

COURIER SPORT CRICKET**Halifax League Centenary Spotlight: Ian Rushworth.**

Booth blossom despite start

BOOTH were all out for eight in their earliest recorded match against Ludenden Foot.

Fellow Halifax League players might unkindly suggest the club's batting hasn't improved much since but Booth's record over their 100 years in existence suggests otherwise.

Six Parish Cup triumphs — five of them in the 1960s — and several Halifax League titles, the most recent in 1987 and 1990, suggests the club has come a long way since the first days when Booth Congregational Church organised the occasional game.

According to the club's centenary pamphlet, the first matches were played at Tommy Lane along Jerusalem Lane. However, a dispute with the farmer resulted in a new ground being found near Brackens Mill which was described as "a murderous place for flies."

Booth's nomadic existence continued and grazing cows necessitated the use of a wheelbarrow and slippery shovel at some venues.

Broad Fold Park eventually became their adopted home in 1948 and much work has taken place over the years in bringing it up to standard. Former player George Woodhead recalls the efforts of the ground committee in mid-century when they decided to level the field. Stones from Pepper Hill, flags from Slade Barn Floor on Warley Moor near Fly Flatts and soil from the quarries at Moor End were brought in to complete the job.

Booth's first success came in 1900 when they won the Sowerby Division Championship. They reached the semi-final of the Parish Cup in 1904 and went one step further two years later,

going down by seven wickets to Illingworth.

After being disbanded for the first World War, Booth regrouped and joined the Hebden Bridge League in 1924, moving on to the Halifax League in 1938.

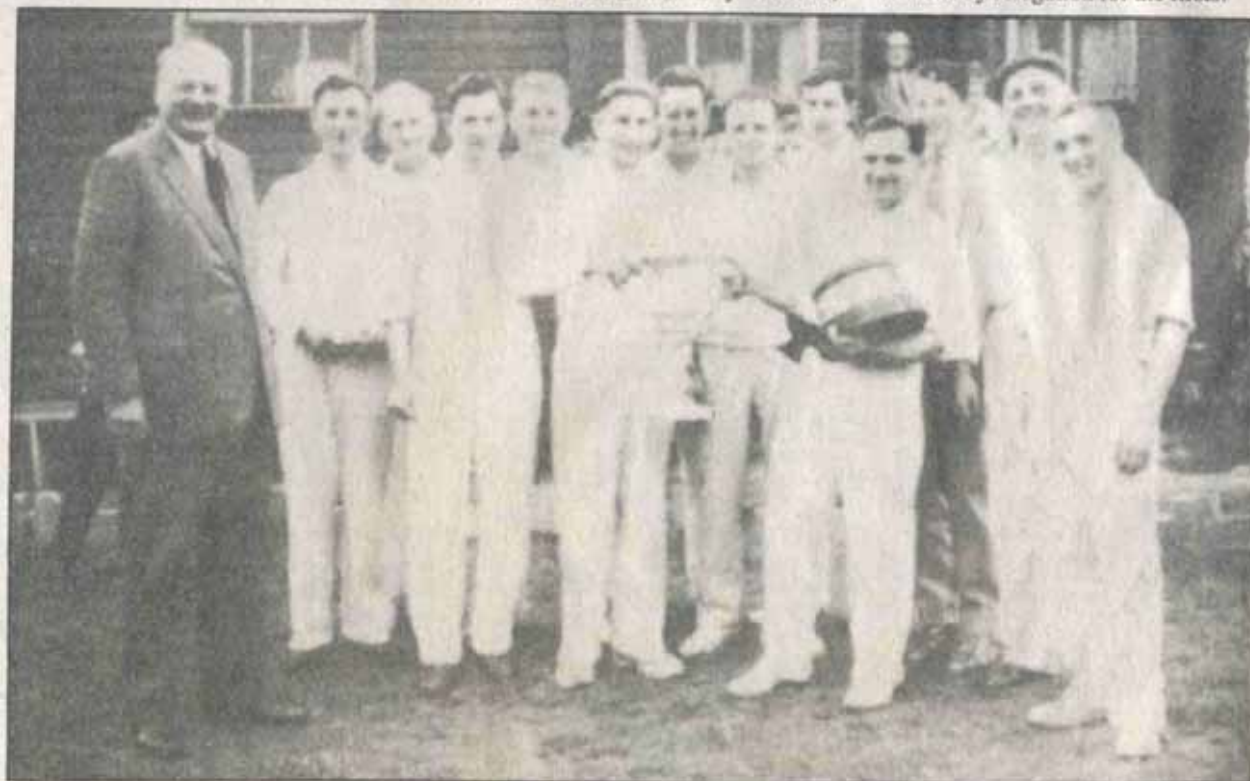
Several major trophy successes following culminating in the most success-

ful season in the club's history, in 1967, when they did the Halifax League — Parish Cup double.

Booth have also had their share of star players: Sam Patrick averaged 390 in the 1920 season before turning professional for Tong Park; Jack Corboy was a very useful batsman after joining the club in 1938; and Billy Thomas,

father of current players Morgan and Neil, is widely regarded as the best all-rounder and captain to play for the club.

Booth have already marked their centenary in fitting fashion by lifting the Crossley Shield. They are hoping the gloss will not be taken off the celebrations by relegation for the firsts.



□ 1960 PARISH CUP WINNERS . . . Booth's victorious team was (from left to right): R H Murgatroyd, J B Corboy, F Wade, D Livesey, D Thomas, W Thomas, R Walters, F twemlow, T Driver, L Patrick, J Hartley (scorer), J Nuttall, R Sadler.