

# THE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN

## Ethnic Minorities at Augustinians CC by Duncan Robinson

Representation of ethnic minorities is a very important cultural issue. It takes effect in everyday life and is also an important matter in the sporting world. It is no different at Augustinians; the club is always on the look-out for more ethnic-minority players and advertise themselves as an equal opportunities club.

Cec Charles was the first ever ethnic-minority player at Augustinians. He is of West Indian origin, so he knows a thing or two about the issue.



### **1982 Huddersfield Association Section 'A' Winners** **– Cec is second left on the middle row**

Charles is still heavily involved at the club and, along with John Harold, does most of the coaching of the juniors. He has been a very successful player over the years and only stopped playing three seasons ago when he decided he was not fit enough. He does, however, still turn out for the Sunday XI.

Charles says: "We are trying our best to bring more ethnic-minority players to the club and there are quite a few at junior level. It's just that when they reach adult age they seem to lose interest so there are not as many in the adult teams."

The situation at Augustinians is not really any different to other teams in the Halifax League. Charles explains, "We usually have three or four in the side, which, on average, is about what most sides have. We have fielded teams with more than 50% ethnic minority players, but that is not typical."

The prevailing situation, both at Augustinians and in the local area, has changed since Charles first started playing for the club. At that time there were a lot of Afro-Caribbean players in local cricket but not many Asians. The ethnic-minority players that there were tended to play together and not integrate into other teams.

However, there are now many more Asian players and fewer West Indians. There is also much more of a cross-section and ethnic-minority players are spread out over different teams.

Charles believes the reason for the drop in the number of Caribbean players is simply that, "young West Indians are not interested in playing cricket." And, despite what many might expect, he does not think that there are any more ethnic minority players now than there have been in the past.

Being the only ethnic-minority player at Augustinians when he first joined, there was always a danger of Charles being exposed to racist abuse. However, he denies that this was the case. "I never experienced any kind of racism in the Huddersfield League." He goes on, "There were two occasions after we moved into the Halifax League but it [racism] has never really been there, at least not openly."

This can only be a positive reflection on the sport as a whole and also on the local area. The leagues must take credit for drawing a very strong line on the issue.

Charles is happy that the opportunity is there for any players from ethnic minorities to get involved at Augustinians, and says he would "love to see more West Indians taking part". It is up to them because, as Charles puts it, "the door is open".