beginning of every innings in which he opened the bowling. His usefulness and his analysis were marred by missed catches, chiefly behind

the wicket. Deighton was not, of course, the only one to suffer in this way. For example, in the last match Shardlow was hit for 40 runs without a wicket, but who shall say what his analysis would have been if the Durham captain, who hit a century, had been caught at the wicket off him, as he should have been, almost as soon as he went on? Deighton's three wickets cost 47 runs a-piece, but I disregard that in assessing his usefulness as an all-rounder. He has now, by the bye represented Staffordshire at golf and cricket.

Of the other bowlers who stepped into the breach when called upon G. Pedley bowled his slows rather well in the north, and E. Binns, who came in at the last minute for the Wakes week match, justified a further trial if and when opportunity serves. Ikin was less successful with the ball than last year. The experience of this season points to Taylor, Crump, Shardlow, and Deighton as the probable stock bowlers for next year, with Lockett, of course, when available.

SEARCH FOR A WICKET-KEEPER

A successor to C. C. Goodway behind the stumps has not yet been found to judge by the performance of the four wicket-keepers who have been utilized this season. L. Lowe, of Knypersley, was the first choice, and he started with a remarkable match, for he caught two batsmen and stumped two, and did not concede a single bye in either innings. He did not quite live up to this high standard in the next match, but in any case a broken finger while batting put him out of the reckoning. R. Hammond was brought in again for the tour in the north, but did not reveal his old form, and gave way to J. E. Blair, of Stafford, who had one good match and one indifferent one. As it was learnt that J. D. Beever, of Aston Unity, has a Staffordshire qualification, he was invited for the last match on his reputation in the Birmingham League, but had a most unfortunate start, missing chances that any wicket-keeper should have taken, and which had disastrous consequences. So the problem will still be awaiting solution next season. Generally speaking the fielding has been good, and sometimes very good, but with room for a little more sprightliness on the part of some.

W. A. Adams again captained the side with acumen. He could not do otherwise. C. C. Clarke made an excellent substitute in the last match. Mr. L. W. Hancock, as hon. secretary, has given unlimited time and labour to the welfare of the club, and equally inexhaustible care to the comfort and convenience of everyone associated with the team.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE CRICKET LEAGUE

Flag Goes To Burslem AND SILVERDALE GO TO SECTION B?

By THE CRITIC

THE statement that Silverdale descend to Section B is queried as a matter of form and strict accuracy, because if they won both their remaining matches and Crewe Alexandra lost both theirs the Railwaymen would be beaten on the post by a point. That is, of course, a possibility, and it is up to the Silverdale team to shake off the inferiority complex and make a supreme effort to achieve their part of the task. But it is a difficult job that faces them, for after visiting Norton to-day they have to entertain the new champions on the last day of the season. Crewe have Stone as visitors to-day, and wind up the season at Caverswall, and with a 5-points' lead they appear to be "sitting pretty" so far as the relegation issue is concerned. Their emphatic victory at Knypersley practically banished their fears, and I imagine that the home captain unintentionally did the Alexandra a good turn when, having won the toss, he gave them first innings. It appears to have been another case of deliberately giving the adversary the best of the wicket.

Blythe Works had no such favour at Nantwich, but they rose to the occasion, made their own position safe, and extinguished the championship aspirations of the Cheshire men. I do not think the reigning champions had any chance of retaining the League flag, even if they had won, but their rather unexpected defeat finally settled the matter, and the flag will be seen at Cobridge next summer to proclaim to all beholders the prowess of the 1938 Burslem team. The last Burslem championship was in 1930, but the team of the Mother Town have generally been challenging for the honour in the interval, and have three times in the intervening seven years finished as runners-up, including last year. The League has functioned for 49 seasons, except for the four blank years of the war. Burslem won the championship in the second year, 1891, and have repeated the distinction in 1904, 1912, 1930, and 1938, besides being runners-up on eight occasions.

The victory at Stone which clinched the issue might be described as a rout, with Fred Taylor the terror. The young professional came very near to taking all the ten wickets. Silverdale's collapse at Caverswall practically sealed their fate, and Longton's fifth consecutive victory put them in a position to challenge Nantwich for the second place. Again deprived of their professional, Ikin, and with an otherwise much weakened side, Porthill did as well as they could perhaps expect, but were fairly easy prey for Leek.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Norton 175, Longton 183 for 6.
Porthill 151, Leek 135 for 6.
Burslem 179, Stone 39.
Silverdale 43, Caverswall 162 for 9.
Nantwich 144, Blythe Works 147 for 6.
Crewe Alexandra 192 for 6 (declared),
Knypersley 94.

LEAGUE TABLE

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | Pts. |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|------|
| Burslem | 20 | 15 | 4 | 1 | 46 |
| Nantwich | 20 | 12 | 5 | 3 | 39 |
| Longton | 20 | 11 | 6 | 3 | 36 |
| Leek | 20 | 8 | 4 | 8 | 32 |
| Knypersley | 20 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 31 |
| Norton | 20 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 31 |
| Caverswall | 20 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 26 |
| Porthill | 20 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 26 |
| Stone | 20 | 6 | 11 | 3 | 21 |
| Blythe Works | 20 | 5 | 11 | 4 | 19 |
| Crewe Alexandra | 20 | 4 | 11 | 5 | 17 |
| Silverdale | 20 | 3 | 14 | 3 | 12 |

EXCELLENT GAME AT NORTON

Arthur Smith's Prolific Bat

Norton and Longton had a thoroughly good match, and the visitors, taking revenge for a one-run defeat earlier in the season, continued an uninterrupted run of success which began on July 23. First let me pay tribute to the Norton groundsman for his excellent wicket. I fancy there have been no better wickets in the League this season than those at Norton. The game was stopped for a quarter of an hour once by a shower, but otherwise warm sunshine tempered a rather searching breeze. An unavoidably late arrival robbed me of the pleasure of seeing the greater part of a delightful innings of 80 by Arthur Smith. With some help from G. T. Lancaster and R. Hill, who got into the teens, he got the hundred up by the time the third wicket fell, and was fifth out at 129, having batted rather less than two hours. Trying to pull a ball from the Longton captain he made his first imperfect stroke and was caught at square leg.

Twice Geoffrey Edge had possible chances of stumping him, but the reason why he missed the ball and why the wicket-keeper failed to take it was that it "popped" abruptly on each occasion, a thing which it never did while I was present. He hit nine 4's. There is a fairly general impression that Arthur has had, for him, a rather poor season. This was his highest score, and prior to this match he had only twice reached 50. He had scored only 13 in his last three innings. But it is a striking testimony to the reputation he has built up that he was the first batsman in the League to reach 500 runs in what many have regarded as not a good season for him. His score of 80 took his aggregate to 506 with an average over 28. Here are his aggregates for the last four years:—1937, 747; 1936, 479 (a wet season); 1935, 867; 1934, 810.

A little later in the Norton innings father and son were partners at the wicket, viz., Steve Smith and his boy, R. J. The lad played a straight and competent game until he tried to turn to leg a ball from Plant that was on the leg-stump all the way, and was l.b.w. He was one of two promising young batsmen whom I saw for the first time.

