

# SAND, SHIELDS, AND SYKES CUPS!

## 15 Things You Didn't Know About Meltham Cricket Club by Rob Hardie

With Meltham Cricket Club having been in existence for over 140 years, you would expect there to have been records broken and well documented exploits. So on that premise, here are 15 facts you may not (or possibly might) know about MCC:

- 1) Joseph Brook's remarkable wicket-taking exploits of 10/8 against Bradley Mills in 1938 is a record that still stands today. This was confirmed by Drakes Huddersfield League chairman, Roger France.
- 2) Meltham Cricket Club received special civic recognition from Meltham town council in 1995. This honour was bestowed upon the club in recognition of the club's magnificent season the previous year. 1994 saw the club claim the league championship and Sykes Cup 'double' for the first time in the club's history.
- 3) The club was founded in 1867. The same year Queen Victoria and Napoleon III turned down plans for a channel tunnel!
- 4) Meltham Cricket Club is the only club in the league to have won the Sykes Cup four times in a row. This was from 1992-5.



- 5) Along with Broad Oak, Meltham's 2<sup>nd</sup> XI has won the Paddock Shield a record 11 times.

- 6) Meltham's Nirmal Nanan remains the only player to win three consecutive league batting prizes, from 1977-9.
- 7) Meltham also have the honour of boasting the only player to win three consecutive league bowling prizes - Paul Booth claiming the awards from 1997-9.
- 8) Paul Booth also holds the record for most Sykes Cup man-of-the-final awards, collecting his three awards in the victorious cup campaigns of 1992, 1993 and 1995.
- 9) Current England Test star Ryan Sidebottom received the Lodge Cup in 2001. AKA the Alec Lodge Memorial Cup, the trophy is awarded to any current or recent junior player who has made a significant contribution in any sport. Sidebottom played several games for Meltham in the 1990s.
- 10) Club vice-president Roy Kilner was made a Drakes League life vice-president in 2005 for his services to cricket. Formerly the club's captain, Kilner has held many roles at the club and is a recipient of the league batting prize twice, in 1957 and 1963.
- 11) Another hat-trick of prizes was claimed by Paul Booth, winning the Jack Gledhill trophy (all rounder of the year award) for the third time in 1999, after winning it also in 1992 and 1997.
- 12) The entire 1972 campaign was played away from home after too much sand on the pitch at Mean Lane destroyed the surface of the wicket.
- 13) The club's first Sykes Cup win in 1948 was drawn out over three days' play, Meltham eventually beating Lascelles Hall by 101 runs. It is claimed that the 1948 final, played at Fartown, saw the largest Sykes Cup final crowd in history.
- 14) Meltham Cricket Club did not appear in the local press until the 1880s; there was, however, mention of a side under the title of Meltham Mechanics Institute Cricket Club. This is possibly the original name of the club.
- 15) In a rule that was amended in 1896, it is a club regulation that nobody be allowed onto the playing surface with clogs on!