

CRICKET

Focus on - Walsden

This is the final profile in our series on Calderdale cricket clubs, produced by Dr Peter Davies of the Cricket Heritage Project at Huddersfield University.

Great Scott is the hero in long history

THE current Walsden club, which has existed continuously since 1870, had at least two forerunners.

Walsden's first recorded match was played on the land in front of the bandstand on what, since 1910, has been Centre Vale Park.

This was an away match against the 2nd XI of the Todmorden club.

Walsden have played on their current ground since 1870, but apparently had two former grounds in their earlier incarnations in the 1850s and around 1862.

These were at White Slack and at Heights Houses.

The current ground was formerly the site of Inchfield Mill dam and was leased to the club by E. Smith of Inchfield Villa. 137 members enrolled at that time and the ground was opened with a 16-a-side match on 23 July 1870.

As Walsden's major fundraising event of 1871, 'XI Gentlemen of Todmorden and Walsden' played Mr Dan Rice's 14 Clown Cricketers at Walsden on 21, 22 and 26 July.

The clowns had little skill as cricketers but entertained the crowd with their witticisms and

contortions at the fall of every wicket.

The first ladies cricket match in Todmorden was played at Walsden on 6 June 1893.

Walsden played Todmorden to raise funds for the War Relief Fund in 1914, and in support of the Centre Vale Military Hospital in 1915 and 1916, the latter match realising the considerable sum of £50.

Arguably the most dominant personality in Walsden's history is Frank Scott, the local signalmen.

In a long career he scored 6,175 runs and took 966 wickets, and his 1921 benefit fund raised £109.

During the Second World War, the Home Guard, ARP and Air Training Corps all played games on the Walsden ground.

In 1954 the Walsden 1st XI, inspired by West Indian sub-pro Everton Weekes, claimed their first major trophy, beating Middleton by three wickets in the Wood Cup final.

'A double, of sorts' was the Todmorden News and Advertiser's understated verdict on Walsden's triumphant season of 1962. The club won the Wood Cup and became champions of the Central Lancashire League for the first time.



Trophy time: The Walsden double winning team pictured with the silverware in 1962

Over the decades, Walsden's women members have made a massive contribution to the club's wellbeing.

Likewise the club's overseas professionals, including Australian Trevor Chappell and Pakistani Mohsin Khan.

FACT FILE

Founded: 1870
Ground: Scott Street
Local Landmark: Riggs Garden Centre

Greatest Moment: The 1962 'Double'
Local Hero: Frank Scott - Walsden's W.G. Grace