

The Great Match – 1990 Heavy Woollen Cup Final

One of the most memorable matches in Mirfield CC's recent history was the 1990 Heavy Woollen Cup final. The tie was played out on the 5th August against Shepley at Ossett, with Mirfield eventually victorious. The triumph was particularly momentous as Mirfield had lost to Batley in the final the previous season. It was also the first time that the club had lifted the cup since 1963.

Mirfield made it into the final after a hard fought and fiercely contested semi-final victory over Skelmanthorpe (having defeated Lascelles Hall by 13 runs in the quarter-final). Mirfield completed the 50 overs with 259-4 and Skelmanthorpe responded with 149-7 before rain halted play. The game resumed the following day and went to the wire as Skelmanthorpe fell short of Mirfield's final total by just six runs. Mirfield's victory was helped greatly by the performance of Iqbal Khan, who notched up an unbeaten 141 during Mirfield's innings. Shepley made it to the final by beating the previous season's winners Batley following a convincing performance.



The final was predicted to be an extremely tight contest with Mirfield's consistency over the previous seasons matched by Shepley's ease in reaching the final. However, the match proved to be far from even as Shepley collapsed and were all out for 165, prompting the *Mirfield Reporter* to lead the sports page for the following week with the headline: MIRFIELD COAST TO CUP GLORY.

Mirfield batted first in front of an impressive crowd of 850, and completed their 50 overs with a score of 245 for 6. As in the semi-final, it was Iqbal Khan who led the scoring with 103, before he was eventually bowled by Holliday in the 25th over. Mirfield went into the tie confident, with captain Derek Johnson

claiming: "We are running into more consistent form and in our last four games we have played better than at any time this summer."

Khan narrowly missed out on the man of the match award which went to Andy Bolt, who scored 67, stumped two and caught one. Speaking after the game, an ecstatic Bolt stated: "I have been at Mirfield for 20 years, - it is my only club – so you can imagine how delighted I feel to win the cup." On what turned out to be a bad day at the office for Shepley, Kulkarni still managed to put in an inspired performance scoring 70 in just 84 deliveries, including three sixes and six fours. It was not enough though, and a solid fielding performance from Mirfield saw Shepley all out after 44.3 overs. Three of their players went for a duck including Andy Goodier, who was bowled by Khan - the final wicket to fall. Commenting on his side's downfall, Shepley skipper Geoff Gill said: "At 31-4 we had always left ourselves too much to do." Mirfield's delighted captain Johnson spoke after the match on the effort of his players: "We have a marvellous team spirit and I was proud to be their captain."

The day was a great success and the game was played out in front of a sell-out crowd that generated gate receipts of £615. The victory was a fantastic achievement for Mirfield and more than made up for the disappointments of the previous season, which had seen them narrowly lose three cup finals and the league title to Batley. Club legend Clive Brook, who incidentally captained the side that had last won the Heavy Woollen cup back in 1963, was overjoyed with the result: "The victory is particularly satisfying after our disappointment at losing all four competitions to Batley last season. Then we peaked too soon. This year it has come right at the right time."

Mirfield also went on to win the league to complete what proved to be a memorable and highly successful season for the club.