

Lowest Scoring Cup Final Ever?

Hebden Bridge League Cup Final

Mytholmroyd v Zion
at Foster Holme
Saturday 7 September 1895

Zion 16 all out; Mytholmroyd 12 all out
Zion won by 4 runs

Was this the lowest scoring cup final of all time? Mytholmroyd, who also ran a team in the Sowerby Division League in 1895, and Zion, who played their matches at High Hirst, had qualified for the final of the Hebden Bridge League Cup after finishing in the first four of Division 1 and winning their semi-finals.

Teams very rarely reached 100 in the local leagues at this time, but the local explained the extraordinary low totals by the quality of the batting, bowling and fielding rather than the quality of the pitch. Zion managed only one run from the first seven overs of their innings and Mytholmroyd none at all from their first six. Only the Zion number eleven, Lord, seemed prepared to put bat to ball and his straight drive for three and pull for four off Culpin proved decisive.

The following fascinating report is from the *Hebden Bridge Times and Calder Vale Gazette*:

‘The encounter attracted a good muster of spectators but only poor batting was exhibited, the show with the willow being unworthy of two clubs who have fought their way successfully to the final. However, the excitement which prevailed amongst the members of both elevens no doubt accounted a great deal for this.

If Mytholmroyd had gone in for opening their shoulders only a little bit, the probability is they would have been lucky enough to wipe off a small total like 16, but they contented themselves with attempting to play the bowling of whatever sort it was. Both sides were very faulty in that way; no matter how loose a ball was sent up the batsmen simply played it, instead of doing their utmost to score off it. The bowling of the Mytholmroyd pair was very good, as also was Sowden's, but Crossley Cotton carried off the palm for superiority with the leather. He was by far the fastest of the four, and almost every ball went straight at the sticks. Bowling of this kind is sure to prove destructive, and so it did on Saturday. The fielding of both sides was A1, and it was impossible to take liberties. Three men who attempted short runs found out their mistake when it was too late.'

The presentation was conducted by the Reverend Harry Wild of Heptonstall, one of the vice presidents of the league. First he handed £1 5s 6½d to Crossley Cotton, a collection made for 'his destructive bowling'. 'I hope he will not spend it foolishly,' commented the Reverend. The cup was presented to Zion captain JW Sowden, a remarkable achievement for a club in its first season.

Reverend Wild's speech provides some clues about one of the motivations for forming the local leagues: 'You know that one of the great disadvantages of playing with a junior club is that they very often fail to fulfil their engagements, but by this League every club is forced to keep its appointments, and so the league in this way does a great and useful work and serves a very good purpose.'

Zion

M Barritt	c S Eastwood b Heap	1
W Smith	b Heap	1
JW Sowden	run out	2
S Sowden	b Culpin	1
C Cotton	b Heap	0
A Barritt	b Culpin	0
F Lord	b Heap	2
J Walton	run out	0
J Hill	not out	1
S Wilcock	b Culpin	0
J Lord	c N Crowther b Heap	8
Extras		0
Total	all out	16

Fall of Wkts: 1-2; 2-3; 3-5; 4-5; 5-5; 6-7; 7-7; 8-7; 9-7; 10-16

Mytholmroyd Bowling

	Overs	Mdns	Runs	Wkts
A Culpin	13	8	10	3
W Heap	12	8	6	5

Mytholmroyd

J Greenwood	b Sowden	0
S Eastwood	b Cotton	2
A Robertshaw	c Smith b Sowden	0
N Crowther	b Cotton	0
A Culpin	b Cotton	1
W Heap	c M Barritt b Cotton	3
J Oxbury	b Cotton	0
J Eastwood	run out	0
E Butterworth	not out	3
J Robinson	c M Barritt b Sowden	3
J Houldsworth	b Sowden	0
Extras		0
Total	all out	12

Fall of Wkts: 1-0; 2-2; 3-2; 4-2; 5-5; 6-5; 7-6; 8-6; 9-12; 10-12

Zion Bowling

	Overs	Mdns	Runs	Wkts
C Cotton	10	7	5	5
JW Sowden	9	5	7	4