

Clayton West the only club badly hit

BY DAVID LOCKWOOD

THE 2001 Drakes Huddersfield Cricket League season opens on Saturday with just one club unable to use their ground because of the foot and mouth epidemic.

Clayton West won't be able to fulfil any fixture at their Back Lane ground until further notice, and all their first eleven matches will be played on opponents' grounds.

Five other clubs are affected to a lesser extent.

There will be no retrieval of balls outside Kirkburton's Riley Lane ground, where they will also employ the local rule of no sixes.

Shepley, similarly, have adopted the no sixes rule, along with a directive that a nominated person will collect the balls from adjoining fields.

Three other affected clubs, who will nominate someone to retrieve balls are Delph & Dobcross,

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Lascelles Hall and Shelley.

Drakes executive secretary Paul Whiteley explained:

"All visiting clubs must adhere to regulations laid out, and the rules appertaining to the various grounds."

Clayton West's second eleven games will be re-scheduled from fixture to fixture, and the League's match secretary Hubert Murphy will advise all clubs and the Umpire's Association of re-arranged fixtures.

As the first team are scheduled to play at Dalton on Saturday, the Seconds will play their opening fixture (also against Dalton) at the Dalton Fold ground on Sunday, April 22.

League chairman Roger France re-iterates last week's appeal when he said: "All players and visitors to the five affected clubs, should ensure that no-one transgresses the rules, particularly regarding the retrieval of balls."

Mr Whiteley added: "In the second eleven games affecting Clayton West, the 33% to finish rule will still apply, but will take into consideration matches played on the original date."