

Yorkshire at the Memorial Ground

By Pat Neal

The Memorial Ground has played host to the Yorkshire Colts on four occasions with Yorkshire being victorious on three of these. A host of future Yorkshire and England stars graced the ground.

The first game played between 7th and 8th July 1954 saw Staffordshire entertained in a Minor Counties game. The Dewsbury Reporter marked the occasion with the photo below.

Staffordshire were bowled out for 244 in the first innings with B.James taking 4 for 38. However, Yorkshire slumped to 121 all out, K.C Stockwell making 46 and having to bat again made only 127 B.C Moor scoring 53. Staffs won at 4:58pm on the second day.

In 1957 Yorkshire fared much better the side included Brian Bolus, Don Wilson, Ken Taylor, Ted Lester, Ronnie Burnett and Doug Padgett. The Lincolnshire side included the splendidly named H.M.A Cherry-Downes.

Lincs batted first and made 191 all out as Don Wilson took 6 for 49. In reply Yorkshire made 213, a lead of 22 with Padgett 84 and Taylor 58. Wilson again took the honours with 8 for 62 (match figures of 14 for 111). Yorkshire rapped up victory by 6:38pm with Padgett 56 not out.

In 1959 the MMG hosted the first ever second eleven Championship match when Warwickshire appeared between 6th and 7th May. Bolus, Lester and Wilson again appeared alongside Phil Sharpe, Jack Birkenshaw, Bob Platt and Harold 'Dickie' Bird.

Wilson again took a liking to the Mirfield wicket taking 5 for 44 as Warwickshire made 123. The Huddersfield Examiner reported of the first day that "conditions were ideal for cricket and the 100 or so spectators by noon included a member of the fairer sex in a sun suit"! Bird 52 and Wilson 40 saw Yorkshire to 185 in reply.

Wilson again starred in the second innings taking 5 for 40 Warwickshire being dismissed for 116 leaving Yorkshire 55 to win. Yorkshire ended victorious on 58 for 2.

The last Yorkshire game was between 10th and 11th May 1961 and saw a 19 year old John Hampshire appear along with John Balderstone, Peter Kippax, Mel Ryan and Tony Nicholson.

Hampshire later to become a Yorkshire and England star scored 65 and 64. Yorkshire made 269 in the first innings Balderstone (61) and Chadwick (54). The Examiner reported "Ted Lester won the toss to bat on a wicket which had been

well covered and was much firmer than might have been expected. His opening pair of J.H Hampshire of Rotherham and J.P Chadwick of Harrogate celebrated with a good century stand.”

Lincs made 202 in reply with Cherry-Downes again appearing but Kippax took the honours with 8 for 70.

Yorkshire declared in the second innings on 138 for 4 setting Lincs 205 to win but thanks to 6 for 36 from K.Gillhouley Lincs were dismissed for 141.

The Examiner commented on a strange incident in the match “there was one amusing incident when Hampshire swept Chatterton out of the ground for six, for it seemed he had damaged the ball. Closure inspection revealed however that this was not the ball from the game but a ‘find’ from a previous match.

Although the Memorial Ground has not hosted and further Yorkshire games it continues to host Cup Finals and junior Heavy Woollen district games each year.