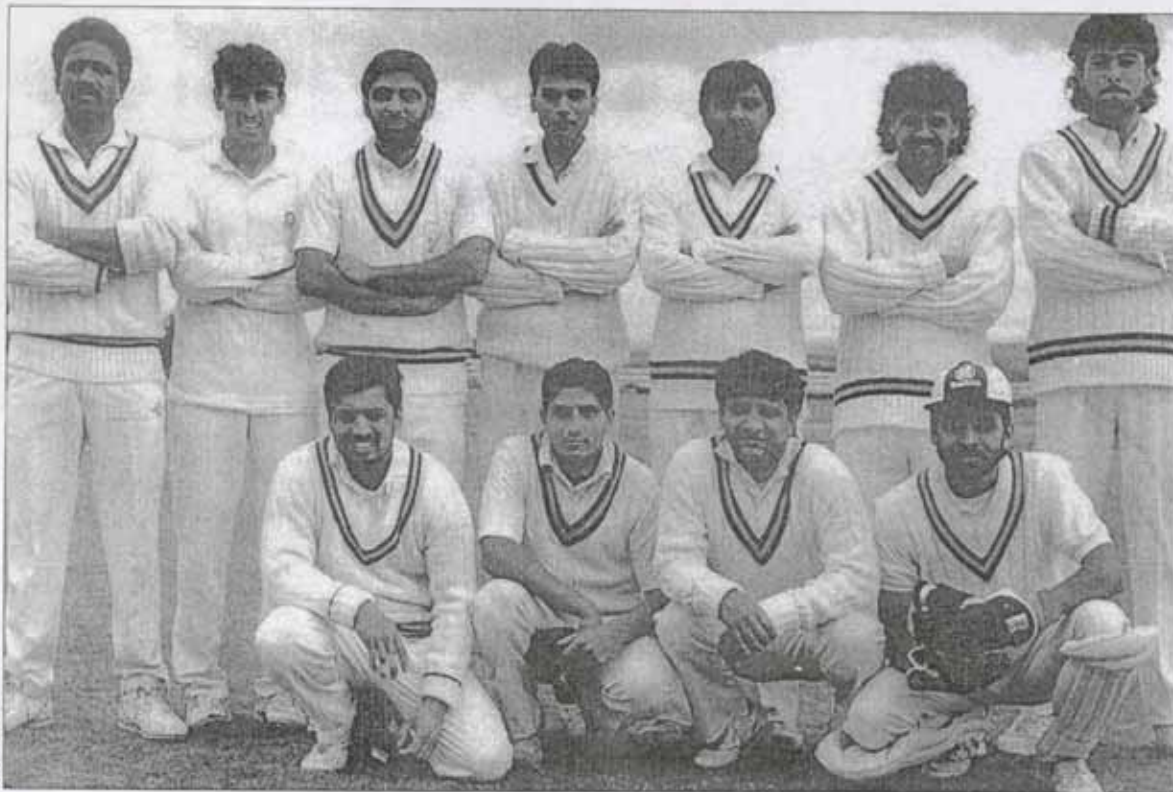


THIS week sees the start of a new feature on Cricket and the Community in Batley. The series of articles has been written by **DR PETER DAVIES**, project leader of the Cricketing Heritage of Calderdale and Kirklees, and the first one focuses on Mount CC in Mount Pleasant.

A recent photograph of the Mount CC team. (N5)



ALTHOUGH competitive cricket and a permanent home were still some way off, Mount Cricket Club was formed by seven young Asian cricket enthusiasts in 1974.

In 1977 Mount CC began their tenancy at the Kirklees Council-owned Hyrlands Park. In the same year the club took its bow in competitive cricket, joining the Dewsbury and District League.

That first season ended with a ninth-place finish in Section C after the team won six of the 20 matches they played.

After two seasons of competitive cricket, Mount CC scooped the first of many league and cup titles. The season also saw the club carry off the Dewsbury and District League Section C championship.

By 1984, Mount's second XI was starting to emulate the success of the first XI. That year saw the club bag the Dewsbury and District League Section D title.

Despite the club's continued success, Mount have always encountered great difficulty when they have tried to progress into local senior leagues.

The main stumbling block has always been the fact that their HQ, Hyrlands Park, is council-owned. Unfortunately, the playing area and facilities have not been deemed to be suitable by league inspectors.

Thus, the club has searched for other ways to give its better players a higher standard of cricket. In 1981 an

## Mounting ambitions



Mount CC celebrated their 21st birthday in 1995 with a special function. (N5)

the relationship with Howden Clough was short-lived. However, in 2002 another partnership received the green light, with Mount setting up shop with Staincliffe CC from the Central Yorkshire League.

Today, Mount stand as a wonderful example of a thriving community cricket club in action.

Dr Davies and Rob Light have co-written three books about the history of local cricket and the series is called *100 Not Out*. They are part of the £50,000 Cricket Heritage Project sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and copies are available from Dewsbury Books at Crackenedge Lane, Dewsbury.

The books are published by Sigma Press. Call 01484 473405 for more information.



Mount CC stalwart Farid Karalia.

arrangement was made with struggling Chickenley CC.

Their first XI, playing in the Central Yorkshire League, effectively became Mount CC first XI. However, the arrangement with Chickenley was not to last.

The continued success of Mount helped their efforts to recruit new players. By the mid-1990s this had enabled a new team to be formed - which joined the Wakefield Union Cricket League.

The club's first XI had also joined a new Leeds-centric competition, the Barkston Ash League, in search of a higher standard of cricket.

The continued success of the club has meant that Mount awards nights have become very special events. They are regularly attended by big-name guests and large crowds. The local community holds the club in great esteem.

A staggering 1,100 people attended the 1999 awards night,



Ismail Dawood - the first homegrown Asian player to become a first-team regular for Yorkshire - is an old boy of Mount CC. (N5)

Commission of India.

Once more in pursuit of a better standard of cricket, the club left the Dewsbury and District League in 1997 and joined the Dales Council League. Junior development has been a

prime concern at Mount throughout the club's history.

In the late-1990s great strides were taken to ensure that

quality coaching could be provided. At the end of one season a staggering 20 Mount players enrolled on the ECB coaching course.

The success of the club's junior development programme has also been recognised by Yorkshire County Cricket Club.

In 2002 the remarkable success story of Mount CC was brought to national attention via a special feature article in the highly acclaimed *Observer Sport Monthly* magazine.

After the club's unqualified success in the Dales Council, Mount once again took the opportunity to provide higher-class cricket for its players in 2001.

This time they linked up with Howden Clough CC of the Leeds/West Riding League. Unfortunately,