

MEMORIES OF THE TALISMAN

Profile of Harold Ainley by Duncan Robinson

Harold Ainley is a much loved member of Augustinians CC. He is currently a committee member and a league representative but is best remembered by everyone at Laund Hill for his captaincy of the 1st XI during the unprecedented success of the 1980s.



The Augustinians side of the '80s won either the league or cup in six consecutive years and this was in no small part down to Ainley's guidance. Ainley describes these years as his 'best memories' of his time at the club and it is easy to see why. He picked up many individual and team accolades as skipper of the 'team of the eighties'.

When asked about his worst memory from his time at Augustinians, Ainley replied, "the death of one of our founder members, Michael Grimes, last year." This answer shows how deep his affiliation with the club runs and how the relationship is a very personal one.

During his many years at the club, Ainley has seen many changes and he sees the most significant to have been the change of ground, from All Saints School to the club's current home at Laund Hill, and the change of league, from the Huddersfield Association to the Halifax League. The reason for this, according to Ainley, is that these changes allowed the club to grow and to move forward.

However, Ainley was keen to emphasise that the way the club has been run through the years has remained consistent. It has always been run by a committee and therefore it is of no real surprise that Augustinians CC has remained a successful and well organised club.

Ainley is also positive about the future of the club as he sees the progress of the junior teams as "very positive". However, he does concede that the club "could do with an influx of players" and he sees that as a problem as it is proving difficult to find people willing to play. Ainley remains upbeat, however: "It's a problem but hopefully the players coming through from the junior teams will solve that".

Such is Ainley's love for the club and the game of cricket, he was still captaining the 2nd XI last summer. However, when asked if he would continue playing next season his answer was, "watch this space", as he leaves the club in suspense over his future. Ainley explained: "I would love to continue playing and I don't want to stop but I've had a bad knee for a while and it now seems as though the other one seems to be going. I will make a decision nearer the start of the season."

The club will surely be hoping their talisman can carry on for one more year and if it was down to the man himself there is no doubt he would continue for many a year. However, due to his injuries, Ainley may have to hang up his spikes before he would have wished and bring an end to a wonderful innings.