



# What *Yorkshire* Cricket Means To Me

**One Game. A Shared Passion.**



**Gill Smith and Neil Brinsdon**

## **Dedication**

*For the people who make cricket more than a game - who turn clubs into families, weekends into memories, and strangers into teammates.*

For the sake of clarity and space, we have occasionally shortened the list of roles and teams linked to contributor's names, some have played or coached or been involved with many different teams and organisations. Please know these edits were made with respect and practicality in mind, and we hope no offence has been taken.

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First edition published February 2026.

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Published by What Cricket Means To Me Publications,  
United Kingdom.



Cricket to me is more of a feeling, it feels like home.

It played a huge part in my upbringing. My dad used to play, he was a very solid player and I've been told I used to run onto the pitch in my nappy to chase after him. My mum managed the cricket club for 13 years, as you can imagine, plenty of "lock ins" and good times. Everybody was like a family!

I was there more than I was home! My grandma and grandad used to watch Dad every Saturday - she would always bring a packed lunch with those chocolate tea cakes in - my favourite. Memories forever and memories that wouldn't be, without the game.

You can't quite beat sitting in an old clubhouse, eating triangle sandwiches with your mates after a good game. Growing up it was a place where I could be myself, run off energy, build confidence and make connections with people of all ages and backgrounds, it's made me who I am today and that is the power of sport and community.

Cricket has influenced my life in too many ways to mention but the one that stands out the most is learning to get back when things don't go quite to plan and that refers to life and cricket.

There's always another game and there's always another day for things to change (until there isn't!).

**Ami Campbell**

**Yorkshire County Cricket Club**



Cricket has always been more than just a game to me - it has been a constant companion, a source of joy, and a bridge between my past and my present. Growing up in Pakistan, I spent countless days playing cricket with friends and family. Whether it was on the streets, fields, or open spaces, the bat and ball were never far from my hands. You could say cricket is in my blood; it shaped my childhood and gave me an outlet for energy, fun and connection.

When I came to the UK in 2009, cricket was one of the first things that helped me settle into a new environment. It provided familiarity in unfamiliar surroundings and gave me a community where I immediately felt at home.

Playing in local leagues not only kept my passion alive but also allowed me to build friendships that have lasted to this day. For the past ten years, I have been playing in the Bradford League, representing three clubs along the way - Saltaire, Buttershaw St Paul's, and now Bankfoot. Each team has given me unforgettable experiences and strengthened my love for the game.

One of my most memorable moments came in 2012 when I won the All Rounder Trophy in the Craven & District League. It was a proud achievement that reflected years of dedication and love for the sport. More than a decade later, in 2024, I experienced the same pride again when I won the All Rounder Trophy in the Quaid e Azam Premier Cricket League. These milestones are special, not just because of the recognition, but because they symbolise how cricket has remained a central part of my life across different places and stages of my life. For me cricket is not just a sport - it is joy, friendship, resilience and identity. It connects my roots in Pakistan to my life in the UK, reminding me of where I came from and inspiring me to keep playing with passion.

**Amer Ayoub**

**Bankfoot Cricket Club**



My brothers and sisters and I played and still play in the garden and these are my earliest memories of cricket.

I just love it!

I love the competition!

In 2017 we were all in the ground at Lord's watching the Women's World Cup Final, and England's win! At the end of the game we were all given a bat and a ball - my first cricket kit. I used to watch my brother and sisters play and then got the opportunity to play myself in the Super 1's programme and now I get to represent Yorkshire.

The 2019 Ashes and World Cup really built that hunger to play and watch all forms of the game. I guess why I love cricket in particular (especially Test cricket) is that everyone gets to bat or bowl and, as a disabled person I feel I get the chance to prove myself. More recently we have had some epic nets sessions with my dad, siblings and friends at Heslington nets. Cricket means that when I meet up with people they now respect what I do and I can hold my own on and off the pitch at Heslington and beyond.

I watch a lot of cricket and analyse techniques of past and present players which allows me to use their game and advice to improve my game and that of others. My favourite player is without doubt Joe Root but watching back footage of Kumar Sangakkara's drive and Ricky Ponting's pull helps me to improve. I may also shadow bat watching cricket on TV with my grandma.

Cricket is at the heart of my life and that of family.

This game!

**Stan Fairclough**

**Yorkshire Disability Cricket**