Thanks to some capital bowling by R. H. Plant, who came out with four wickets for 24 runs in nine overs, Norton were out for 175, though the last wicket added 20. Plant very rarely tries his hand with the ball, and the absence of Stubbs and Pedley probably accounted

for his doing so on this occasion. I thought he bowled quite as well as some bowlers, who regularly get wickets, for he had a good length, varied his pace a good deal, and sometimes turned the ball a bit from the off. Broadhurst bowled no fewer than 51 overs, but he was plainer than usual and inclined to over-pitch. His four wickets cost 20 runs apiece. Including the short stoppage Norton occupied rather more than 2 hours and 50 minutes, so that Longton had only 2 hours and 7 minutes in which to get the runs or get out.

R. H. PLANT AT HIS BEST

An injury to Stanley Welch is proving a serious handicap to Norton. Up to the end of July he had taken 63 wickets at an average cost of just about seven runs a wicket, and his effectiveness had had a lot to do with Norton's high place in the table. He had the misfortune to renew an old foot strain at practice, and he will not be able to bowl again this season. Without him the Norton attack is not strong, and I understood also that F. Hodson was not quite sound though he managed to bowl 13 overs. As he met with no success, and two young players, F. J. Smith and C. Dunne, were ineffective, the task of getting Longton out devolved upon the captain, W. Deakin, and the slow, leg-break bowler, R. Hill. They both troubled the batsmen for a time, and with half the side out for 88, it was anybody's game, but then the bowling was mastered.

In the absence of G. Pedley, Payne filled the unusual role of opening batsman with G. B. Edge, and the pair put together 50 runs in half-an-hour before both left. Payne was bowled off his pads, and Edge, whose 36 was a good, forcing knock, strong on the on-side, tried to hook one that came quick and low off the pitch, and was clean bowled, both wickets going to Deakin. The skipper also made Arthur Chadwick play on, and W. Bourne and C. B. Steele were caught from poor strokes off Hill. The left-hander shaped something like his old self until he spooned one back to the bowler.

A WINNING PARTNERSHIP

This was the point at which Broadhurst joined his captain. The professional had made six runs in his last seven innings, including four consecutive "ducks." But he belied all that, and found his form at the time of need. He played good cricket, and made that sequence of failures appear inexplicable. All the time Plant was batting beautifully, smothering the good balls with a perfect defence, and hitting the ball tremendously hard at every opportunity, besides which he got a four or two by turning the ball very fine round his legs. Several of his on-drives off the back foot travelled at express speed to the boundary. In 40 minutes the partnership added 69, and brought Longton within reach of victory, for only 19 runs were required with four wickets standing, when Broadhurst left with a timely 26 to his credit.

And then I saw the second young player of real promise who was new to me. This was E. Whiston, who had not been in the 2nd XI, but was a member of the A team. Unless he flattered to deceive his proper place in the future will be the 1st XI. Playing in confident and attractive style he stayed 18 minutes to the end with Plant and was never in the least difficulty. Plant made the scores a tie with an on-drive clean out of the field, and won the match off the next ball. He took out his bat for a brilliant 68, scored in 70 minutes, and including eight fours. He made his season's aggregate into 481, with an average of 37, in spite of being run out three times for 0, 1, and 1. Geoffrey Edge leads him in aggregate by four runs.

A MISTAKE CORRECTED

An incident about the middle of Plant's innings annoyed some of the Norton supporters. There was an appeal for a catch by the wicket-keeper when he tried to hit a bad leg-ball, and the umpire gave him out, but reversed his decision on realizing that he had made a mistake. It is only right to say that the Longton captain made no protest. Though obviously astonished he walked away, and was called back, and everyone, including the bowler, agreed that the first decision was a mistake.

Denkin tried his hardest to win the match with his limited bowling, and himself delivered 19 overs for four wickets and 64 runs, and Hill's two cost 47 in 12 overs.

STONE ROUTED BY TAYLOR

For a considerable time Stone seemed likely to get the leaders out at Stone for a moderate score, with B. Shardlow, H. H. Wood, and Hancock all bowling well, but somehow the grip was lost, and Burslem got too many runs to leave much hope for the home team. But the utter collapse of the Stone batting which followed was a shock. However, there is the slight consolation that there have been three lower scores this season, and the Burslem bowlers have been responsible for two of them. Taylor bowled probably as well as he has done in any match this season, but even so the resistance was weak. F. Ravenscroft (11) and H. H. Wood (18) played with some confidence for a time, but the other nine batsmen scored five runs between them. Taylor took the first eight wickets, but just when he seemed likely to capture all the ten wickets for the first time in his short career, Roy Hollo wood bowled the Stone captain, so the professional had to be content with nine, which cost him 23 runs. This coup brought his aggregate to 98 wickets at an average of 5.72. It is a great record, and with two matches to play he will probably get well past the 100, though he has no chance of reaching Barnes's record. In nine seasons at Porthill Barnes got over 100 six times, with 122 in 1903, which, so far as I know, stands as the league record.

Arthur Birch (33), and J. Fenton (32), were top scorers, for Burslem, but Taylor, last man in, hit a lively 23, not out, and smashed the windscreen of a car parked near the road with one big drive. Wood had the best analysis for Stone with five for 43.

BLYTHE WORKS SURPRISE NANTWICH

Blythe Works found a new bowler in visiting Nantwich. E. Lewis, who has done several smart performances with the 2nd XI. recently, was included for the first time this season, though I think he played in the last two matches last year, and failed to get either a run or a wicket. He upset the Nantwich batting, and took six wickets for 31. The 144 of Nantwich included 23 by Fox and 38 by G. Bull, W. Hurst (50), A. Moore (24), E. Hawley (22), and H. Amison (20), carried the Works to victory by four wickets, which ensured the retention of their status.

Porthill's team in their home match with Leek, included the eldest son of J. S. Heath, who has the same initials as his father, for the first time. He batted nicely while scoring 14 before being bowled by Harold Birch. J. S. Heath, sen. (38) and J. W. Brown (35) had a valuable partnership, but the absence of Ikin, A. A. Bickerton, N. W. White, R. Hammond, and H. F. Wood (captain) was, of course, felt, and the total of 131 was inadequate. E. Broderick played through Leek's reply of 133 for six and scored 64. J. S. Heath, jun., got a couple of wickets. Birch had four for 20 for Leek. I notice that D. L. White lost his wicket for the first time this season. Previously he had batted eight times, going in No. 11, and had been not out every time.

CREWE'S BEST SCORE

Crewe Alexandra made a spirited bid for safety, and their smart win over their Knypersley hosts almost certainly achieved that end. The Knypersley wicket has not been very kind to batsmen this season after extensive relaying, and will probably be much better next year. But Crewe batsmen found it all right, and put together their best score of the season. The captain, F. C. Shreeve, got going, but was run out for 42. J. S. Broad made the same number, and E. Jones 40, not out. Jones failed in the first three matches, was omitted until August 6, and recalled for the last three games has scored 99 for twice out.

