

Fartown Project Interviews

Interviewee: Steve Draper (phone interview)

1. What was the first game you saw at Fartown?

A John Player Sunday League game in 1980 (scans sent through)
(*Warwickshire*)

2. What was the last game you saw at Fartown?

The last ever Sunday League game in 1982. (*Worcestershire*)

3. What is your fondest memory of the ground?

Both the games were very well attended with an excellent atmosphere. Steve remembered one particular incident when Geoffrey Boycott lost his contact lens and had to “Retire Hurt” (*Warwickshire 1980*). Spectators were looking for it during the tea interval.

4. What was the greatest match you saw or were involved in at the ground?

Both games were poor! Yorkshire lost them both! In fact Yorkshire had a poor record at Huddersfield.

5. What was the greatest player you saw or played with at the ground?

Geoffrey Boycott – he was perhaps the only genuine world class player he saw at Huddersfield.

6. What was the best thing about the ground?

Steve recalled the impressive, traditional, pavilion. He felt that games would always be exciting due to the wicket favouring the batsmen and the ground being so compact.

7. What would you have changed about the ground?

Absolutely nothing – it was perfect!

8. Could you try and describe the atmosphere at the ground during one of the big games?

The atmosphere was very good. The matches always attracted big crowds that had a good percentage of local spectators. On some occasions the crowds were as big as 14,000. The feeling of the crowd was very much family - orientated.

9. What positive impacts do you think the ground had on the local area and community?

The ground boosted the area's and the town's profile. Steve felt that the decline of the ground was not necessarily to do with the Yorkshire committee but more to do with the new owner of the pavilion who was determined to get rid of the cricket team that used it.

10. What do you feel when you see the ground now?

Steve said it made him very sad and he has visited it since. He does feel it is not as depressing now as it was in the early 1990s when there were burnt out cars on the outfield. He said it was nice to see the Hurst memorial restored and urged Kirklees Council to take a more active role in the restoration of the ground. There were parallels with the decline of the Saville Town ground in Dewsbury.

Trivia:

What was the strangest match or occurrence you experienced at the ground?

None really.