

CRICKET

Focus on - Rastrick

Shaping up
at Round Hill

UNORGANISED, unrecorded cricket was probably first played in Rastrick in the 1840s.

One of the teams from those days was Rastrick United, the forerunner of Rastrick C.C.

Rastrick C.C. moved to Round Hill soon after they

were established. It is not known exactly where their former ground was, but it was either in Fixby or Grantham on Dewsbury Road.

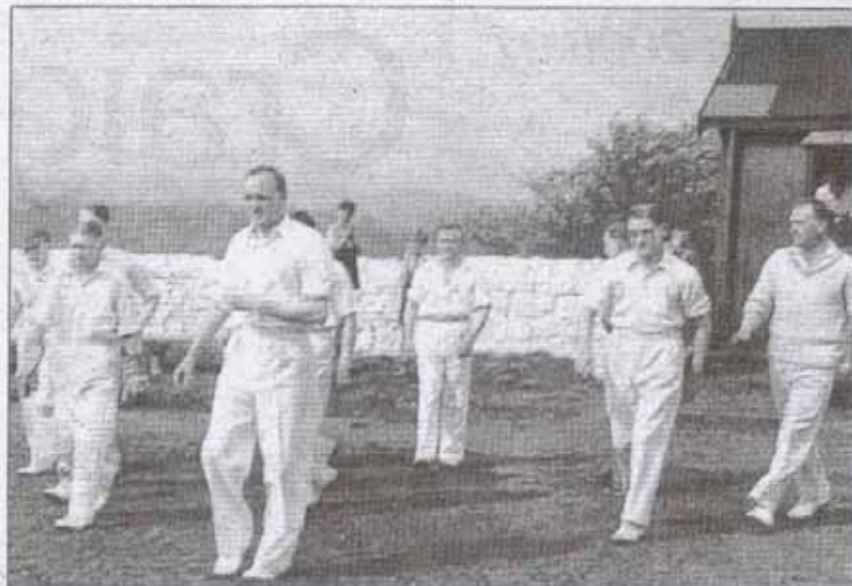
Visiting teams in the early days didn't really relish playing Rastrick. Transport was not what it is today and opposition sides arriving by train at

Brighouse station faced a two-mile hike - all up hill - to Rastrick's ground.

Originally the hill at Round Hill extended well into the playing area. In 1891, major excavations took place to remove a part of the hill to provide a more level playing field.



As it was: the Round Hill ground in the 1950s



Taking to the field: Arnold Carter leading out the first team in 1952

One intriguing item which occurs repeatedly in early committee meeting minutes is the order for pies each week. Some weeks, as many as 15 dozen or more were ordered if the first team were at home.

The first Round Hill pavilion was opened on April 15 1905 by Sir Thomas Brook-Hitchen - a landmark event.

In the 1930s the club ran a ladies team. On May 29 1931 the Brighouse & Elland Echo reported: "A large crowd [around 1,000] enjoyed the novel spectacle of a ladies' cricket match on the Rastrick ground last Monday morning, when teams representing Rastrick and Brighouse met in a friendly game."

It was in the 1940s that the

club was able to purchase its Clough Lane ground. One commentator said that £900 had been raised 'with astonishing ease'.

In 1951 a cricket writer commented: "It is at Rastrick that one can find the old character which is always one of the features connected with a local cricket club."

The club celebrated its 125th anniversary in 1988, and produced some beautiful commemorative plates to mark the occasion. A rather distinguished brick scoreboard was built in 1996 - 20ft tall and constructed at a cost of £26,000.

Today, Rastrick pit their wits and skills against other teams in the Huddersfield League.

The 16th in a Saturday series on Calderdale cricket clubs by Dr Peter Davies of the Cricket Heritage Project at Huddersfield University

FACT FILE

Founded: c.1863
Ground: Round Hill
Local Landmark: The Round Hill public house
Nearest Other Club: Badger Hill
Greatest Moment: Winning the Sykes Cup for the first time in 1951.
Local Hero: Stuart Fletcher - starred at Round Hill before playing county cricket for Yorkshire and Lancashire.
Bizarre Fact: In 1899 a Rastrick bowler named Shaw took 10-2 in 6 overs, including six wickets in consecutive balls!