

EMLEY CRICKET CLUB: the 19th in a fascinating series of cricket histories...

# Ringers make life difficult in 'friendly'

AROUND  
THE  
WICKET

...with  
historian  
Peter  
Davies



□ **AMONGST THE SILVERWARE:** Pictured above left, the 1972 side which claimed the double (Central League Section A title and Allsop Cup) and right: a team line-up from 1988 league campaign.

After 1903, when Emley FC was founded, the cricket club and the local football club both played in the same field in Upper Lane (as they would also do later on).

But the soccer players moved to a ground near Chapel House farm - leaving the cricketers in sole possession - and went on to play at several other fields before returning to what came to be known as the Welfare Ground.

At the start of the twentieth century, there is also evidence of another cricket club in Emley - 'The Noncoms', a group of chapel-goers who were members of the local Nonconformist League.

They played their home games at a laid ground at the bottom of Kirk Hills (the Tyburn Lane side) in a field farmed by Albert Parker.

A number of local men starred for this outfit, including Henry and Herbert Hardcastle, Thomas and Earnest Mathewman, Joe Parker, Hugh and Ashley Pattison, and Harry Stafford.

In 1906 the local coal merchant, George

Stringer Snr (an ex-Emley cricketer himself), opened a new pavilion at Upper Lane.

This was good news for Emley Cricket Club, who up to this point had had to rely on a simple wooden hut known as 'The Tent'.

We are told that in 1909 the Emley soccer XI contained 10 miners from the Park Mill and Emley Moor collieries, so it would not be surprising if the cricket club also attracted its share of miners.

A fixture that took place in 1913, against the Borough Police, was probably the most famous in Emley's history.

The game took place right at the end of the season, on 24 September, and it became an almost mythical occasion because the boys in blue managed to persuade the famous triumvirate of Huddersfield and Yorkshire cricketers - George Herbert Hirst, Wilfred Rhodes and Schofield Haigh - into becoming bobbies for the day. Or ringers by any other name!

You can just imagine the reaction of the Emley cricketers when they saw the legendary trio warming up before the match! Anyway, the Borough Police won the game

comfortably: they made 102-6 declared, and then bowled Emley out for 68 (with Hirst, Rhodes and Haigh no doubt among the wickets).

In 1924 Emley joined the Huddersfield Central Cricket League, replacing Hepworth, but withdrew, only eight years later in 1932.

They rejoined the Central League in 1938 and went on to win the Allsop Cup in 1941, the second summer of the war.

More silverware followed in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, and in 1990 the club groundsmen joined the party, scooping the H Robinson Trophy for most improved venue in Huddersfield Central League.

A flurry of trophy victories in the 1990s encouraged the club to apply to join the Huddersfield Cricket League, and this eventually happened in 2004.

The history of Emley Cricket Club has been dominated by personalities such as big-hitter Ted Gill, long-serving club secretary Mrs Moxon, and talented cricketers Roger and Matthew Wood - with Matthew going on to play for Yorkshire.



□ **CLUB STALWART:** Above: an 'unknown' batsman from the early 20th century. Far left: this historic line-up dates from the late 19th Century and includes the Rector, the Rev E Sutton and Left: a special presentation to the legendary Mrs Moxon, who was club secretary for over 40 years

