

Delight all round at Primrose Hill

Life starts again for cricketers

By CLARE HORTON

PLAYERS, spectators and officials at Primrose Hill Cricket Club have spoken of their delight at the club coming back from the verge of extinction.

Just last month the Drakes Huddersfield League club with a 123-year history was given little chance of survival.

The axe looked set to fall on the club — known as PPH — because of a lack of officials.

But on Saturday the sound of leather on willow was heard once again on the Cross Lane pitch as Primrose Hill played Almondbury in their first game of the season.

A last-minute cash boost from Huddersfield-based businessman Russell Evesey, whose grandfather lives in Primrose Hill, gave new life to the club.

Mr Bruce Heath, who stepped in at the 11th hour to become treasurer and general secretary of the newly named Primrose Hill Sports Club, was at the ground to see the game.

"It was relaxing and quite exhilarating to see this game actually go ahead," he said.

"It has been hectic as we tried to get everything into place. It's been a race against time."

Mr Heath, new chairman Lenny Spence, secretary Will Watson and vice-chairman Margaret Clarke, all stepped forward to help after reading in the *Times* of the club's potential fate.

"We did not want to see a club with the history Primrose Hill has go down," said Mr Heath.



Raring to go . . . Joint Captains Nigel Senior (right) and Del Smith with new chairman Lenny Spence before reborn Primrose Hill's first game of the season

"My brother used to come here and if I was in the area I would watch the old game. But, other than that, I didn't have any links with the club."

Spectator Mr Derrick Johnson said he was glad to be back at Cross Lane.

"I was very upset when it looked like the club was going to close," he said. "I have been watching the club for four or five years and they've had some very good players."

Player Darren Dennis has been with the club for more than a decade and said many of his team-mates had also been there since they were juniors.

"We have probably the best team spirit in Huddersfield," he said. "I don't think anybody here would play for another team even if the club had folded."

His brother, Glynn, also a player, said: "We had faith we would carry on going. We've had seasons in the past where things have looked bad and we've thought 'will there be a team?'"

"But we always pull through." And even the followers of Saturday's opponents Almondbury were pleased to see PPH survive.

"We are delighted they are staying

in the league," said one. "They have put a lot of work in here in the last few weeks to make sure of it."

"There is camaraderie between all cricketers and followers and it's good they've got over their troubles."

Unfortunately the team lost on Saturday, although it was a close match. Primrose Hill made 126 for 6, but Almondbury ended up 128/9.

And yesterday Primrose Hill lost again, being all out for 29 at Elland Secondary, who scored 30/0.

● Full report and pictures of Drakes Huddersfield League matches