

Before I present my third report as your Secretary, I must preface my remarks on the past year by making special reference to the great losses suffered by the Club with the sad deaths during the past year of our President and one of the ~~senior~~^{senior} past playing members and Trustees, Mr. Robert Midgley.. It has indeed marked the end of an era in the history of the Club.

It is difficult to express adequately the sense of loss which all members must have felt when they learnt of Mr. Ronald's death last August. Without his help, interest and encouragement since he became president in 1946, there is no doubt that Booth Cricket Club would ~~probably~~ not be in existence now. He made sure that cricket would continue to be played at Booth ~~when~~^{when} it became impossible to play on the old field and we are given to understand that he has made provision for it to continue after his death, such was his interest in the well being of the Club.

I should also like to pay tribute to the past services to the Club both ~~from~~ as a player and as a worker, of Robert Midgley who died in ~~December~~^{December}. He also played a large part in keeping the club going after the war and with the help of Harold Boardall, Harry Clegg and Tom Nicholl succeeded in obtaining permission from Mr. Ronald to convert part of the park into our present cricket field. In the years months and years following, I know from reading the old minute books of the Committee just how much time and effort he put into the club and how much Booth Cricket Club meant to him.

I am sure you will all agree that we owe both of them a very great debt of gratitude.

If I can now turn to the events of the last playing season, it was a moderate season for both first and second teams in the League, with both teams finishing fifth in their respective divisions, both with 41 points. Both made an early exit from the Parish Cup and Crossley Shield at the hands of Blackley and Outlane.

It was however a different story for the first team who once again took part in the Haig Village Competition. We were good enough this year to reach the Yorkshire Area Final, having defeated Tong, the area champions in the last two years on the way. In the final we met Barkisland and although our bowlers contained the opposition to a moderate score in the 40 overs, Booth's innings ~~never~~ really got off the ground and we were well beaten on the day. The competition has however provided us with some exciting cricket and some big crowds, the largest of which at Barkisland numbered some 400.

Perhaps it was the heavy fixture list which took its toll by the middle of the season when both teams suffered inglorious defeats

about those two matches the better !

The junior eleven had by far the most successful season of the lot for although they went out of the Collinson Cup early on, being defeated by Copley, they reached the Championship final and played off against Barkisland. The first match produced a tie and in the replay, our normally strong batting line up let us down when it was most needed and Barkisland emerged the winners. It was however a noticeable achievement by the third team and they deserve our congratulations. Three members of that side have produced memorable achievements during the season. Chris Turner has won the junior league bowling averages and Geoff Midgley and Neil Thomas figured prominently in what must be a club record partnership during an amazing match at Luddenden Foot. Booth's total after 20 overs was 207 for 1 with Midgley 107 not out and Thomas 87. I think that anyone who did not go to the match can be forgiven if they did not believe that score when they first heard it. It is also an ironic feature of the match that the teams manager, coach, and sergeant major was seen to be pulling his hair from its roots during the early parts of the innings because they were not scoring fast enough'.

Geoff Midgley was also selected to play for the Halifax League juniors against the Red Triangle at Sowerby Bridge and during his innings of 70 odd, succeeded in losing every ball that the club could produce !

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Three members of our club, Richard Allott, Morgan Thomas, Roy Collinge and Geoff Midgley were selected during the season to play for the Halifax under 24 side to play in the White Rose Trophy and the Blackley cricket festival and Richard Allott and Morgan Thomas were also chosen to play for the Halifax League side.

The club averages this year have been won as follows :

	Batting	Bowling	Fielding
1st. team	P.Metcalf	N.Fielden	R.Collinge
2nd team	G.Midgley	N.Butterworth	A.Greenwood
3rd. team	G.Midgley	C.Turner	A.Saltonstall.

On the social side, the Annual Dinner was again held at Thrum Hall in January when our main speaker was Peter Parfitt. Although it was a most enjoyable event as it invariably is, it is disappointing that the attendance continues to decline and I hope that next years dinner which is being held at Hebden Bridge will attract some of the people who have recently stayed away, otherwise it will not be long before we have to give serious consideration to dropping it altogether, which would be a great pity.

We have also during the year acquired a new motor mower and a new practice wicket covering which has now to be laid. We were also fortunate to receive a grant from the former Sowerby Bridge UDC of £175 which we have to use towards the installation of some new toilets.

The ladies Committee yet again proved to be the main source of revenue for the Club as you will see from looking at your balance sheets and I am sure you will agree that they deserve a special vote of thanks for the ^{ir} magnificent work ~~they~~ both during the season in the canteen and also for their many fund raising events.

In closing I should just like to mention two points which I think are disturbing. The first happily does not yet concern our club directly and I hope it will not in the future. It is the ever increasing trouble about players behaviour on the field and the reluctance to accept and abide by the umpires decision. There have been serious examples of both in our league this season and I only hope that we do not allow this to happen in our club.

Secondly I want to mention an age old problem of work. It is ~~and has been for a long time the same old story whenever there is work to do on the ground, be it routine maintenance or the long term work of erecting and preparing a new pavilion. It is always the same handful of people who are left to do it. I think that it is time, now that we do not have anybody to look after the ground on a full time basis, that a rota of players is drawn up to be responsible for the maintenance of the ground for a particular week.~~

There are ~~too~~ many who ~~would~~ want to play ~~and~~ ~~are prepared to put in the~~ ~~work~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~pitch~~ ~~on~~ ~~Saturday~~. ^{but not as many who want to get the pitch in a condition for play} This is not fair on the people who continually cut the field, mark the wicket or generally look after the ground and I think the burden should be divided ^{• kit more fairly} ~~more~~ ~~equally~~ ~~amongst~~ ~~the~~ ~~players~~.