

PROACTIVE AND INTERACTIVE

Interview with Simon Walker, Southowram CC Webmaster



When did your club website go online? The club website originally went online in late 1999 although the project was abandoned in mid-season owing to my work commitments. For the 2000 season we moved the website to play-cricket.com with the vision of encouraging the other teams within the Halifax League to join. The idea was that all teams would update their home results which would allow the league's play-cricket.com website to be fully interactive. We, along with many other teams in the league, found that the play-cricket.com website performance was slow so the play-cricket.com website was phased out at the end of 2005. The current website was launched in 2006 and significantly redesigned for 2007 although I think that the current format is too complicated to be easily updated. A new design is planned for 2008.

How many people help with the website apart from you? I am the only person who updates the website. At the moment I am not aware of any other members who have the html skills required to make updates although I am willing to accept contributions from anyone.

What are your main day-to-day tasks as webmaster? At the moment I am looking at new designs for the website to make it more pro-active and easier to update. I didn't have time to update the website as often as I would have liked last year so for the 2008 season the results will only consist of a summary rather than a full results page as in 2007.

Which features of the site are most popular with club members or general browsers? The page accessed most often last year was the team selection page followed by the fixtures pages.

How might your website develop in the future? I am looking at adding SQL and PHP features to make some of the page interactive. At the moment I am still learning PHP and SQL so my ambitions outstrip my ability at the moment.

In your opinion, what is special and unique about your club in general? The rise of the club from nowhere in 1977 to the position we are in today as one of the leading clubs in the league. Since 2000 the club has won the Parish Cup twice, the Crossley Shield once and the inaugural Twenty20 tournament.

What do you like most about your ground? The best feature is the ground itself. With the ground being in a natural bowl it is sheltered from the wind in all directions. We also have some of the best facilities for spectators and of course there is the bar which, unlike most other clubs, is open throughout the match.

What does the future hold for your club? In 2008 we are extending the clubhouse to provide an umpires room, a larger bar store and to relocate the kitchen. We are also adding a patio area to the front of the club to provide a

better viewing area closer to the pavilion. In the longer term we are also investigating the possibility of developing the ground to make a multi-sport facility. In the shorter term: winning the league and cup double in 2008 with any luck.

What is your club famous for when it comes to the cricket teas you put on? Any culinary specialities? Our teas are very popular throughout the league. We always provide either a sit-down tea or a buffet. Although it could be said that our teas are famed for my mother's chocolate cake!

Favourite away ground you like visiting? I don't have a specific favourite although I think Booth can be picturesque on a fine day.

What has changed most about local cricket during your lifetime? Most clubs have far better facilities since I became involved with cricket in the Halifax League as a scorer in 1982.