Greenwood wanted 30 runs for his 500, but only scored four. D. Robinson, a promising young bat, made 23, but the Crewe bowlers were always on top. J. Hossack took five for 27, making his aggregates for the season 51, J. Prince four for 11, and J. Barker two for 9.

J. Ankers waived his resolve to retire, and turned out to help Silverdale in their dire need, but to face E. J. Wakelin's speed after being out of the game all the summer was too much to ask. The Silverdale batsmen failed completely before J. Tablinor (4 for 10), A. Pickard (4 for 18), and Wakelin (2 for 14). After winning by eight wickets, Caverswall had some batting practice. J. H. Ragsdale hit up 68 in an hour (13 boundaries), Roy Smith made 31, and E. J. Wakelin 23 not out.

TUTBURY v. OAKAMoor

Played at Tutbury, on Saturday. Scores:

Tutbury: S. R. Rickman run out 21, J. Powell b Shemilt 0, J. Billings b Shipley 9, G. Starbuck b Shemilt 0, H. R. Pepper b Shipley 9, M. F. Hurdle c Critchlow b Shipley 9, T. L. Coxon b Shipley 2, R. Bishop c Critchlow b Shemilt 1, L. Starbuck c Thorn b Shemilt 4, S. Billings not out 7, E. Johnson b Shemilt 0, extras 4; total 57. H. Shemilt 5 for 36, F. Shipley 4 for 17.

Oakamoor: G. E. Critchlow not out 22, W. Swinson b Hurdle 2, E. Swinson b Hurdle 0, H. Shemilt b Hurdle 2, R. Mosley b Hurdle 0, F. Shipley b Hurdle 4, F. Boardman run out 7, G. Harrison b Bishop 0, E. Thorn b Hurdle 1, D. Bryant b Hurdle 0, M. Goodwin c J. Billings b Hurdle 0; extras 17; total 55. M. F. Hurdle 6 for 18.

STAFFORD v. SUTTON GOLDFIELD

Played at Stafford on Saturday. Scores:

SUTTON GOLDFIELD

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| N. Sharpe b Redshaw | 57 |
| C. Howl lbw b Redshaw | 0 |
| E. H. Walters b Redshaw | 34 |
| R. F. Barnes not out | 46 |
| D. G. Foster b Whitfield | 0 |
| R. Baker c and b White | 22 |
| N. Prosser not out | 1 |
| Extras | 14 |
| *Total (5 wkts.) | 174 |

*Innings declared closed

G. V. Swift, E. Francis, T. Farmer, and C. Barker did not go in.

Bowling: Redshaw 3 for 42, Whitfield 1 for 35, White 1 for 16.

STAFFORD

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| W. T. White b Farmer | 10 |
| D. J. Powell not out | 32 |
| K. C. Wood c Walters b Farmer | 0 |
| J. Whitfield c and b Foster | 5 |
| R. Kenney b Foster | 0 |
| D. E. Bloor b Farmer | 6 |
| N. H. Read c Swift b Farmer | 7 |
| H. O. Beck b Farmer | 0 |
| G. H. Greatorex b Farmer | 0 |
| G. L. Longdon b Farmer | 4 |
| E. W. Redshaw b Prosser | 1 |
| Extras | 5 |
| Total | 70 |

Bowling: Foster 2 for 34, Farmer 7 for 24, Prosser 1 for 7.

BLYMILL AND WESTON v. ALBRIGHTON (Return).

Played on the ground of the former on Saturday, Aug. 20, the home team winning by 56 runs. Score:—

Albrighton.—V. Stroudley c Haylett b Hill, 9; W. Gwilt b Medlicott, 3; E. Poole c Haylett b Hill, 0; T. Stephenson c Harper b Hill, 1; C. Royal b Medlicott, 2; J. Middleton c Hill b Harper, 8; A. Thompson b Harper, 5; R. Ward c White b Hill, 1; J. Woodriddle not out, 4; K. Royal b Hill, 0; R. Arnold run out, 1; byes 2, no-ball 1-3; total, 37.

Blymill.—K. J. Haylett c sub. b Woodriddle, 9; C. Ball c Middleton b Poole, 2; H. T. Harper c Stroudley b Poole, 4; A. C. Dallow b Poole, 0; J. E. White c Middleton b Stephenson, 20; C. W. Hitchen b Middleton, 25; F. B. Averill b Stephenson, 5; H. N. Hill b Stephenson, 2; H. Ball b Middleton, 9; M. Averill not out, 7; S. Medlicott h.w. b Stephenson, 0; byes 8, wides 2-10; total, 93.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE CRICKET LEAGUE

Weather has the Last Word FOUR MATCHES ABANDONED

By THE CRITIC

THE weather was spiteful on Saturday. For two or three days it had been fine, the barometer had risen to a respectable level, and was still slowly rising. Grounds were in nice condition, and there appeared to be every prospect of a full afternoon's cricket to wind up the season. But it was not to be. All over the Potteries area rain commenced to fall between 1 and 2 o'clock, and continued for several hours. Stone very largely escaped, and a late start was possible at Nantwich. Elsewhere after long and vain waiting the matches were abandoned. That meant that Silverdale were denied the chance of a fight for the retention of their place. In any case the odds were heavily against them, for they had to beat the new Champions, and Crewe Alexandra to lose at Caverswall, to give them the opportunity of meeting the Railwaymen in a play-off. But if they had to go down they would have liked to die fighting instead of waiting in impotence to see the rain wash away their last slender hope.

So Silverdale, one of the very oldest clubs in N. Staffs., will next year join their near neighbours, Bignall End, who lost their place two years ago, in Section B, and they will find the task of climbing back to the top Section far less easy than it was a few years ago. Bignall End have had two unsuccessful attempts, and Great Chell one, to get back, and Blythe Works and Knypersley, who took their places, have so far retained them.

Stone finished the season in a blaze of glory, declaring their innings closed for the second week in succession, and administering a crushing defeat to the Blythe Works team at Stone. In peril of relegation up to July 23 they rallied in great style to win three matches in a row and 13 points out of 18 in the last six games gave them a better position than seemed at all likely, though not as good as last year. Longton paid the penalty of taking a weak team to Nantwich. Disposing of the Cheshire men for 48 they would probably have won, even though the wicket was difficult, if they had had their full batting strength. By their victory Nantwich shook off the challenge to their position as runners-up, and so the two top clubs merely change places as compared with last season.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

Nantwich 48, Longton 35.
Stone 174 for seven, declared, Blythe Works 60.
Abandoned: Silverdale v. Burslem, Caverswall v. Crewe Alexandra, Porthill v. Norton, and Knypersley v. Leek.

