1950s

1954 First Walsden Wood Cup Win

THE NEWS AND ADV

Weekes the Walsden "Prince Charming"

The legendary Wood Cup final of 1954 between Walsden and Middleton came to an end at Copster, Warneth, on Wednesday night. To Arthur Cooper fell the honour of making the winning stroke—a four through the covers—pulling the name of Walsden on the Central Lancashire League's honours list for the first time in the club's 63 years as members of the league. At a ceremony surpassing any Wembley presentation for sincerity, Mr. William Wood—brother of the founder of the competition, the late Ald. John Henry Wood—presented Walsden skipper Len Moss with the cup.

Walsden reached the final in 1953 but were comfortably beaten by the then league leaders, Milnrow. The three Cooper brothers of the present Walsden side were members of the 1947 final team.

Mr. W. W. Grundy, president of the league, and Mr. G. Cockcroft, J.P., C.C., chairman, were among those who offered congratulations to the Walsden team as a large crowd gathered on the steps of the Warneth pavilion to watch the presentation. Moss and Middleton's captain, Harry McDougall, spoke on behalf of the teams, and Mr. J. Nelson (president) on behalf of the Walsden Cricket and Bowling Club. Mr. Nelson said that if Walsden was the Cinderella of the league, she had had her hour of happiness that night and had found in Everton Weekes an admirable Prince Charming.

The cup was later filled with champagne and passed among players and supporters before being carried to Walsden in triumph. An enthusiastic crowd had gathered in the village to welcome the team.

Walsden recovered remarkably from a 45 for five innings last Thursday to reach the suspended final of the fixture for Monday night. Everton Weekes, who had been stranded in Ireland on the Thursday, joined Jack Wilkinson, last Friday in a partnership which ended on Wednesday with Wilkinson caught at silly-mid-on by Fawkes off a McDougall delivery. This partnership put on 148 runs, of which Weekes scored 135—thus confounding the Middleton supporters who had doubted the West Indian's ability to bat at both ends. Wilkinson played probably the most valuable innings of his career and the disappointment he felt at not batting to the end must surely have been assuaged by his reception at the pavilion.

Arthur Cooper joined Weekes for only the innings through, batting paid of any idea for a collapse of the Walsden innings—although he did cause some concern during the breathtaking over from professional Price.

It would ruin Walsden's victory of its savour to endeavour from all this that Middleton were anything other than a very good side. McDougall's innings was one of the finest seen this season and Middleton's spin attack was accurate and well-supported—it is not every day they will meet a Weekes.

The match was a personal triumph for Everton Weekes, who besides his prodigious batting performance (described by many experienced strikers at the greatest ever seen) bowled, subsequently well, taking the last four Middleton wickets for seven runs.

So the game which was to have started at Rochdale on August 4th was concluded at Warneth on September 1st. The Walsden players would be well advised to keep possession of the official record of this match to show their grandchildren—verbal evidence will take some beating!

MIDDLETON

J M Hyde lbw b Weekes	0
E J Price b Cooper	17
H McDougall c Coulbe b Weekes	22
J M Fisher b Weekes	3
K Collings b Weekes	6
P Fawkes lbw b Weekes	19
A Barlow lbw b Weekes	4
W Ley c Potts b Weekes	19
A L Moss st Alb. Cooper b Weekes	6
K Crook not out	1
D Broome c Sub. b Weekes	2
Extras	1
Total	104

34 37 102 103 109 113 213 213 222 225

WALSDEN

A Sutcliffe b Fisher	7
C Potts c Price b Collings	9
Alb. Cooper st Barlow b Collings	19
A L Moss c Hyde b Fisher	4
J T Cooper b Fisher	0
K Hembrey b Price	0
J Wilkinson c Fawkes b McDougall	17
E Weekes not out	135
Art. Cooper not out	11
Extras	4
Total (for 7)	206

15 29 33 33 38 48 194

BOWLING

Walsden

	O.	M.	R.	W.
J Coulbe	20	7	52	1
E Weekes	42.5	10	83	6
A L Moss	17	5	30	0

Middleton

	O.	M.	R.	W.
E J Price	24	4	104	1
K Collings	9	3	30	2
J M Fisher	18	3	60	3
H McDougall	17	2	39	1