

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

By Rowan

TO SAY THAT New Road Sunday School, Rastrick, is unique, is only half the story. This week we look back forty years to 1937. It was a year, out of many successful ones, when New Road won everything in sight in the Huddersfield and District Cricket Association.

It was the year when both first and second teams came good, and between them they won the 1st Division Championship and the Lumb Cup, the 2nd Division Championship and the Armitage Shield.

Twenty-two players are on the picture (in white) and while death has taken its toll there are happily many still with us.

The four players on the back row from left to right are Frank Horner, Sidney Wade, Willie Redmond and Irvine Edley. Sidney was killed in action in North Africa, Irvine died suddenly on May 11, 1963.

Middle row, left to right, are Jim Horner, now living at Hepworth, Ernest Armitage (deceased), Edgar Horner, who later became captain of Rastrick in the Huddersfield League (under his leadership the club won the Sykes Cup for the only time in its history), Clifford Sykes, who also joined Rastrick and became a fielder renowned for his reflex action as many Huddersfield League batsmen remember to their cost.

Wilfred Armitage (deceased) is next to Herbert Horner who is still alive and well, and living at Lane Head, Brighouse, while to his right is Dick Lister, who was killed in the war that was soon to follow these happy days.

Next is Tommy Redmond (deceased) followed by Norman Holroyd, who became director of a well established road haulage company, and captain of Meltham golf club. The last white shirted figure on the middle row is Charlie Horner, the youngest of the Horner family who have contributed so much to the sporting life of the village.

He also played for both New Road and Rastrick and was a fine all rounder. The front row, from the left, shows Harold Walker, a first rate batter, who died earlier this year at St Annes, where he had gone to live with his family about 1958. Next is Clifford Walker, a member of a well known Elland Upper Edge family, now living at Holmfirth. Then come the

four Bottomley brothers, Albert, Arnold, Frank and Fred. Not one has survived the intervening forty years, but they were a tower of strength in their day, not only on the cricket field, but to New Road School which still remains a power of good for the area.

To complete the line-up of players is Harry Sutcliffe (deceased) who remained a faithful Rastrickian all his life, and Harold Keene, still living in Rastrick, who was a useful cricketer and no mean performer with a billiard cue.

The three officials on the front row are (left to right) Mr John William Bottomley, the father of the Bottomley brothers, Mr Arthur Reeve, who was Mayor of Brighouse, 1933-1935, and Mr John Henry Ramsden.

New Road has never lacked the faculty for laughing even at their own expense. The story goes that a staunch member of this independent Sunday School joined the army in the first world war. He went before a recruiting officer who asked what religion he was. He was a little hesitant so the officer prompted him with "Church of England?" — "Roman Catholic?" — "Methodist?" to which he said "No" every time. "Well dammit man — what are you?"

To which our friend replied "Ah'm a New Roader".

Mr Joe Garside, third from the left back row, remained a cricket lover all his days. Once at a cricket dinner the coffee stage had been reached. The young waitress said to him "Black or white, sir?". He was busy talking cricket and he said "Black".

As she moved away he saw his coffee and called out "ere owd on, lass, ah s'all want some milk in it."

There is a great good humour throughout the world of cricket. Wilfred Bottomley, present secretary of New Road, who gave years of splendid batting service to New Road, and Brighouse in the Bradford League, recalled when Alan Shackleton was batting for Brighouse. He played a shot with real vigour and as a result his cap fell off on to his wicket and removed a bail. Quickly Alan picked up his cap and replaced the bail com-

menting to the umpire "Windy, ain't it!" — the stony faced umpire growled "Aye so it is, mind it doesn't blow it off ageean on the way back to pavilion".

One of the characteristics of New Road is to go out and play the game hard — to win in fact. There is the story of Duggie Swallow the New Road wicket keeper which illustrates the New Road philosophy. The heat was on, the opposing batsman was haring to the safety of his crease, the ball flashed in and struck him, he stumbled and fell, dislocating his shoulder. Now Duggie was well versed in first aid, and cricket as well. He retrieved the ball, stumped his man, then went to his assistance, in that order.

The club was formed in 1896, and has played on the same field at Badger Hill ever since. Since that date only four presidents have presided over the fortunes of this cricket club with the will to win.

They are Mr John Thornton 1896-1930, Mr Arthur Reeve 1930-1965, Mr Albert Bottomley 1965-1975, and the present incumbent, Mr Harold Green former head of Calderdale Parks and Cemeteries.

New Road joined the Huddersfield and District Cricket Association in 1917. It took them six years to get off the mark when they won the Lumb Challenge Cup in 1923, a trophy they have won seventeen times, including this year.

The championship trophy, which is the Combination Challenge Cup, has been won by them twenty-two times, including this year. In 1959 they were the first division champions, nothing unusual in that, they had been champs ten times before, but what followed will never be surpassed. They made it a hat-trick the two following years. In 1962 they repeated it, which took them to 1964, but they hadn't run out of steam. They won it yet again in 1965, which means that they had performed the extraordinary feat of being champions seven years on the trot.

But, then, what can you expect from a club that, in 1937, set their sights on every trophy in sight and won them?



The will to win