FINAL TABLE

| | P. | W. | L. | D. | Pts. |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|------|
| Burslem | 22 | 16 | 4 | 2 | 50 |
| Nantwich | 22 | 14 | 5 | 3 | 45 |
| Longton | 22 | 12 | 7 | 3 | 39 |
| Knypersley | 22 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 33 |
| Leek | 22 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 33 |
| Norton | 22 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 32 |
| Caverswall | 22 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 27 |
| Porthill | 22 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 27 |
| Stone | 22 | 7 | 11 | 4 | 25 |
| Blythe Works | 22 | 5 | 12 | 5 | 20 |
| Crewe Alex. | 22 | 4 | 11 | 7 | 19 |
| Silverdale | 22 | 4 | 14 | 4 | 16 |

STONE BATSMEN IN FORM

Since their complete surrender to Fred Taylor, the Burslem professional, the Stone batsmen have done their best to rehabilitate themselves, and prove that that day's rout was a cricket phenomena, and not a true reflex of their capabilities. After declaring at 167 for 6 at Crewe, they gave another meritorious display against Blythe Works in the concluding match at Stone, and so ended the season on a particularly happy note. The only interference by rain came about 4 o'clock, when the game was delayed for half-an-hour. Against some steady bowling, especially by W. Massey, the Stone batting was sound from the start, for though they lost R. W. Harris early, H. H. Wood and E. D. Slynny offered a resourceful resistance, and wore some of the edge off the bowling. The score was up to 45 when Wood left for a well-played 22, and Slynny rendered good service by staying an hour, though scoring no more than 17, and was unluckily out through turning a bad ball on to the wicket with his foot. The third wicket went at 63, and five later A. Jarvis was run out, a good wicket being thus thrown away.

EXCELLENT PARTNERSHIP

However, Frank Ravenscroft being joined by Hancock, this pair proceeded to more than double the score. Ravenscroft has always been an opening batsman, but he has experienced one of the bad patches that come to most batsmen, and it was a wise move, which might well have been taken earlier, to change the order in the hope that it would change his luck. He went in second wicket down, added 71 for the fifth wicket with Hancock, and stayed on to take out his bat when the innings was declared closed with 50 runs to his credit. His was an innings of much charm and without fault, and it was his best of the season. He took 48 from the Works bowlers in the previous match, but had never got higher than 11 in nine innings since. Hancock's 40 was also free from mistakes, and showed the left-hander at his best. When the partnership was broken a couple more wickets were lost in adding 35, of which, Bert Shardlow hit 19, and the Works were sent in to face a fairly formidable total.

GOOD BOWLING FOLLOWS GOOD BATTING

B. Shardlow and Hancock, of course, opened the attack, and their efforts met with so much success that no change was necessary. Both bowled well enough to have got perhaps better sides out, and they were never seriously clobbered. Ernest Hawley resisted gallantly and skilfully, but no support was forthcoming. Of the total of 60 he made 22. Shardlow took 5 wickets for 27, and Hancock 4 for 30. They have served the club well, for the left-hander made his crop of wickets for the season into 71, while the professional has taken 63, and they have not always been well supported in the field.

A TREACHEROUS WICKET AT NANTWICH

Two and a half hours of steady rain had the effect of making the wicket at Nantwich extremely difficult. It was not what is termed a turning wicket, for the ball turned but little and that only occasionally. But the wetting on the top of a hard pitch resulted in the ball coming off at varying pace and all sorts of angles. Some "stood up" abruptly, and some cut through low and fast. So batsmen had a troublesome time, and 20 wickets fell for a mere 83 runs, an average of four runs per wicket. It was the lowest scoring match of the season in this Section of the League, and, in fact, the only one in which 20 wickets have fallen for less than 100 runs, the nearest approach being the match in which Norton defeated Burslem by one run, and in which the two teams scored 101. Among those who were missing from the Longton side were R. H. Plant and W. Bourne.

Nantwich had first innings and lost three good batsmen for four runs, viz., T. W. Steventon, J. E. Smith and G. Dull. Then J. Sproston helped Fox to carry the score to 20 but six wickets were down for 23. The professional had been maintaining his customary skilful defence from the start, and he found another useful partner in D. Rldyard. But with 20 added Fox was caught in the long field as a result of "having a 20" at Broadhurst. Seventh out at 43, his 23 were worth treble the number in normal conditions. The other three wickets went for 5 runs, and the bowling figures were, W. Stubbs 3 for 13, Broadhurst 5 for 27 and A. Webberley 2 for 8.

AN ELONGATED TAIL

Geoffrey Edge acting captain, started off as though he would win the match for Longton off his own bat. He lost G. Pedley with one run on the book, and A. J. Chadwick at 15, both failing to score, and he had made 28 out of 28, which included one extra when he was third out. Then E. H. Steventon and W. T. Maybury brought about a collapse extraordinary. With two wickets down Longton were within 20 of the Nantwich total, yet they were beaten by 13. For eight wickets to fall while seven runs are scored is phenomenal. Certainly, there was a very long tail to the Longton batting, but the two Nantwich veterans (I think they would so describe themselves) bowled with splendid accuracy to take full advantage of their opportunity. Five wickets fell at 28, and the last three at 33, 34, and 35. The only extra in the match was one no-ball.

Steventon and Maybury bowled unchanged, and their analyses were respectively 15.5 overs for 14 runs and 4 wickets, and 15 overs for 20 runs and 6 wickets. Edge, who made all the runs scored from the bat except eight, raised his season's aggregate to within three of 600, which is his best since joining Longton, and much the highest in the League this season.

GENTLEMEN OF STAFFORDSHIRE C.C.

Improved Results

By THE CRITIC

The Gentlemen of Staffordshire Club has enjoyed quite a good season, and obtained considerably better results than in 1937. The fixture card comprised 17 matches, the same number as last year. Four matches were abandoned owing to rain, viz., a new Sunday fixture with Ashfield, Birmingham, the Stafford match, and both matches with Market Drayton. These latter games shared the same fate in 1937, being the only two to be rained off in that season. Not a ball has been bowled in four consecutive matches between the Gentlemen and Market Drayton.

Five matches were won, three lost, and five drawn, compared with three won, six lost, and six drawn last season. Batting 13 times the Gentlemen lost 114 wickets for 2,265 runs, giving an average per wicket of 19.86, whilst their opponents batted also 13 times, and scored 1,850 runs for 93 wickets, average 20.74. Last year the average of the team was almost exactly the same, viz., 19.96, but the average against them was 22.37.

Altogether 58 players batted, compared with 56 last year, and 70 in 1936. No fewer than 27 played only one innings each, 11 batted twice, and 13 three times. That leaves only seven players who went to the wicket more than three times.

The victories obtained against Leamington, Burton, and Somerset Stragglers were achievements of considerable merit. Yarlet Hall and the County Police were also beaten. Reverses were met with at the hands of Wrekin College, Denstone College, and the Worcestershire Gentlemen, and drawn games were played with C. H. Vasey's Trent College XI., Derby Friars (2), Gentlemen of Shropshire, and the Greenflies.

C. H. Twigg has been a missed man this year. Spending the summer in this country last year, he scored more runs and took more wickets for the Gentlemen than anyone else, but he was abroad this year. The other leading scorer in 1937 was Capt. Moreton, but this time he has played only three innings and, incidentally, has given up wicket keeping. In that respect the club was fortunate to have the services of J. E. Blair, of Stafford, for most of the matches. His work behind the stumps was represented by 15 wickets eight caught and seven stumped. The most regular players were E. C. Fernie and C. L. Hatton. Fernie's slow bowling has been extremely useful on a number of occasions, but Col. Hatton's son strikes me as being value for something better than an average under 14 with the bat. Such batsmen as Stanley Heath, Clifford Howl, "Jack" Evans, and A. D. Wilkie would raise the standard of the club's batting if they would make it convenient to assist the club more frequently.

