

Low and Johnston set the pace for Boro as runs flow

IT was run feast on Saturday as batsmen with the sun on their backs produced some of the most thrilling displays of the season, including four century makers and a pair who formed a sublime partnership of an unbeaten 171 in a swashbuckling 20 overs and five balls.

Middlesbrough's brilliant opening duo, James Lowe and Paul Johnston, smashed 125 balls around Acklam Park against Blackhall as they romped home by ten wickets to become the first this season to complete a double.

Lowe, Boro's skipper, hit an unbeaten 83 with seven fours and four sixes from 62 balls, and Johnston made 77 with seven fours and three sixes. The sensational double act smashed 83 runs from the first 14 overs and 88 from the last six overs and five balls.

But Blackhall had their mo-

Darlington Building Society NYSD Premier League

by Chris West

ments with Warren Swan (63) and John Darby (35) sharing 105 for the first wicket before Liam Botham (4-33) and James Beaumont (3-57) brought a collapse.

They lost nine wickets for 41 runs and couldn't offer more than 166-9.

The four centuries, which brought the total for the season so far to ten, came from Mike Gough at Hartlepool, Ian Gill for Northallerton, Gary Pratt for Bishop Auckland and Marton's Graham Shaw.

Shaw, who starred against Darlington at Feethams, was unbeaten on 104 when the villagers won impressively by nine wickets. He hit 13 fours and two sixes as he faced 129

balls, sharing in a stand of 127 with Chris Lane (27 from 103 balls) for the first wicket.

Earlier, Mohammed Zahid demolished Quakers with seven wickets in a 19-over spell which included 11 maidens which cost 26 runs, reaching the notable landmark of 500 league wickets. It moved Marton up to joint second.

Guisborough are still in the lead but had their advantage cut from seven points to four after being held by Northallerton.

Gill's hundred, which included 66 in boundaries, was his first for two years and it put the Priorymen on the rack despite four wickets for Neil Russell. Jon Barnes made 48 and shared in a stand of 94 with Gill after coming together with their side in trouble on 18 for 2.

Guisborough, in turn, sank to 36 for four before Colin

Murray (45) and Russell (31) put on 73 for the fifth wicket.

Chris Murray (46 not out) carried them from further danger at 161-8 to reach 199-8 - a tantalising 13 runs away from victory, but having to settle for a draw. Barnes (7-60) bowled through at one end to register the day's surprise result.

Gough's first century of the summer came out of Hartlepool's 238-3 against the informal Normanby Hall.

His unbeaten 118 included 13 fours and four sixes and came from 160 balls with a stand of 165 for the second wicket shared with professional, Janaka Guneratne (81).

Normanby found the task of winning too much and despite half centuries for Gary Scott and Paul Wiseman they fell short by 54 runs on 184-7. Marc Symington (5-58 from 20

overs) made the Hall fight for every run.

Great Ayton recovered from the loss of their first two wickets for just eight runs against Bishop Auckland to post 242-8 with Riaz Afridi (55), David Grainge (50), Steve Pennock (48) and Matt Wilkinson (41) finding form. Between them they hit 29 boundaries with four sixes.

In Bishops' reply of 228-4 Gary Pratt made a 143-ball century with 16 fours.

He was unbeaten with 113 and had Phil Holdsworth (44) as his best partner. But they were 15 short of their target at the close and had to settle for a draw.

Marske enjoyed a tense victory after bowling out Richmondshire for 112 before struggling to 98-8 leaving tailenders Jonathan Pickard and Jordan Carroll to score the most vital 15 runs to see them

home.

Carroll's younger brother, Josh, had routed the home side with six wickets for 44 runs while wicketkeeper Chris Shepherd held six catches. Neil Pratt's 35 was the best for the Seasiders.

The two bottom clubs, Thornaby and Billingham Synthonia, renewed an old challenge but it ended in stalemate. Thornaby set a target of 192-8 with the arrival, at last, of their new professional Khurram Shehzad a special feature.

He made 33 before bowling 19 tidy overs of spin and taking a wicket.

Synners finished 44 runs behind on 148-6 after half centuries for Keith Hewson and Craig Symington.

Martin Cull took five wickets for them as he ploughed through 25 overs.

DARLINGTON BUILDING SOCIETY NYSD PREMIER LEAGUE, PREMIER DIVISION

Table containing cricket match results for Darlington Building Society NYSD Premier League, Premier Division. Includes match details for Hartlepool v Normanby Hall, Guisborough v Northallerton, Bishop Auckland, and various other matches with scores and player statistics.

READERS DURHAM COUNTY LEAGUE

Table containing cricket match results for Readers Durham County League. Includes match details for Willington v Mainsforth, Brandon v Crook Town, and various other matches with scores and player statistics.