

DEVASTATING BLOW TO CRICKET CLUB



LIFE MEMBER Leslie Forester in action on the silt covered cricket field.

FINANCIAL AID from the Sports Council is a strong possibility following the devastating flood damage at Todmorden Cricket Club.

And there is "just an outside chance" that some cricket may be played at the Centre Vale ground before the end of the season.

These assertions were made this week by the Todmorden chairman Richard Crossland.

"The recovery process is only just beginning although a tremendous amount has been done already by a massive voluntary effort," he said.

The beautiful Centre Vale ground was not spared as the flood water hit Todmorden last week. On Wednesday the ground was immersed completely in five feet of filthy water and as the flood water subsided deep patches of mud covered the playing area.

What has happened in the initial five days following the flooding has by any standards been amazing. Some of the volunteers have been spending 12-13 hours at the ground in the monumental task of clearing up. The chairman has led by example and his spirit and "mucking in" attitude has been taken up by an army of committee-men, players, members and non-members, old and young, male and female.

And with a hired pump, dumper trucks loaned kindly by Robert Marshall and Roy Lord; barrows, shovels and squeejees loaned by Rochdale firm H.

Rothwell, much of the horrible mess has gone.

The square was the top priority and this was cleared last Thursday. And from then on it has been non-stop pumping, hosing, shovelling, sweeping. By Tuesday most of the thick mud had been removed from the playing area. It has been estimated that over 200 tons of mud have been moved.

"Even at this early stage it can be said the damage to the ground and property is considerable," said Mr Crossland.

"The total cost cash-wise is difficult to try and estimate. On the playing side we can say that each time a home fixture has to be played away as was the case last weekend, the net cost per match will be around £200," he said.

Technical experts have been called in and have taken samples of turf from the square and silt samples to check for damaging chemicals. The representative from Rigby-Taylor (horticulturalists) did however seem optimistic when he visited the ground on Monday.

Sowerby MP Donald Thompson was at the ground along with the Sports Minister Mr Neil MacFarlane, and in turn they have informed the Sports Council of the "serious position."

Members of the Lancashire League Executive visited the ground last Friday and were "horrified" by what they saw. The league have promised every co-operation to assist the club and the Lancashire League were holding an emergency meeting this week to discuss the problem.

It is expected that a firm decision will be made on the rest of

LATE NIGHT EXTRA!

Todmorden's Trophy in last ball drama

By PETER WHITE

ONE nerve-wracking moment when Haslingden lost their heads and Todmorden kept theirs means the Martini Trophy will rest at Centre Vale for the next 12 months.

The competition is only three years old, but it's doubtful if its predecessor, the Worsley Cup ever produced a more dramatic finale than last night's, cricket by moonlight climax at Bent Gate.

With the street lights long since switched on, houses in the neighbourhood illuminated and the nearby motorway all lit-up, Todmorden's moment of triumph came shortly after 8.45 pm in the sort of light where even the scores were having difficulty seeing their books.

Todmorden actually won because they had one less wicket down than the home team, scoring 168 for seven against Haslingden's 168 for eight in 48 overs.

But that wasn't the only twist in one of the most incredible climaxes I have ever witnessed to a cricket match.

The winning run came in the sort of circumstances usually found only in the pages of fiction.

Seven runs were scrambled from the first five balls of the final over by Tony Greenwood and John Brierley, leaving one needed to tie the scores from the last.

Rod Taylor bowled, Tony White went for a stumping and broke the wicket, but Greenwood was still in his ground. As Haslingden claimed and froze, Brierley scampered down the wicket and the batsmen crossed to claim victory.

A clearly disconsolate White, who had generally kept wicket so well, said: "I went for the stumping, then tried to grab a stump for the run out, but the umpire said he had made his ground."

While the Todmorden batsmen danced off the pitch, Haslingden's numbed players surrounded the umpire, clearly unable to believe they had really lost. After the game, however, there were no complaints from the dressing room, just a definite air of depression that the Trophy had slipped through their fingers.

Haslingden's Bobby Grimshaw, in fact, sportingly admitted that Brierley had made his ground and the umpire's decision was right and Grimshaw

was holding at square leg.

There were thoughts that Greenwood might not have actually touched down at the other end before beginning his celebrations, but independent witnesses vouched for him and he, himself, had no doubts.

Albert Ross faced 75 balls for 18 runs, but although Haslingden tightened the screw, 22-year-old Brian Heywood again distinguished himself.

The hero of the semi-final, Heywood was the game's top scorer with 58, including some glorious boundaries, and he picked up a £59 collection to crown his greatest moment in League cricket so far. We are going to hear a lot more about this young batsman, whose efforts brought him seven fours.

Ian Smith scored 27 before being bowled by Haslingden's most impressive attacker, Alan Barnes and professional Rod Estwick 14 after surviving a strange run out decision. He was given out, only for the umpire to realise that the unfortunate White had not broken the stumps and he changed his decision — rightly.

It was slow going, but a timely acceleration led to that remarkable finish.



■ All smiles from the Todmorden players as they celebrate their Martini Trophy triumph.

Earlier Haslingden had resumed their innings at 32 for one in cold, gloomy condition, and it couldn't have been easy for them with four interruptions for rain.

Skipper Brian Knowles, who hit one six and five fours in his 46, must have been kicking himself for a rather lacksadical shot to give an early catch in the gully to Todmorden captain Phil Morgan, who also took a brilliant effort at slip.

Alan Massicks took over from Knowles and played a fine innings for his side, scoring 41 against a two-man attack of Estwick, who tended to be erratic, and Mike Hartley. The latter had figures of two for 11 from 10 overs and finished with a highly creditable five for 61.

Another fair crowd turned up in poor condition, paying an extra £329 to take the total gate receipts to £1,212.

HASLINGDEN 168 for 8, TODMORDEN 168 for 7.

HASLINGDEN: B Knowles c Morgan b Estwick 46, Bentley c Whitehead b Hartley 11, M Ingham b Hartley 7, J Entwistle c Morgan b Estwick 4, A Massicks b Hartley 41, M Grindrod c Estwick b Hartley 17, I Austin c Smith b Estwick 10, R Taylor not out 11, R Grimshaw b Hartley 8, A Barnes not out 2, extras 11; total (8 wks) 168.

Bowling: Estwick, 24-6-96-3; M Hartley, 24-4-61-5.

TODMORDEN: P Morgan c White b Taylor 11, A Ross b Barnes 18, B Heywood c White b Taylor 58, D Whitehead c Ingham b Barnes 3, I Smith b Barnes 27, Estwick b Taylor 14, J Brierley not out 12, M Hartley c White b Barnes 6, T Greenwood not out 5, extras 4; total (7 wks) 168.

Bowling: Bentley, 17-3-53-0, R Taylor, 16-2-54-3, A Barnes, 15-4-47-4.

*A super moment
Sawley seems to
have captured the
mood!
I can still remember
knowing why he completed
the last run because
when Tony crossed the
ball he dismissed me
and lost.*