

# LOTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO!

## 2008 Cup Draws and Fixtures - By Rob Hardie

As Meltham prepare for the 2008 season, their fate in the first round of various knockout tournaments has already been decided along with the full set of league fixtures.

After being beaten in the Sykes Cup at the 3<sup>rd</sup> round stage last year away to Shepley at Marsh Lane in mid-June, Meltham have been drawn at home to Holmfirth. The home tie is sure to be a boost to the club as they look to claim their 9<sup>th</sup> Sykes Cup triumph.

Despite the home draw at Mean Lane, Holmfirth will be looking to prove they are no pushovers, having been promoted last year to the top division alongside the Mean Laners. Holmfirth have themselves won the cup six times although they were dumped out of the competition at the first hurdle last year by Shelley, the team that Meltham defeated in the second round.

In the Examiner 20/20 trophy, Meltham have been drawn in a group which should prove to be easy to qualify from: the 'Taylor' group, with home fixtures at fellow Premier Division side Micklehurst and Frank Platt Conference outfit Slaithwaite.



The two away fixtures the club face are sandwiched in between the home games and come against top-flight side Delph and Dobcross and Cedar Court Conference side Marsden (above). As there are five teams in the group, each team has a free date. Meltham's free date comes last out of the five so the club should be looking to ensure qualification from the group before the last round of fixtures; this will ensure they aren't waiting on other teams or results to go their way.

In the Heavy Woollen Cup, Meltham have again been handed a home tie as they look to claim the trophy for the first time. After being knocked out in the first round by Gomersal last season, the club will be looking to do a lot better this time round after being drawn to face Huddersfield League side Clayton West. They were promoted last year to the top division and should provide a stern test, although Meltham should overcome them.

In the league, MCC will take on another newly promoted side in their first game. On 19<sup>th</sup> April, the first XI will travel to Scammonden Road to face Barkisland in the season opener. Meltham's first home league game comes against Delph & Dobcross, a team that finished three places higher in the league last term.

Meanwhile, the second XI will begin the defence of their Paddock Shield with an away trip to Paddock on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May. This is the second year in a row that the two sides have been paired together in the first round of the competition. Meltham were of course victors on that occasion after Paddock failed to provide any opposition after several days play were washed out during the period of terrible weather last summer. Meltham went on to claim their 11<sup>th</sup> Shield win so hopefully the omens are good for a repeat this time round.