



A statement from the North Yorkshire SMBA committee

The NYSMBA committee members have fully considered the contents of a recent post (and its associated comments) that were placed on the official NYSMBA Facebook (FB) page by Bronagh Toleman the day after our AGM on April 27th 2018. They have reluctantly concluded that they have no option but to publically set the record straight by issuing this statement.

Joseph Newsome – Chairman

On behalf of the NYSMBA Management Committee

Issued May 8th 2018

To put things in perspective we would ask everyone to remember that at the end of 2016/17 Bronagh was elected as our premier team captain after challenging Rose Haynes after her 7th and most successful year in post. In the event Rose decided to stand down so there was no need for a ballot. This year Bronagh found that she herself was facing a challenge from Francis Boatman who has played for North Yorkshire over many years. Both knew in advance this would require a secret ballot to be decided, as has always been the case, by a vote from each of our clubs in attendance at the AGM plus votes from each of the committee members (excluding the Chairman). Both therefore had equal opportunity to rally their supporters to attend the AGM and in addition both were afforded time to address the meeting before voting took place. The ballot resulted in a win for Francis who will therefore lead our Premier team as captain for the 2018/19 season.

Considering Bronagh's undisputed prowess as one of the county's most successful bowlers, this result has evidently surprised many outside North Yorkshire which is shown from the responses to her comments on FB. However, these people should recognise the fact that Bronagh was unable to attract enough local support in her own county to secure her re-election. We can of course fully understand how disappointed Bronagh herself feels after only a single year in post but the committee would ask her to review the year objectively and consider the reasons why she was unable to attract the popular vote in her adopted county. The fair and democratic decision of North Yorkshire's membership must now be accepted by one and all.

However we cannot accept her use of the official NYSMBA Facebook page to express her disappointment and to make other insinuations and statements. In particular we would like to refute the following.

- The accusation that Francis used his address to “**slag her off**” is not correct. The committee feel he was simply outlining his areas of concern regarding the way the team had been managed and suggesting changes he would try to make. In particular he pointed out the unprecedented step of involving 2 Staffordshire players in our Premier team which he felt was wrong – a view shared by committee members.
- She has NOT been “**ousted**” or “**forced to walk away**” from the team and we find her statement that she has played her “**last ever game**” for our county somewhat surprising considering her statement that she “**loved playing for**” the team which she “**was passionate about**”. The fact is she remains eligible for selection next season unless she makes herself unavailable.
- There is NOT a “**massive clique**” in North Yorkshire and contrary to her suspicions the decision Francis took to stand against Bronagh was his and his alone. Her statement that “**you’ve got what you wanted**” suggests other influences but this is a statement without any foundation.

Posts on social media attract many instant reactions from those not in possession of all the facts and it was natural that Francis’ election would result in some expressions of incredulity from across the country. We can understand this. However, a few of our own members also responded with some allegations of dodgy practices by the NYSMBA committee and we were very sorry to note these which of course are untrue. Some comments refer to the new club Bronagh is in the process of forming in Scarborough. We look forward to welcoming this fledgling club into our Association once all the conditions of membership have been fulfilled. It and its members will then be afforded full rights alongside our other 40+ clubs and 800+ players.

Over the past week the serious question was raised as to whether we should invoke our Disciplinary Procedure against Bronagh and others on the grounds of bringing the reputation of our Association into disrepute. However we have rejected this course of action as we all feel this was not what was really intended. We hope that these posts were made in the heat of the moment and that in retrospect these “postees” will reflect on and regret the words they have used.

Francis now has the opportunity in the year ahead to show that the confidence shown in him is justified. In this he will have the full backing of the whole NYSMBA committee and the member clubs who gave him their vote.

Finally, we do sincerely hope that this statement will put events in their proper perspective. In any case there will be no further authorised public comment from our Association and we consider the matter now closed.

We would all now like to look to the future and not dwell any further on the past.