In bowling as in batting the work has been split up amongst too many operators, and a remarkable feature of this, as of preceding seasons, is the lack of young bowlers of ability. In all 33 bowlers have tried their hand in this season's matches.

The following are the averages:—

BATTING

| | No. of Ins. | Not out. | Total runs. | High score. | Average. |
|----------------------|-------------|----------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| W. M. Tonkinson | 3 | 0 | 124 | 74 | 41.33 |
| G. E. Clarke | 3 | 1 | 71 | 50* | 33.66 |
| C. Howl | 4 | 0 | 124 | 81 | 31.00 |
| J. S. Heath | 3 | 0 | 53 | 89 | 31.00 |
| J. F. Meakin | 3 | 0 | 74 | 43 | 24.66 |
| Dr. R. M. Barrow | 3 | 0 | 61 | 54 | 20.33 |
| Rev. P. F. McSwiney | 3 | 1 | 39 | 17* | 19.00 |
| R. J. C. Evans | 5 | 0 | 91 | 35 | 18.20 |
| J. E. Blair | 6 | 0 | 105 | 61 | 17.66 |
| J. D. Wakeling | 5 | 0 | 86 | 26 | 17.20 |
| B. Meakin | 4 | 1 | 51 | 26* | 17.00 |
| C. L. Hatton | 8 | 1 | 110 | 38* | 13.75 |
| E. C. Fernie | 9 | 2 | 85 | 19 | 12.14 |
| H. F. Wood | 3 | 0 | 34 | 20 | 11.33 |
| Capt. J. P. Moreton | 3 | 1 | 26 | 15* | 9.66 |
| Rev. H. C. Wood | 3 | 1 | 11 | 7* | 3.50 |
| H. O. Boes | 3 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 2.00 |
| Capt. B. H. McLellan | 3 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 1.66 |
| G. L. Longdon | 3 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 1.66 |
| H. R. Oldnall | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1* | 1.00 |

Batted twice: A. D. Wilkie 102 and 90; E. W. Page 59, 16; G. C. MacFerran 25, 27; M. F. Hurdle 42*, 2; A. B. W. Hooper 25, 12; R. C. Blakeway 26, 3; C. C. Meynell 1, 26; H. L. Underwood 20, 6; R. S. A. Hardy 6, 12*; H. D. Saltmarsh 4, 2; K. J. Wild 3, 0. Batted once: R. E. H. Human 101; Grimshaw (substitute) 74; T. R. Deighton 70; J. L. Brear 57; Col. C. Hatton 20; D. J. Powell 15; E. H. Nicholls 13; R. Howl 12; W. Graham 12; R. Kenney 11; W. B. Hart 9; P. Underwood 9*; W. A. Adams 8; J. Mountford 7; J. R. Fisher 6*; K. Wright 5*; E. R. Pennett 3; L. H. Morris 2; W. W. M. Morgan 1*; W. S. Robertson 1; P. G. Wild 1; I. Richards 1; J. P. Brodie 1; Major G. F. Hazard C; G. N. R. Morgan C; J. C. Orr 0; P. Arkwright 0.

*Signifies not out.

BOWLING

| | O. | M. | R. | W. | A. |
|----------------|------|----|-----|----|-------|
| R. S. A. Hardy | 17 | 5 | 30 | 5 | 6.00 |
| G. E. Clarke | 10 | 1 | 39 | 6 | 6.50 |
| W. B. Hart | 11 | 2 | 35 | 4 | 8.75 |
| G. L. Longdon | 18.4 | 1 | 65 | 5 | 13.00 |
| E. C. Fernie | 62.5 | 7 | 229 | 17 | 13.47 |
| H. F. Wood | 20 | 1 | 61 | 4 | 15.25 |
| A. D. Wilkie | 19. | 0. | 84 | 5 | 16.80 |
| R. J. C. Evans | 42 | 5 | 159 | 8 | 19.87 |
| H. R. Oldnall | 47 | 6 | 173 | 7 | 24.71 |
| J. S. Heath | 28.4 | 1 | 136 | 5 | 27.20 |
| M. F. Hurdle | 40 | 4 | 144 | 4 | 36.00 |

Took three wickets: B. Meakin 6-0-27-3; T. R. Deighton 17-1-65-3; Rev. P. F. McSwiney 18-0-83-3; G. C. MacFerran 24-1-121-3. Took two wickets: R. Kenney 7-1-20-2; R. Howl 6-2-31-2. Took one wicket: R. C. H. Human 2-3-0-6-1; J. Mountford 3-0-7-1; J. R. Fisher 4-1-11-1; C. L. Hatton 2-0-13-1; S. W. Hooper 3-1-19-1; J. D. Wakeling 9-0-35-1; C. W. J. Chinner 19-1-85-1. Nine others who bowled from 10 overs downwards failed to take a wicket.

BLYMILL AND WESTON v. ELECTRICAL CONSTRUCTION CO.

Played on the ground of the latter on Saturday, September 3, the visitors winning by 16 runs. Scores:—

E.C.C.: C. Collings b Hill 0, C. Barnett c Haylett b Brookes 8, F. Mitchell c Hitchen b Medlicott 36, H. Saffin b Brookes 0, D. Wiggitt b Brookes 9, K. Lloyd b Brookes 9, W. Southwick not out 10, J. Noble b Harper 14, G. Clowley c Harper b Medlicott 8, T. Gethin lbw b Harper 1, S. Farmer run out 0, extras 10; total 105.

Blymhill: K. J. Haylett c Southwick b Wiggitt 1, A. Robinson b Wiggitt 8, H. T. Harper c Wiggitt b Lloyd 28, D. Brookes c and b Wiggitt 23, C. W. Hitchen b Noble 25, J. E. White c Southwick b Wiggitt 1, S. Medlicott c and b Wiggitt 0, Major R. O. Bridgeman b Noble 5, G. Gladwell b Noble 9, F. D. Averill b Noble 10, H. N. Hill not out 1, extras 10; total 121.

SHUGBOROUGH PARK v. HOWARD POTTERY

Played at Shugborough on Saturday evening. Shugborough batted in a half-light. Scores:

Howard Pottery: W. Gilbert b Bamford 2, A. Williams b Bamford 14, J. Hawkins b Bamford 22, J. Ford c Billington b Mould 23, S. Foxall b Bamford 0, W. H. Ball b Tams 4, G. Foxall run out 7, E. Ford not out 25, R. Edwards b Mould 1, C. Ford b Bamford 3, F. Goodwin c Sproston b Hopper 4, extras 1; total 108.

