

RASTRICK CC

HOME SWEET HOME

In the world of Halifax cricket, Rastrick's home ground holds the double distinction of being the closest to a metropolitan boundary and the closest to a motorway.



It is located only a couple of dozen yards away from the Calderdale-Kirklees frontier and like Outlane's ground, just the other side of the border, it is dominated by the sight and sound of cars and lorries pounding the nearby M62. No doubt too, the drivers of these vehicles can spot the premises of Rastrick Cricket & Athletic Club (RCAC) down below them, as they whiz towards Leeds and Hull.

When you are out in the middle, Rastrick's ground definitely has its appeal: the rather distinguished brick scoreboard (20ft tall and erected in 1996 at a cost of £26,000), the spectacular views out over Brighouse and Halifax, and the large spherical mound located directly opposite the pavilion (think of a West Yorkshire version of the Sydney Hill).



Many years ago, Round Hill, as it is called, used to witness ox-roastings on special occasions. Today, seven benches are perched halfway up, making it an excellent vantage point from which to watch Rastrick go about their business in the Huddersfield League.



There is a neat white perimeter fence, a pair of modern sightscreens and three advertising boards (one of which proclaims: BRIGHOUSE ECHO: BEST FOR LOCAL SPORT). To the right, one sees a white wall behind the bowler's arm, two seats for watchers of the game and the double-decker pavilion.



Today, when you inspect the brickwork on the front of the pavilion, an inscription jumps out: DONATED AND BUILT BY RCAC MEMBERS 1974-1975.



(Incidentally, the zig-zag iron steps up to the changing rooms from ground level are amazing and no doubt faze some opposition batsmen as they climb down from high altitude into the middle).

Rastrick's ground is also interesting on account of the row of houses that back on to it - thus forming a natural boundary fence - and the defunct white brick building at the motorway end (on its front one can just make out the words: THE CALDER & HEBBLE CAR PARK - PATRONS ONLY).



And a note to all cricketers and cricket-watchers: the Roundhill Inn, situated just behind the pavilion on the main road into Rastrick and Brighouse, serves a very decent pint of Black Sheep.



