

## SKELMANTHORPE CC

# HOME SWEET HOME

*Welcome to Skelmanthorpe Cricket Club. Please note these are private grounds and cars are parked entirely at the owners' risk. Please keep dogs on a lead. No ball games whilst a match is in progress.*

*Thank you for your support.*

[Notice at Lidgett Lane]



Skelmanthorpe's impressive ground on Lidgett Lane is situated just off the B6116 from Huddersfield into Scissett. You see a charity shop, a church, an exotic restaurant called Volare, and also the community fire station as you near the ground.

Three houses and three bungalows look out over the venue on Lidgett Lane - and they, like the many passing cars, are in serious danger every time a big-hitting batsman gets to the crease.



At Lidgett Lane, there is invariably a sizeable crowd - spread right round the boundary's edge. Club officials are pretty busy on matchdays: collecting gate money (£1 per person), collecting beer money for the batsman who's just made a fifty, and vending raffle tickets.



There are advertising hoardings by the main entrance and others on the boundary's edge. These adverts enable Skelmanthorpe to pay their professional. Overall it is a very pleasant setting - up on a level and set back from the road. However, seasoned cricket-watchers say that on a cold day, it is *very* cold.



Neat and compact, the playing area undulates slightly in one corner. There is a narrow ditch around the perimeter of the ground, but grass now grows there. Locals claim that the playing surface is small compared to some in the Huddersfield area, but that the quality of the outfield has improved in recent years.



The white-sheeted sightscreens are on wheels, and there's also white gravel and a whitewashed dry stone wall to further enhance the batsmen's vision. Benches are dotted all around, which gives the place a nice professional feel.

According to one Club official, the Skelmanthorpe square is 'well kept and looked after'. One Sunday in 2002, the home side made 320-8 and the opposition totalled 313 - so there are plenty of runs to be had. There are three wickets, plus one artificial strip.



The garage under the handsome scoreboard contains everything a local league groundsman could wish for: mower, wheelbarrow, spades, rakes, bits of wood and rope, and thousands of white paint pots. The arena is surrounded by pretty fields and farm tracks, and according to one ex-Skelmanthorpe groundsman, 'it is a lovely little venue'.



The pavilion is an attractive bungalow-style wood building, with a smart patio in front (usually inhabited by wine-drinkers). The cricketers' tea is laid out on small, neat tables, there's always homemade food on the agenda (not too long ago, a full tea cost £2, a salad tea £1.50, a piece of cake 30p, and tea or coffee 25p), and the beer mats carry the Carlsberg logo.



On the walls are pictures of former pros, framed photos of famous XIs, and a limited-edition souvenir plate (complete with view of the ground - only 200 were produced).

The pavilion was extended, the changing rooms were improved, and showers were installed after Skelmanthorpe joined the Huddersfield League. And a tricolour 'S.C.C.' flag (red, white, blue) is hoisted on a pole just outside. As one visiting spectator says: 'Skelmanthorpe give off the impression that they are an extremely aspirational club.'

