

# High and mighty

## 32. Scholes C.C. - Chapelgate

*Over the last quarter of a century, the turnover of the club has increased 25-fold and, likewise, our operating costs have risen year on year so that in 2002 it will cost the club in the region of £4,000 before a ball is bowled...Please support club social functions, use your contacts to attract new sponsors to the club, promote the use of the clubhouse as an ideal setting to have a birthday party or other intimate family gatherings.*

[Bob Pell, Chairman of Scholes C.C. - 2001]

For those local cricketers who are also followers of Huddersfield Town, Scholes C.C. is famous for one man: Mel Booth, who reports on the Terriers for the *Huddersfield Examiner*. His smiling mug-shot accompanies every one of his newspaper articles, so his visage as well as his journalistic style is famous throughout Kirklees. In the winter, Booth is a soccer man but in the summer he picks up his bat and ball. He is in fact part of a famous cricketing family. Not too long ago, there were five Booths on the club's books: Mel, Dave, Stuart, Steve and Hedley.

Scholes also boasts an irreverent - and very unofficial - cricketing website, 'Chapelgate Claptrap'. As the home page puts it: 'This is an independent production, and is not sanctioned by Scholes Cricket Club. Neither does the Club have any editorial control over the content or material contained herein. The views and opinions contained herein are not necessarily those of Scholes C.C., and the Club makes no representation regarding the accuracy of the facts as reported or expressed on these pages.' The website also publicises the club's venture into 'nude cricket' - but that's another story!

Scholes' ground is both peaceful and distinguished. It is set high above Holmfirth, amid glorious moorland scenery. You

can access the ground by various means - over the wall, through the gate near the far field, or via the path near the garage. When you enter the arena, you are struck first of all by the fantastic views on offer. For the most part, you catch sight of tranquil greenery, but if you look close enough you can spot a windmill in the mid-distance and a football pitch in the near-distance.



**1954 Team Photo**

In terms of buildings, there are two, and both are modern: a bar and tea room by the main entrance (home to some excellent photo-montages on a cricketing theme) and a pavilion for the teams to change in further round to the right (note the iron railings and the cute waiting area for batters-to-be). Around the perimeter of the ground, there are lots of empty beer barrels and a number of benches for spectators' use. Two in particular bear rather moving dedications: IN MEMORY OF HENRY WARDELL 1923-1999 - SUPPORTER AND FRIEND and THESE SEATS ARE DONATED IN MEMORY OF J.W. HEYWOOD (BILL) WHO DIED 4TH JANUARY 1988 - A LIFELONG SUPPORTER OF SCHOLES C.C.. At one match in September 2003, another bench

collapsed under the weight of the seven spectators sitting on it - and many drinks were spilt!

There is only one sightscreen, but there are whitewashed dry stone walls to aid the batters at both ends. The playing area slopes gently down from the dressing-room area. Adjacent is an area of tasteful new Brookside-style housing (some of the residences even have verandas).

The powers-that-be at Scholes are very fond of their notices. In the bar and tea room you encounter the following: WELCOME TO SCHOLES C.C., WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY CRICKET AT SCHOLES?, THANK YOU FROM ALL AT SCHOLES C.C. and NO SPIKES TO BE WORN IN THE TEA ROOM AND BAR. Outside the pavilion: THIS AREA IS DESIGNATED FOR PLAYERS AND OFFICIALS ONLY. Near the back entrance to the ground: PLEASE SHUT THE GATE OR IT WILL BE LOCKED - THANK YOU. Even the local authority gets in on the act. Near the gate at the bottom end of the ground, a sign reads: KIRKLEES M.C. - NO DOGS ALLOWED.

The locals are also keen on their poetry. As you order your drinks at the bar you can read various bits of verse on the club noticeboard: *Scholes Lament*, *Scholes Balls and All* and also this little ditty in honour of the Chapelgate groundsmen:

These three chaps appear frequently on the cricket pitch at Scholes  
Days of bat and ball are over, 'T'roller now along they bowls...  
Two 'undred and seventeen years 'etween 'em, That's how long they've done so far  
T'owdest rollers in the business, Yet they still prop up the bar.

The club moved into Chapelgate around 1880. Their first HQ was a field just below the Boot and Shoe Inn, but they only played there for a few years. In this early period, Scholes were known as Scholes Moor, and then Scholes Clarence, but we are not told why they switched names so frequently.

The first recorded match at Scholes took place on 29 April 1876, when the village team entertained New Mill C.C. - with

the game ending in a draw. In the same year, the club pitted its wits against other village sides: Denby Dale, Farnley Tyas, Hepworth, Holmbridge, Lockwood Mechanics Institute and Skelmanthorpe. It should also be noted that in this year, their debut season, Scholes were already employing a professional - Mr. Dalton, a gifted all-rounder who scored 23 and took 7-41 in the game against Hepworth. We are told that in 1897 the club had 15 vice-presidents (including two local vicars) and 13 committee members...and that subscriptions were due by 16 July.



**SCHOLES C.C. 1970**

**BACK ROW:** L. Haworth (Scorer), M. Smith, K. Wood, S. Whiteley, S. Wade, G. Kaye, K. Hollingworth  
**FRONT ROW:** R. Hallas, S. Ellis, L. Heap (Capt.), J. Ellis, N. Holroyd, S. Booth

Today, Scholes play in the Huddersfield League, but previously they were members of the Huddersfield & District Combination and the Huddersfield Central League. The last decade has been silverware-laden for the Chapelgate boys. And much of the 1<sup>st</sup> XI's success has been down to the excellent batting performances of stylish Indian batsman Wasim Jaffer, the club pro in 1999, 2000 and 2001.

Back in the old days, Scholes had to rely heavily on villagers for support. In 2001 club member Paul Ibbotson wrote a 'nostalgia' piece for the SCC 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary brochure. 'It seems that fundraising was as big an issue 80 years ago as it is now,' he explained. 'The club had to raise the funds to pay

for everybody's kit, unlike today, and there was no bar to provide a steady income. Clifford [an octogenarian club member] recalls walking round the village aged 16 with a friend, knocking on every door they could find, asking for contributions to keep the club going. 3d, 6d, a shilling or two bob were all gratefully received, and half a crown got you a vice-presidency!

The cricket club has grown with the village, which even in the nineteenth century was described as 'populous and increasing'. Among other things, the place is noted for its tradition of Primitive Methodism, its multi-purpose general store, its old school and its yoghurt factory. There is also Lee Mill - in its day one of the most famous woollen and worsted manufacturers in the area.

And on a Saturday night, when the cricket is over, the Chapelgate crew celebrate, or drown their sorrows, in their own bar or pop into the Boot and Shoe, in the middle of the village, for a pie-and-pea supper and a spot of karaoke.

Extract from P.Davies, *Pennine Pitch* (2003)