

1963 S.B.C.I. CRICKETERS BUDGET £300 FOR GROUND IMPROVEMENT

SOWERBY BRIDGE CHURCH INSTITUTE have committed themselves to spending £300 on their ground at the Astleys (Tuel Lane tp) before the next cricket season starts. At a meeting of the institute's cricket section, on Monday, approval was given to improvement plans, and next week, a bulldozer will be pushing soil from the top of the slope to the bottom and smoothing out certain humps and hollows.

The "square" will not be affected, and it is expected that by the time cricket resumes, the disturbed outfield areas will be grass-covered again with the turf firm enough to withstand what wear it will receive.

The club expects to raise a large proportion of the money itself, but an application for a grant has been made to the National Playing Fields Association.

A month ago, S.B.C.I. completed their first season in the Halifax League with a place at the bottom of the Second Division and possibly wondering about their chances of re-election. There was a strong body of opinion in the Halifax League opposed to

increasing the size of the league, and, having regard to unofficial discussions which have taken place exploring the chances of forming a breakaway league of certain "elite" clubs, there is the continued possibility of a bid to reduce the league again to 20 clubs.

A first-class ground would stand very much to S.B.C.I.'s credit in any debate about rejecting their application for readmission. As indeed would the "Stute's" record in local cricket. There have been S.B.C.I. cricket teams for over 60 years. The Astleys ground was bought in 1921 when Sowerby Bridge Council took over the Institute's Albert Road ground for development as the Milton Avenue housing estate.