

Mytholmroyd Cricket Club
2006 Season Review: The Search for Silverware

By Russell Eggar

The strength and depth of the squad at Mytholmroyd CC in recent years has meant that both the 1st and 2nd team are competing for honours in the Halifax League. At the beginning of the 2006 season the club had its largest and most talented squad in years, meaning they were set to attack the Halifax League with one thing in mind. Silverware.

The season started on the 22 April 2006 with victories for both the first and second teams against Old Crocs and Blackley. From then on, both teams grew in confidence and it was only the 1st XI's defeat against Booth and the 2nd XI's losses against Northowram and Blackley during May that spoilt an amazingly successful first half of the season for the club.



Crossley Shield Final day at Mytholmroyd, August 2006

Far from dampening the spirits of the Mytholmroyd players, these early losses only encouraged the teams to pull out all the stops in order to win that elusive silverware with the 2nd XI showing particular resilience to climb to the top of their league with resounding wins that captain Jon Russell attributes to the dedication and versatility of his bowlers as his team dispatched all the opposing batsmen in the month of June to gain the maximum 10 points in every match as well as advancing to the semi-final of the Crossley Shield by beating Southowram at Ewood Homes by 2 runs. The first teamers had mixed success in June but were successful with the bat, hitting 319 against King Cross on one occasion with a mammoth partnership of 245 between Danny Bailey (180) and skipper Simon Wheelwright (65).

In July, the 1st XI's bowlers began to meet the high standard set by the batsmen by helping the team gain maximum points on three occasions with Paul Senior and Zahid Mahmood causing the damage to the opposition.

After an uncharacteristic defeat to Blackley in early July, Mytholmroyd's 2nd XI raised their game to such a high standard that they were proving unstoppable, convincingly beating every team in the second half of the season, including an outstanding win over rivals Triangle, which proved the resolve and effort of the players was worthy of champion status. They came back from 164-8 to dispatch the opposition for just 94, with player-of-the-season Jon Bamford finishing with figures of 7 wickets for just 18 runs. Incidentally, this was the kind of performance that saw Bamford pick up the league award for bowling at the end of the season.

The 2nd XI went on to clinch the title three weeks before the end of the season with a victory over Booth after also scooping the coveted Crossley Shield – the final of which was staged at the home of Mytholmroyd CC, Ewood Homes, less than a week earlier. Royd convincingly beat Bradshaw to pick up the trophy for the first time in 50 years.

It was Bradshaw, however, who contributed to the 1st XI's unfortunate demise in the race for the title. Just a day before the 2nd XI's victory in the Crossley shield final, the 1st XI met Bradshaw in a must-win match that they narrowly lost in a close fought battle.

With a league title trophy, the Crossley Shield and heroic performances all round from the 1st XI, 2nd XI and Sunday XI in 2006, Mytholmroyd finished the season with important silverware in the cabinet, but more importantly they begin the defence of their trophies and the search for more in April 2007.