

PRIMROSE HILL: the tenth in a second series of cricket histories...

Volunteers help Pip Hill grab headlines!

P PRIMROSE Hill Cricket Club began life in 1875. Their first ground was located in what was commonly known as the 'Cornfield', where St Matthew's Church now stands.

Two seasons later the move was made to a field in Cross Lane, which the club still occupies. It was very much a 'village' club in its infancy.

In the early days, Primrose Hill were known by three other monikers: the Hillites, the Pip Hillers, and the Pips. In 1891 the Lumb Cup was won and in the following year Primrose Hill became founder members of the Huddersfield & District Cricket League. However, in 1908 they lost their place in the league, not regaining it until 1920.

In 1891 the club landed its first major trophy after a one-sided Lumb Cup final against Dalton. Sykes, Dyson Ellis and Eastwood shared the wickets, as Dalton were dismissed for 57, before Ellis (27 not out) saw the Pip Hillers to a famous seven-wicket victory.

During the 1890s the club informed the police that gambling was taking place in

the adjacent football field. Unfortunately, the chief constable didn't seem very interested in the matter!

In 1893 the club employed Fred Dawson, of Lockwood, as professional at a rate of 10/6d per week, with the promise of a benefit, 'provided he is willing to attend practice three nights a week'.

Three years later, on April 1 1896, the club authorities 'resolved we order one dozen best match balls from B Harse (Oxford) at 50/- per dozen, less 12 and a half per cent for ready money and that we ask J Kennedy to lend us the money'.

In this era the club's formal title was Primrose Hill Cricket & Athletic Club. As such, it held annual athletics festivals (between 1888 and 1924) and also had connections with the village football club. It is estimated that the club had 300 card-carrying members around this time. From 1909 to 1913 Primrose Hill played in the Alliance and Council leagues, winning the Kenyon Lockwood Cup in 1913. This success spurred them on to re-applying for entry into the Huddersfield & District League. But they failed - and in the process were thrown out of the Council.

Primrose Hill formed the Huddersfield Central League in 1913 along with Almondbury, Hall Bower, St Andrew's, Salendine Nook Baptist CC, Honley Wesleyans and Bradley Mills.

The club won the 'double' in 1914, with both the 1st and 2nd XIs coming good. They achieved this in the first season of the newly-formed league. Then, in 1918 the 1st XI repeated this success by putting in a tremendous performance in the second half of the season.

Primrose Hill were one of the first clubs in Huddersfield to organise workshop cricket competitions in 1916-7.

For the duration of one summer - 1922 - Primrose Hill lost their place in the Huddersfield League to Marsden. But



LOYAL BAND: Primrose Hill's centenary committee pictured in 1975.

they would be back for good in 1923.

In 1934 the club finally won major honours in the Huddersfield & District League, finishing the season as Section B champions. It had been a hard-won trophy as Broad Oak had surprisingly beat the 'Pips' in the last game of the season. This forced them into a play-off fixture against Linthwaite. Over a 1,000 people turned up to watch Primrose Hill win the Hinchcliffe Trophy.

In 1953 Primrose Hill Cricket Club won the Greenwood Ground Trophy. This was due recognition for the quality of amenities on offer. One observer noted in the 1950s: 'There is a general atmosphere of enthusiasm prevailing at Primrose Hill, and the club may be regarded as fortunate in possessing a band of volunteer workers which is enthusiastically backed up by the lady supporters, who are most active'.



TRUMPHANT: The Walker Cup winning side of 1971



ONE CLUB WOMAN: Legendary supporter Patsy Ball



HISTORIC LINE-UP 1: Primrose Hill's Edwardian line-up from 1903.



HISTORIC LINE-UP 2: This Primrose Hill team photo dates back to 1913.

AROUND
THE
WICKET

...with
historian
Peter
Davies