Shugborough: B. Billington c and b Ford 4, K. Bamford b Goodwin 0, H. Houghton b Goodwin 2, F. Sproston b Goodwin 0, S. Hopper b Ford 2, A. Marsden b Ford 0, W. Hammond c and b Ford 0, J. Tams b Goodwin 1, E. Bamford b Ford 2, R. Plummer c Hawkins b Goodwin 2, V. Mould not out 2, extras 1, total 16. Bowling: C. Ford 5 for 7, F. Goodwin 5 for 8.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE CRICKET LEAGUE

Burslem's Fifth Championship

SILVERDALE RELEGATED: CHEDDLETON M.H. PROMOTED

By THE CRITIC

IT has been a so-so season for league cricket—no abnormal interference by rain, but very few really typical summer days. Of the 132 games which constitute the season's programme in each of the four sections of the league, only 30 in Senior Section A have been drawn, and 102 have been played to a finish. This compares with 117 finished and 15 drawn last year, but that was a previously unheard-of proportion, and this year compares very well in this respect with preceding seasons. Everything possible has been done by the league to secure definite results, and perhaps we may hope that the old average of 50 to 60 drawn games every season is a thing of the past. Of the 30 undecided matches rain prevented any play at all in 20, and seriously curtailed most, if not all, of the others. Last year only five matches were completely rained off.

Run-getting has been declining in the league for the last three years. In 1935 the average of runs per wicket was 16.95, and in 1934 16.77, but in 1936 it dropped to 13.94, in 1937 to 13.65, and this year the downward trend continues. The total number of runs scored was 29,036, the wickets lost 2,097, and the average therefore 13.36, which is the lowest with one exception (12.53 in 1931) for a dozen years.

The early part of the season seemed to foreshadow an unusually keen fight for the championship, for after six weeks a single point covered the first seven clubs, and five were bracketed level at the top. But the Whitsuntide matches saw Burslem draw clear, and they were never again overtaken. By the beginning of July they had established the commanding lead of 10 points, and though a couple of defeats gave Nantwich the chance to cut this down to four points early in August, the Cheshire club could get no nearer, for the Burslem team finished very strongly. A pleasing feature was the excellent fight put up by the promoted club, Knypersley, who, with Norton, offered a sustained challenge in mid-season, but neither of these two quite stayed the course.

So the two top clubs of last season merely change places, and Nantwich yield the championship flag to Burslem. Silverdale, depleted of most of their leading players of a few years ago, and unable to find recruits of quite the same class, suffered a severe slump in the second half of the season, and lost their place, which will be taken by Cheddleton Mental Hospital, who have won the championship of Section B after a close race with Sneyd Colliery. The Hospital team had one season in Section A in 1935, and I remember a prominent member of their team assuring me at the end of their last match, "We shall soon be back." It has taken them three seasons, but they will be back in 1939, and Section A clubs will welcome the opportunity again of playing on the Hospital's magnificent ground.

When discussing the prospects of the clubs before the opening of the season just ended, I ventured with trepidation on the quick sands of prophecy, and managed to avoid being engulfed. "Nantwich and Burslem will probably

play a conspicuous part in the struggle for honours again. . . . Though the present champions will take some dethroning, I should not be surprised if this proves to be Burslem's year." "Silverdale, Blythe Works, and Crewe may find themselves fighting an uphill battle." One could hardly have been nearer the mark in summing up the prospects at both end of the table.

AN ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

I have prepared, as usual, what I used to call the tell-tale table:—

| | Against | | For | |
|--------------|---------|-------------|-------|-------------|
| | Runs | Wkts. Aver. | Runs | Wkts. Aver. |
| Burslem | 1,575 | 196 | 2,546 | 175 |
| Nantwich | 2,155 | 192 | 2,598 | 175 |
| Longton | 2,227 | 131 | 2,644 | 163 |
| Knypersley | 2,154 | 164 | 2,683 | 174 |
| Leek | 2,207 | 148 | 2,663 | 159 |
| Norton | 2,223 | 130 | 2,274 | 173 |
| Caverswall | 2,139 | 157 | 2,217 | 173 |
| Porthill | 2,756 | 171 | 2,679 | 171 |
| Stone | 2,415 | 169 | 2,170 | 196 |
| Blythe Works | 3,033 | 167 | 2,191 | 182 |
| Crewe Alex. | 2,513 | 164 | 1,989 | 162 |
| Silverdale | 2,584 | 176 | 1,843 | 183 |

This searching test puts the clubs in the following order:—Burslem, plus margin per wicket 6.59, Longton, plus 4.57, Nantwich, plus 3.64, Leek, plus 1.83, Norton, plus 0.42, Knypersley, minus 0.13, Porthill, minus 0.45, Caverswall, minus 1.15, Stone, minus 1.70, Crewe, minus 2.99, Silverdale minus 4.61, Blythe Works, minus 6.75. Gains as compared with last year are Knypersley (as against Great Chell) 7.45, Norton 4.46, Leek 0.98, Caverswall 0.78, Crewe 0.76, and Longton 0.50. Declines are, Silverdale 5.48, Nantwich 4.48, Blythe Works 2.92, Porthill 0.54, Burslem 0.49, and Stone 0.03. Gains and losses in League points don't run on quite the same lines. Gains, Knypersley (compared with Great Chell) 25, Norton 11, Leek 3, Longton 2, Burslem 1. Losses, Crewe 3, Blythe Works 8, Stone 10, Caverswall 11, Nantwich 13, Silverdale 14. Porthill gained the same number of points as last year. Some freakish anomalies are disclosed. For example, Caverswall have a slightly better record than last year, yet have gained 11 fewer points, and Stone, with a loss of 10 points, have a practically identical record.

Knypersley have risen eight places in the League table as compared with their predecessors, Norton have jumped five places, Leek 3, and Burslem, Longton and Porthill one each, while Silverdale have dropped six places, Caverswall and Stone 4, Blythe Works 3, and Nantwich and Crewe 1.

BATTING DECLINE

Batting averages are lower than last year. Four players have averages of 30 and over—not of course, including Ernest Hawley, who only played in the last four matches, and averaged 38—against seven last year, two of which were over 40; eight exceed 25, compared with 14; and 18 have averages above 20, the number last year being 24. Strangely enough not one of the seven batsmen with averages over 30 last year has re-

peated that measure of success this time. There is a similar falling off in aggregates. Last year Arthur Smith scored 747 runs, and seven batsmen passed 500, whereas this year the highest aggregate is the 597 of G. H. Edge, and only three exceeded 500 runs. The fact that there was more interference by rain would, of course, affect the aggregates, but not necessarily the averages.

The match-winning effect of good bowling is again emphasized by the success of Burslem and Nantwich, each with an outstanding pair of bowlers, and the event of the year in this realm is the 100 wickets of Fred Taylor, the Burslem professional. He easily heads the bowling of the League in average also for the second year in succession, his century of wickets having cost just under six runs each. At 22 years of age he has had three years as a professional at Burslem and his analysis for the three seasons is, 1,001.4 overs, 358 maidens, 1,668 runs, 246 wickets, 6.77 average. He and Roy Hollowood have taken 166 wickets for Burslem, compared with 160 last year and E. H. Steventon and W. T. Maybury have taken 160 for Nantwich, which is 21 fewer than last year. To these four skilful bowlers supported by a high standard of fielding, these two clubs largely owe their exalted position.

