

Cricket club gets the woman's touch

By Helen Goodwin

HANGING Heaton Cricket Club will be getting the women's touch with the appointment of its first two female committee members.

Jo Gilbert, 39, of Derwent Road, and Sue Gray, of Ullswater Avenue, are now fully-fledged members and are hoping to make a real difference to the club.

Jo's life-long involvement with cricket has been a real family affair - her dad and brother both played for Hanging Heaton and her nephews and son Ben, 18, do so now. On top of that, her partner Mel Dearden has been club president for the past two years.

"My family have been involved with the cricket club for years and years," she said. "My dad is cricket secretary and vice-president so it's his influence that made me want to contribute to the club's future."

Having been visiting the cricket club since she was a babe in arms, Jo, who also has a daughter, Samantha, 16, could not wait to become a member as soon as she was old enough - at the age of 18.

Being on the committee will combine Jo's interest in cricket with her aim to ensure the club's prosperous future.

"I really enjoy cricket and we've been saying for years they could do with a few



Opening up a new era: Jo Gilbert, left, and Sue Gray (130121)

women on the committee," she said. "There are certain things that we would look after better than the men - we would make sure the place was always tidy for a start!"

Although there was once a separate women's committee, that was scrapped, and for many years the club had an all-male committee.

But the male committee members did not grumble when Jo and Sue showed an interest in joining up.

"They were all for it," said

Jo. "We looked up the rules and that was it. All you had to do was be a member for a year first."

Sue, whose husband, Howard, is treasurer of the club, said: "I think there was a definite need for a female voice on the committee, it was something that needed to be put right. There are many women who are club members and they need to be represented too."

With the cricket season only spanning six months of the year, other income is

required to promote the club's prosperity, and it is in this capacity that Jo and Sue hope to make their mark.

The club has proved to be a popular venue for functions and Jo and Sue have already organised the New Year's Eve function and hosted various other events.

Jo said: "It's a cricket club and all I want is for cricket to carry on there and the club to survive, that's what I stand for."

Hanging Heaton C.C.



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