

DENBY CC

HOME SWEET HOME



Today, Denby Lane stands as one of the most idyllic venues in the Huddersfield Central League. It has all the hallmarks of a traditional village ground: a parish church - rebuilt in 1845, and then again in 1957 - just over the boundary rope, a pub round the corner, and fields and farmhouses all around (which meant that at the height of the recent foot-and-mouth epidemic, the ground was out of bounds).

And when early evening arrives, so do the shadows. The ground has a couple of distinguishing features: the impressively neat white dry stone wall that acts as the boundary on three sides and the stern notices - DOG OWNERS: PLEASE PREVENT YOUR DOG FROM FOULING THE CRICKET FIELD (at the main entrance) and NO CRICKET BOOTS IN THE TEA ROOM (by the entrance to the said building).



The tea room is spacious and the price list says that a full tea costs £2.50. It is home to a TV, a set of black boards displaying 'match sponsor' information, and a selection of team photos - some colour and some black and white (the most interesting is a small pic of 'Upper Denby C.C. - 1927').





An additional notice says that there are no 'local rules' at Denby Lane. The green changing-room block and a pair of blue-coloured garages are sited next door. Club spokesman Howard Moxon knows that the Denby ground is a popular one: ***'The church is a lovely backdrop and opposition teams like coming here.'***

There has also been a steady improvement in the quality of facilities. Moxon says: ***'The changing rooms were put up in 1960, the tea room in 1964, and as the club has acquired modern machinery, the playing area has benefited. Everyone at the club chips in to help the groundsman, and on a fine day we've got a good scoring wicket here. It's not unusual for 500 runs to be scored in a match.'***



The Cricket Club is in fact part of Denby Sports and Social Club (the village football team play their home matches in an adjoining field). And when the overs are up, everyone adjourns to the nearby George Inn, where the landlord puts on a wonderful post-match spread for the Denby XI and the opposition.





The notices pinned to the tea-room wall are also illustrative: one advertises a memorial game, another an end-of-season presentation evening, and a third publicises the forthcoming harvest festival - to be held at the George. This more than anything emphasises the rural context in which Denby C.C. operates.



This is the gate that welcomes you to the Denby Lane ground...



...and this is where all the basic maths goes on!

