

Lee Booth: Computer Genius

Profile by Toby Lock

With a name alone that is synonymous with the club, Lee Booth is one of seven Booths to have played for Thurstonland CC, a family tradition that has remained for as long as he can remember.

Being practically born and bred with Thurstonland cricket in and around him, Lee rose through the ranks as skipper in the junior teams. Nowadays, he coaches future Thurstonland cricket stars in tandem with long-term club man Andrew Pearson.



Lee made his 1st XI debut in the early 1990s while also playing with the 2nd XI. With the seconds, he averaged over 25 runs a game, and also hit a century. Not just a batsman though, he took over 50 wickets in his 76 games. He was also the club's leading wicket-taker for three years running from 2002-2004, a streak that has helped him to 6th in the all-time club standings.

The man who lives only a six-hit away from Thurstonland's picturesque Marsh Hall Lane ground became a regular in the 1st XI in the early to mid-1990s, and took over the captaincy eight years ago from longstanding skipper David Oldham. Lee led the side to the Allsop Cup final in 1999 and to 2nd place in the Huddersfield Central League Premier Division in 2000.

However, arguably his greatest moment came in July 2001, when, struggling at 24-3 away against Emley, he and batting partner John Eastwood put on a record 4th-wicket partnership of 167 runs; a record that still remains to this day. Lee's contribution of 67 runs, before falling lbw, was just one run away from his then record score for the 1st XI.

With his current record score of 98 not out, he stands at 8th in the club's all-time run-scoring list, having bagged just under 4,000 runs for the team. Emley's run chase in the aforementioned match also saw him take his 200th 1st XI wicket.

Things weren't all plain sailing for Lee in 2001, though. He went on an unfortunate run of losing 12 out of 16 tosses, a record surely only matched by Michael Vaughan himself! The 2001 season also saw Thurstonland CC win the Huddersfield Central League Premier section for the third time in the club's history, 14 years on from their first league success.

Outside playing cricket, Lee puts his computer genius to good use as webmaster of not just the Thurstonland club website, but also the Cricket History of Calderdale and Kirklees and official Huddersfield Central Cricket League and Junior League websites.

With brother Neil captain of the 2nd XI, mother Joyce Vice-President of the Huddersfield Central Cricket League, and young cousin Jack rising through the ranks, Lee can't help but feel a strong family connection to the club. Not only that, but his father also played for Thurstonland.

So naturally, Lee is helping the family tradition continue by coaching the Under-13 side with the help of Andrew Pearson, and Thurstonland's record of always having an Oldham or Booth in the 1st XI since 1992 looks pretty safe.