

Moorlands CC

Moorlands were originally founded as a church cricket team in 1884. Their full title was Dewsbury Moorlands Methodist Church Cricket Club and they were based at the church in West Town.

They played in the Sunday School League, and there was a strong link between church and cricket team.

In fact there was a rubric which said that in order to play, members of the cricket club had to attend either the Moorlands Methodist Sunday School or church services.

Young men were issued with an 'attendance card', which had to be stamped each Sunday they attended.

In turn, this enabled the church authorities to determine whether individual players were eligible for cricketing duty. This ritual eventually proved to be the undoing of the church-cricket club connection.

In the 1950s the relationship broke down and Dewsbury Moorlands dropped the 'Methodist Church' from their title, and went it alone.

One of the first recorded fixtures involving Dewsbury Moorlands was played at Bank Top against another local team known as Dewsbury Friends.

Moorlands won by 6 runs, but the fact that a total of only 60 runs were scored in the match tells us something about the state of pitches – and batting techniques! – in the late nineteenth century.

In terms of on-field successes, one of the club's most memorable moments came in 1935 when they defeated Brownhill at Hanging Heaton to net the Dewsbury & District League 1st XI Championship.

Over the years, the club has also boasted its fair share of personalities.

Mrs Elsie Cummings – wife of Gilbert – was tea lady and scorer at Moorlands for many years, and even helped out as umpire, giving her husband out on one infamous occasion!

From the early 1950s up to 1987, Moorlands played their home matches at Sands Lane – a council-owned pitch.

They then moved to the Memorial Ground – where they play on an adjacent field to Mirfield CC.

During the 1980s and 1990s the club engaged in a variety of fundraising activities.

The club also formed a link with a local day centre, and helped with raising money; and in 1994 the club itself was delighted to receive a bag of cricket kit from the Lord's Taverners.

In the Huddersfield Central League, the club won its fair share of silverware, and then in 1997 changed their name to 'Moorlands' to emphasise that they were actually a Mirfield-rather than Dewsbury-based club.

A year later, the club was proud to open a new pavilion.

In recent years Moorlands have struck up a fruitful relationship with Battyeford Boys Club, Mirfield Free Grammar School and Castle Hall School.

This has resulted in a constant stream of young cricketers visiting the Memorial Ground for coaching; and more often than not, they have stayed on to play junior and/or senior cricket for Moorlands.

In part, this explains why Moorlands currently have such a thriving and successful youth policy.