Big scores have been rare. Six teams never reached a score of 200, and there were only 10 such in the whole season, partly, no doubt, due to rather more courage in using the declaration. Leek made the top score of 252 for nine against Nantwich, and they declared eight times, three times more than any other club. While Leek have the best batting figures, closely followed by Longton, Burslem are out by themselves in the matter of cheap dismissal of opponents. Of six scores of 40 or less their bowlers were responsible for five or them, including the lowest total of the season, 34 by Blythe Works.

TO BE CONTINUED

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE CRICKET LEAGUE

The Season Reviewed (SECOND ARTICLE)

POINTS OF THE PLAY

By THE CRITIC

THIS question was recently put to me: "Is the standard of cricket in the League improving or deteriorating?" I could not honestly say I thought it was improving. The statistics which I gave last week do not suggest it, and from my own observation I should have been surprised if they had. And it will not improve unless and until the clubs abandon false ideas of economy and engage professionals of the right type. I have said so before, but I offer no apology for repeating it. It would, in my opinion, stimulate interest, and lead to a revival of real practice, by which is meant the practice that makes perfect. On gaining promotion Knypersley set a splendid example by engaging a first-class player in H. W. Greenwood, and though his unexpected qualification this year for Northamptonshire probably prevented the club from realizing quite the full benefit of their enterprise, they are so satisfied of the wisdom of the policy that I believe they have in view for next year a prominent county player as professional and coach. The club and its management are to be congratulated on their courage and their auspicious return to Section A. Greenwood was the only newcomer of importance to the League this year, but I hope the excellent example of Knypersley will be followed by others, for now is the time to make a strong bid for increased public support by improving the cricket and stimulating interest.

The foolishness of wasting one's wicket by getting run out is with me a most obtrusive theme. It often butts in when I was reviewing the season a year ago. The following details show how the clubs have fared in this matter the first figure being the number of opposing players they have run out, and the second figure the number of their own men who have been run out. Stone 12-9, Leek 11-5, Nantwich 9-4, Burslem 9-8, Knypersley 9-5, Blythe Works 8-6, Crewe Alexandra 8-3, Porthill 8-9, Longton 5-10, Norton 5-14, Caverswall 4-8, Silverdale 3-10. Nantwich are the most level-headed runners between wickets for they have only had five men run out in two seasons, and their Crewe neighbours seem to have learnt a lesson, for they had the worst record with 13 run out last year, and the best with only three this time. Norton do not improve for they have wasted three more wickets than last year. It is a little surprising to find Stone running out more opponents than any other team which might evoke the suggestion that their ground fielding must have been better than their catching.

Wicket keeping has been a difficult problem with some teams. I find that G. B. Edge, of Longton, and A. McTurk, of Nantwich, stand out by themselves in the number of their victims. Edge has been responsible for 30 wickets, 18 caught and 12 stumped, and McTurk for 27, 11 caught and 16 stumped. Next come A. Meigh, Burslem with 14, and A. Jervis, Stone, with 13.

BURSLEM'S DEBT TO ROY HOLLOWOOD

Power in attack has placed Burslem and Nantwich high above all rivals in the last two seasons, for the outstanding success of these two clubs has been due in both cases to the possession of an effective pair of bowlers. What Fred Taylor and Roy Hollowood have done for Burslem, E. H. Steventon and W. T. Maybury have done for Nantwich. I have already given Taylor's figures for his three seasons as a professional. His 100 wickets this season for 5.89 runs each is a brilliant performance. His father, C. J. Taylor, once returned an even better average for the same club, for in 1930 he took 82 wickets, average 5.29 and he was then in the veteran stage.

For a number of years Roy Hollowood has been as good as a second professional to Burslem. A dozen and more years ago, when the club had no professional, he was a regular opening bowler with Evans Cook, for three years from 1929 he was a regular opening bowler with Charles Taylor, and after an absence of four seasons he has for three years been a regular opening bowler with Fred Taylor. For four years ending 1931, the average per wicket scored against Burslem was 9.08, 10.95, 7.75, and 9.27. For the next four years, without Roy the averages were 14.80, 15.06, 16.73, and 18.51. For the three years since his return to the attack the averages have been 9.94, 8.46, and 7.95. Those are very striking figures, and though a large share of the credit for the two sequences of low averages must, of course, go to the Taylor's, father and son, they serve to emphasize Burslem's debt to Roy Hollowood, who in his seven seasons since 1928 (and he was doing well before that) has taken 445 wickets for the club at an average cost of 7.52. This year he bowled 344 overs for 534 runs, average 8.09.

In 1930 Burslem won the championship with an even lower bowling average than this year, but with a batting average of 11.92, which was practically 10 runs a wicket, inferior to that of Porthill, and the lowest in the league except two clubs. This year it is not as bad as that, for there are only four with better batting figures, but they have no batsman with an average as high as 20. G. Wardle, A. Birch, J. Fenton, and T. G. Hollowood have been the backbone of the batting, with curiously similar records. In the order given their aggregates are 347, 351, 330, and 348, and their averages 19.27, 18.47, 18.33, and 18.31. The enigma of the season has been the failure of A. B. Hollowood, whose 164 runs and 10.25 average compare with the following figures in the three preceding seasons—1937, 630, 31.50; 1936, 351, 23.40; 1935, 862, 50.70. Explanation, a bad patch extraordinary.

A word on the bowling of Fred Taylor, Tall and well built he has a high delivery, bowls at fast-medium pace, sometimes swings away, and sometimes cuts the ball in from the off, and he has the crowning virtue of excellent control over

length and direction, and very rarely delivers a ball at which the batsman need not play.

NANTWICH VETERANS KEEP IT UP

Of half-a-dozen Nantwich players to whom the success of the team was almost entirely due only one can be regarded as a young player, viz., G. Hull, who scored 337 runs and averaged 17.73. The others were the great pair of club bowlers, E. H. Steventon and W. T. Maybury, the professional, Victor Fox, T. W. Steventon, and J. E. Smith. The last-named did reasonably well until the end of July, but finished badly and pulled his average down to under 15.

Fox was the same graceful and consistent batsman as ever, though his 453 runs and average of 23.84 were considerably below last year's figures. The brothers T. W. and E. H. Steventon scored respectively 353 and 328 runs, with averages of 22.06 and 21.86. The bulk of the bowling was once again done, and done remarkably well, by W. T. Maybury and E. H. Steventon, whose respective analyses are 82 wickets, average 9.31, and 78 wickets, average 9.89. The batting of the team was below the Nantwich standard of recent years, and the decline from 1937 is indicated by a fall of nearly five runs per wicket in average, as also by the fact that the captain only had occasion to declare the innings closed once as against nine times last year.

