



Roger Littlewood pictured at crisis club Nortonthorpe

Crisis club issues SOS

By Sally Simpson

A CALL has gone out to keen cricketers to come to the rescue of a local club in crisis.

Scissett-based Nortonthorpe Cricket Club, which rode high on a wave of success throughout the 1960s and 70s, is appealing for support to revive its fortunes.

Lack of support both on and off the field has plunged the club into crisis as the new season approaches.

Over the past five years the club has seen three first team players emigrate to Australia, one pull out with a fractured arm and others simply move on to pastures new.

Club spokesman Roger Littlewood says: "These days there is not as much club loyalty and a lot of players leave in search of glory. There is a lot of

competition within the locality with a number of other clubs on our doorstep.

"The club is financially solvent, but it is the playing strength that will be the deciding factor as to whether we can go on."

Dwindling team numbers forced the club to withdraw its second team from the Huddersfield Central League halfway through last season in an unprecedented move.

With a squad of less than 20, the club has only one team entered in the league again this season.

Says Mr Littlewood: "During the 60s, the club won the championship on three occasions and took the league and cup double in 1975. It also won the Most Improved Ground trophy three times in the 1980s, but ironically we are now in desperate need of a groundsman."

"At the time the club's facilities were second to none — the

club raised the funds itself through the voluntary efforts of the people involved in the club.

"There are old stalwarts who would be turning in their graves if they could see the trouble the club is in now."

Formerly affiliated to Nortonthorpe Mills, the combined football and cricket club was sited on land held in trust for the benefit of recreational activities for the community.

The sports club has plans to improve its current facilities with a lottery grant to bring the ground into the new millennium.

The cricket club is holding a training session at the ground on Sunday, April 18 at 1pm, and players old and new are very welcome to go along.

● **Contact:** Anyone who cannot make the session but is interested in joining the club can ring Mr Littlewood on 866198, Brian Woodhead on 864453 or Shaun Hayes on 865991.