

## **Hartshead Moor CC**

According to official club publications, 'It is generally agreed that [in 1876] a party of young men first started playing cricket, under the name of Hartshead Moor Cricket Club, at the top of the Moor. Later on they obtained the use of the present field, and under the tenancy of Messrs. H. Holdroyd and Joseph Wilkinson had the use of it free of cost until almost 1900.'

It is a fact that for 129 years, the club has been known by the same name (Hartshead Moor C.C.) and played at the same venue (Highmoor Lane) – a relatively unusual occurrence in local cricket circles.

In 1886, three years after the competition had begun, Hartshead Moor C.C. joined the Heavy Woollen Cup.

After previous successes in 1894 and 1895, Hartshead Moor became champions of the Spenn Valley & District League for the third time in 1910.

In 1925 an opportunity arose to buy the ground for £350. Helped by the president of the club and a huge fundraising campaign, £200 was raised towards the cost, with a loan taken out for the remaining £150.

In the mid-1920s club officials stated that 'new accommodation' was 'imperative'. By 1928 the existing pavilion had been redeveloped.

It was opened officially on 25 August in the presence of club representatives and W. Brooke on behalf of architects Messrs. G. Castle & Son. But the weather couldn't oblige and the scheduled fixture against Heckmondwike had to be cancelled due to rain!

Women have played an important role at Highmoor Lane. This was confirmed in the Jubilee Bazaar brochure of 1926: 'Had we a book many times this size it would not be large enough to express our thanks to our ladies for the way they have helped in looking after the social side of our club.'

In 1937 plans submitted by Herbert Walker were approved to erect a 'scoring pavilion'. On 23 July 1938 the new scoreboard was opened, with a range of Yorkshire cricketing VIPs present for the occasion.

Club member J.H. Crossland offered a prize to the first batsman to record a century under the shadow of the new scoreboard, and Moor batsman Norman Mounsey wasted no time at all – hitting 102 not out on the very day the box was unveiled.

In 1940 a photograph of the 1st XI in the form of a greetings card was sent to all those who had donned military colours, with a postal order also included. The club reported that in 1941: 'We [were still] not feeling any serious effects of the War in personnel and were still able to field a useful side'.

A year later, two female members were called up and because of an increase in the amount of male cricketers being called to action, the club admitted that it was finding it difficult to raise two league teams.

After only three seasons in the Bradford Section of the Yorkshire Council, the club moved into the Central Yorkshire League in 1944.

The club scooped the Heavy Woollen Cup for the very first time in 1958. Hanging Heaton were the opponents...and Moor ran out winners by 44 runs.

In 1964 the club was on the move, this time joining the prestigious Bradford League in search of higher-grade cricket.

The hamlet of Hartshead Moor is famous for its cricket club...and also for the M62 that passes close by. The motorway opened in 1970, and three years later a service station was built, almost underneath the cricket ground.

Rather than being fearful or worried about the services coming, some club members were secretly delighted. 'At last it put us on the map!' was the reaction of one.

There were direct implications: land was lost, and this was only partly offset when, soon after, the club acquired 1,300 square yards off the Kirklees Estate.

The old pavilion (built in 1928) had to go and a new one had to be built.

On windy afternoons, with the M62 down below, Hartshead Moor can be quite a noisy ground, but the locals have got used to it. 'It is open to the elements. It's also noisy, but only at certain times,' says one player.

Instead of charging an admission fee to games, the club sells a 16-page matchday programme at every home fixture played by the 1st XI in the Bradford League.

The front cover features a photograph of the first-ever Hartshead Moor side of 1876, which demonstrates that even in the twenty-first century, the club is acutely aware of its history and heritage.

And in Leonard Squire – ex-player, club official and generous benefactor - the club boast a true gentleman stalwart.