LONGTON, LEAK, AND PORTHILL SCORE MOST RUNS

Longton were a good all-round side when their full strength was available, though there was too much tail to the batting, and it was not as it should be that three players should contribute 1,511 of the 2,443 runs scored from the bat. Of this trio G. B. Edge made 597 (the highest aggregate in the league), average 31.42, R. H. Plant 528, average 37.71 (the best average in the league, and in spite of being three times run out for two runs), and G. Pedley 388, average 21.44. Edge and Pedley hit two of the three centuries scored during the season, and Plant would probably have reached three figures if he had not declared when 83 not out, at Crewe. Neither A. J. Chadwick nor W. Bourne quite did himself justice, both averaging just under 15. The captain had almost an embarrassing choice of bowling. A. Webberley was a useful newcomer, his 29 wickets costing no more than 8.96 each, but Broadhurst (76 wickets, average 10.76) and W. Stubbs (41 wickets, average 9.92) bore the brunt. No innings was declared closed against Longton, but Plant applied the closure five times, and two of these matches were won, two lost, and one drawn. He had the courage to take risks in order to give his bowlers a reasonable chance.

Leek proved themselves a level batting side, with eight averages above 13, and seven aggregates above 230. Reg. Halton (390, average 32.50) and E. Broderick (420, average 29.00) were the chief run-getters, but Harold Birch averaged 25, and Ron. Halton, L. H. Crump, and E. Dale all had averages above 15. One effective opening bowler was badly needed, and that is where a good professional might easily have converted Leek into a championship side. The best return was that of Birch (24 wickets, average 13.16), and E. Hordern and E. Broderick, with 27 each, took most wickets. No wonder there were only three clubs with an inferior bowling record. Leek declared their innings closed eight times, three more than any other team, but only two of these eight matches were won, and six drawn.

Porthill had a patchy season, with a dreadful start, a fine recovery, and a weak finish. But they are entitled to sympathy in an overdose of bad luck. To have to start without A. A. Bickerton and lose the bowling of N. W. White, both owing to ill-health, to be without the services of their professional, John Ikin, for five or six of the

Later matches, owing to Lancashire's prior claim, to lose R. Hammond for five or six weeks owing to injury, and to be obliged to field almost a second XI. In several matches, these circumstances are enough to have driven some clubs to the bottom of the table. Viewed in that light Porthill's position is creditable. Ikin's record of 336 runs and an average of 21 is disappointing. The other leading run-getters were J. S. Heath, who did more than anyone to hold the batting together, and scored 417 runs, average 24.64, Arthur Bickerton (325, 23.21) and J. Bentley (338, 19.88), but Hammond averaged over 18. Ikin (53 wickets, average 12.32) and H. Thornhill (41, 16.31) did most of the bowling, with useful help from Douglas White and K. Gleaves.

WEAK STONE BATTING

Statistics suggest that the Stone batting badly needs stiffening. Ten times the team were dismissed for less than 100, these scores ranging from 96 to 39, and the best totals were reached in the last two matches, when the innings was declared at 167 for 9, and 174 for 7. The failure of the batting is reflected in the averages, for no player reached an aggregate of 300, and A. Jervis, with 16.75, has the best average. H. H. Wood scored most runs, 287, and averaged 15.10. Hancock and B. Shardlow bowled well enough to have given the club a higher place if the batting had been reasonably sound, though the left-hander especially often suffered from fielding errors. He took 71 wickets, average 11.87, and Hancock 63, average 10.58. I consider they would have had improved figures if better judgment had been used in the placing of the field. The biggest score against them was 180 for 9, and opponents were eight times dismissed for less than 100. But the change bowling was not very impressive.

I have nothing but praise for Knyperstey. They rose to the needs of higher grade cricket, and by engaging a first-class batsman in H. W. Greenwood gave their batting the stability and steady influence required. As a result they were in the top flight all the season, even challenged for the leadership at one stage, and finished equal fourth in the table. With a less enterprising policy they would quite probably have been fighting for their place, and have killed the interest which their return to Section A aroused. They have kept a compact side, having called upon fewer players than any other club. Greenwood, though missing four matches, scored 474 runs, with an average of 31.60, and of the amateurs E. Lowe (285, 17.81), W. Winstill (263, 17.53), and W. Boon (318, 16.73) did best with the bat. The bowling has been largely shared, and successfully so, by the following quartet of bowlers: W. Butler (23 wickets, average 11.52), W. Boon (31, 11.77), W. Winstill (41, 12.12), and E. Reynolds (47, 12.91).

BETTER BOWLING AT NORTON

Yet another example of the efficiency of good bowling was furnished by the experience of Norton. Their attack was strengthened by the acquisition of Stanley Welch. The direct result is a rise from No. 11 to No. 6 with the probability that they would have finished even higher if Welch had not been kept out of the last five matches by injury. The batting figures are not quite as good as last year, but 660 fewer runs

have been scored from Norton bowlers, and the average against them has dropped 17.20 to 12.37. Welch found his old form, which deserted him when acting as professional with Porthill last year, and took 63 wickets before his injury at the low cost of 7.11, which is second only to Taylor's average in the whole League. Other improved returns are those of W. Deakin (34 wickets average 9.32) and F. Hodson (29, 11.31). Arthur Smith has not been as prolific of runs as usual but has scored 513, with an average of 27, and the best of the amateurs are R. Birch (267, 16.68) and J. Rhead (240, 17.14).

Caverswall had the curious experience of descending from third place to equal seventh, seven points below No. 6, and yet showing rather better figures both in batting and bowling. E. J. Wakelin rarely manages to get through a season without a strain of some sort, and he missed two or three matches for that reason, but on figures he was one of the League's best all-rounders for he scored 319 runs, average 26.58 and took 51 wickets, average 8.52. A. Pickard (32 wickets, average 11.03) was the best of the other bowlers. Roy Smith, three times run out, has rather poor batting figures for him (398, 23.41) and the only other batsman to reach an average of 15 was J. H. Ragsdale (276, 16.23).

THE 'BOTTOM CLUBS

Blythe Works, handicapped by the illness of E. Hawley, did not maintain last year's form, and have a worse record than even relegated Silverdale. However, they tided over a difficult time, a surprise victory at Nantwich finally putting them safe from relegation. The batting averages compare indifferently with last year, A. E. Bennett being at the top with 15.18, with W. Hurst (305) and A. Moore (250) scoring most runs. Mayer (46, 15.67) and A. R. Davies (32, 15.40) had the best bowling figures.

Crewe Alexandra had an anxious time, and were unfortunate in that their professional, Alan Poate, was unable to find his form either with bat or ball. Five players made over 200 runs each, but the 15.50 of J. S. Broad was the best average. J. Hossack bowled cleverly on a good many occasions, and took 54 wickets for under 11 runs a piece. Poate had 36, and J. Prince 27, average 10.74.

In the last year or two Silverdale had to build up almost a new team, so many of their old players have dropped out, and they have failed to retain their place during the process. As last year they have tried many more players than any other club, the number batting being 30. The loss this season of J. Ankers, John Ikin, J. Bentley, and A. W. Ikin left C. F. Rushton practically alone of the old batting stalwarts, and of last year's leading bowlers only H. Pointon was left. Happily the left-hander, F. Vardy, became a regular player, and he and Pointon bowled well enough to have secured better results. Vardy took 72 wickets, average 11.52, and Pointon 57, average 11.26. But they had it practically all to do, and with Rushton's average dropping from 33.15 to 14.31 the batting was hopelessly weak. J. Myatt scored 263, with an average of 17.93, and E. Griffiths averaged over 19 in the first nine matches and then disappeared from the team. The rest was failure.