

The brothers Beck do battle

ONE THING is certain when the Beck brothers Paul and Steven do battle in tomorrow's Parish Cup final at Sowerby (1.30) — their mum Eileen will be doing plenty of clapping.

Mrs Beck is not only her sons' No 1 fan but a great admirer of local cricket and would probably be going to Sowerby even if neither Triangle nor Sowerby Bridge were in action tomorrow.

"I like local cricket and I like to clap good play whether it is for my lads or anyone else."

Mrs Beck, who lives at Pellon Lane, Halifax, is well aware, however, of the importance of tomorrow's game to her sporting sons.

Steven (30) lines up for Triangle while Paul (41) takes his place in the Sowerby Bridge side and their mother says: "I am very proud of them both."

"When I watch them play I can't help thinking how proud my husband Geoff, who died 14 years ago, would have been."

Like every good mother Mrs Beck stays absolutely neutral when it comes to supporting her sons.

"I never watch one of them two games running. I always say 'it is your turn next'."

"Up to last year they didn't do very well when I went to watch them and I thought I was putting the mockers on them. But I will definitely be going to the cup final."

The late Geoff Beck played for Wesley and then became an umpire in the Halifax Association. Steven

and Paul played much of their early cricket with Halifax at Thrum Hall. Steven, a number six bat and occasional bowler, switched to Triangle three years ago while Paul has been a prolific runmaker for the likes of Copley, Illingworth, Elland and Ilkley before moving back into the Halifax League for his second spell

with Bridge a couple of seasons ago.

Both have also made their marks in other sports, Steven as Halifax snooker champion and Paul as a top-notch goalkicker for Old Crossleyans rugby union team and a more than useful soccer player.

Honours have been fairly even so far in games involving the brothers over the last two summers, both on a team and personal level, but there has been little talk about what might happen tomorrow.

Steven said: "I see Paul on Sunday mornings at my mum's house and we usually discuss the

previous day's cricket. But the subject of the cup final has not really been raised.

"Paul is a good player — probably slightly better than me — but it all depends on who does what on the day.

"The teams are very similar in strength but overall I think we are a

little stronger and more consistent."

Paul was similarly complimentary about his brother: "He is a confident player and can be a very destructive batsman when in the mood."

Sowerby Bridge were well beaten in the league by Triangle last Saturday and Paul, who disappointed with the bat after flying in from Florida at 6.0 in the morning, admits his side are underdogs.

"We are going to have to bat and bowl well and take our chances if we are to win. Triangle have had the Indian sign over us in the two league games this season and if we lose against them I think it will be very difficult to stop them completing the double.

"They are what I call a typical Halifax League side. They have some very forceful batsmen and if two or three of them come off they can soon rattle up a good score.

"They also have a strong bowling line-up to tie you down and take wickets if, as is often the case, they have scored a fair total."

Most of the Sowerby Bridge players have not featured on centre stage before and Paul knows his experience tomorrow could be vital to the side. He has already tasted Parish Cup glory twice with Copley and once with Illingworth, winning the man of the match award twice.

Like Steven, he would love to put on a good show for watching mum Eileen.

"Win or lose, I just hope it is a good game."



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MUMS THE WORD . . . Eileen Beck will be cheering on both her sons in tomorrow's Parish Cup final even though Steven (left) plays for Triangle and Paul (right) plays for Sowerby Bridge.