

WHO CAN STOP HONLEY?

2nd XI 2008 Preview by Ian Hodgson

The Second XI are already in Premiership 2 and finished sixth last year so they will be hoping to cement their place and press for honours in 2008. With the juniors coming through the ranks, the seconds gained promotion to the top division two years ago, and have been consolidating their place ever since.

In a league of 14 teams, Broad Oak will be up against Honley, Scholes, Meltham, Shelley, Elland, Micklehurst, Slaithwaite, Shepley, Skelmanthorpe, Holmfirth, Golcar, Primrose Hill and Kirkburton.



Far End Lane, Honley

Who will pose the biggest threat?

Honley: Last year's 2nd XI champions, Honley will undoubtedly be the team to beat this year once again; last time around they finished with 113 points and lost only twice. If you can finish above them you have a great chance of winning the league. Last season Honley had one batsman averaging just under 40 and one in the mid-30s. However, where they caused the most damage was with the ball. J.Hinchcliffe took 57 wickets, finishing with an average of 9.05, and E.Kaye took 33 wickets at just over 16 runs apiece.

Scholes: Finishing second to Honley is certainly no mean feat, and they totaled 90 points. Aided by the batting of N.Brook, who scored 656 runs last year, they will remain a big threat. T.Brook and J.Brook both finished with impressive bowling figures.

Meltham: Rivals of Broad Oak, Meltham finished top of a mini-cluster of teams fighting it out for third place. Palmer and Holroyd both shone with the bat, averaging in the 40s, so we can expect them to be challenging this year.

Slaithwaite: After finishing fourth last year, two points better off than BOCC, they are one of several teams who can beat anyone on their day. The player to watch out for is N.West who took 31 wickets last year at an average of 12.87 and an economy rate of only 2.68 runs per over.

Shelley: Not many teams can boast having two batsmen averaging in excess of 50, but in Greaves and Eastwood Shelley have two very good run-scorers. Greaves managed a knock of 162 not out last year, which proves they have the players to take a game away from the opposition. They also had two bowlers last year averaging under 20 in Kahn, who took 38 wickets, and Wakefield who took 33.

Golcar: They ran away with the Cedar Court Conference last season with 108 points. They could make a big impact this year with a few capable batsmen, who scored hundreds last year, as well as two of their bowlers who took 95 wickets between them.

Primrose Hill: Just like Golcar, their primary concern will be to survive in the league. Their strengths are in their bowling attack with three bowlers who averaged less than 20 in 2007. Between them they took 112 wickets last season although whether they will be able to repeat that this year with better batsman facing them remains to be seen.