

LORD'S A POSSIBILITY FOR THE 'BRIDGE'
NPOWER VILLAGE CUP 2008 DRAW

By Paul Rai

Any cricketer at any level dreams of playing at Lord's. Viewed as the 'home of cricket' and regarded as the game's 'spiritual headquarters', the venue has a place in the hearts of cricketers around the world.

Batsmen dream of driving the ball back past the bowler towards the famous pavilion, while bowlers wonder what it would be like to bowl from the Nursery End - running up, leaving the Media Centre in their shadow, and then there is that distinctive slope that can either help or hinder a bowler.

Playing on the hallowed turf at the most prestigious and historic venue cricket has to offer could be within reach of Armitage Bridge Cricket Club. According to the npower Village Cup draw, ABCC will travel to Central Yorkshire League outfit Carlton CC in the 3rd round scheduled for 18th May 2008.



Organised by *The Wisden Cricketer*, the objective of the npower Village Cup is to promote village cricket and provide an opportunity for village cricketers to compete in a national event. All clubs entering the competition are required to take an annual subscription to *The Wisden Cricketer* magazine, thereby ensuring a continuous means of communication between the organisers and competitors. All villages that compete must have populations of less than 4,000 to be eligible to take part.

ABCC have received byes for the first two rounds of the cup, enabling them the simplest of routes to the 3rd round. Counterparts Carlton have had exactly the same passage through to this stage of the cup. They were eliminated through the hardest of circumstances last season...a bowl out! Nearby Broad Oak have not been as lucky with their draw and will have to overcome Addingham CC to progress to the same stage as the 'Bridge'.



Victory away at Carlton for ABCC will put them into the semi-final for their West Yorkshire group where they will play either Thornton CC or Bardsey CC. The tournament could throw up the possibility of the 'Bridge' meeting Broad Oak in the group final stage, with the victors moving on to the national rounds and a step closer to Lord's.

According to the rules of the competition each side shall face 40 overs each and bowlers are permitted to bowl a maximum of nine overs each. Currently, Armitage Bridge are just a mere seven victories away from stepping out onto the outfield at Lord's. September 8th is the date that has been pencilled in for the village final on the Lord's fixture list. With a combination of luck and good performances, the 'Bridge' could be appearing at the 'Home of Cricket'.