



FOUR PLUS ONE. Batley cricket chairman Richard Illingworth and secretary Donald Thompson with the four first-team trophies plus the Crowther Cup won in the amazing summer of 1989.

Four-cup Batley

ALTHOUGH Gomersal threatened to emulate it last season only to fall at the final hurdle in the Council play-offs at Soothill Batley's unprecedented feat of winning all four cups plus the second team Crowther trophy seems certain to remain in the record books for many years.

What made it even more remarkable is that in all four competitions poor Mirfield were the runners-up.

First trophy to be gathered by David Dove, at 24 the league's youngest captain, and his men was the HW Cup at Ossett when Mirfield fell 42 short through Bob Cooper's 72no and Elliott Noble's 4-35.

Next came the one-sided Hampshire Trophy at Altofts where Mirfield were caught on a drying pitch.

In the league game between the sides on August 26 an amazing last over saw Batley score 15 off the last over from Mirfield captain Russell Heritage to grab three points in a tie in which David Lovell's 70no proved decisive.

Then came the memorable final weekend of the season. Gomersal were seen off by 110 runs at the Mount for a six-point margin and the following day Mirfield were trounced by seven wickets in the Council final at Glasshoughton with Dove hitting an unbeaten 90 and Paul Blakeley 55.

Just seven days earlier they had pulled through the semi-final at Darfield by one run when

the South Riding side had needed only four from the last over.

It was a triumph for team spirit. All-rounder Blakeley was third in the CYL batting averages with 659 runs at 54.91 and second in the bowling with 41 wickets at 13.29 while Lovell (ninth) had 727 runs at 40.38 and Dove (12th) 710 at 37.36 emphasised the batting strength.

The form of Noble in the second-half of the season after returning from college gave a decisive edge to the attack with David Bruce, 42 and a key figure in Solly Adam's league championship side two years earlier plus John Prentice chipping in with invaluable wickets.

The left-arm spin of Paul Heaton and Lovell gave variety to the attack while with the bat Cooper and Richard Sidle scored vital runs.

Perhaps two players more than anybody typified the spirit. Reserve keeper Paul Wilman turned in excellent performances in the HW and Hampshire finals when regular keeper Tim Rukin was unavailable and Neil Harrison, who though having a dismal season with the bat compensated with his superbly consistent fielding.

In the second team Gordon Kershaw's 9-26 routed Scholes for 54 to win the Crowther Cup.

Hopes of a sixth trophy were dashed by Ossett whose seven wicket Wheatley Cup final win ensured the Batley of 1989 were at least human.

SPORT

PETER SNAPE sees all-conquering Batley win CYL title and Council play-off to climax amazing four-cup season

Virtues on parade

BATLEY showed many of the virtues that have aided them in good stead this season when they finally clinched the Central Yorkshire League title by beating Gomersal by 40 runs at Mount Pleasant on Saturday.

For again it was teamwork that won the day for while captain David Dove, Dave Lovell and all-rounder Paul Blakeley were among the runs, as so often this summer it was good to see Neil Harrison score good at last.

Harrison has had a remarkable season with the bat since moving from Dewsbury but he has kept his place because of the quality of his hitting in the deep, a department in which he has few rivals in the league.

After Luke and Lovell had carefully built the framework of a winning total on a greenish pitch with a fair amount of bounce — disturbed only by a sports editor — the obvious better, walking behind the arm — with an opening stand of 40 Harrison helped his captain to add 70 for the second wicket as he produced his season's big score of 45.

There were some fine shots especially on the legside and as last he showed the Dubsby which made him so promising at Ripon. Then before eventually being trying to hit Gary Thompson, the 19-year-old who succeeded Gomersal's fate

with a fine spell which brought him 3-43 when the side was on. Then after Elliott Noble, as so often since he returned from college, had made the initial breakthrough by persuading the free-scoring Nigel Harrington to edge his stail hat to Dove it was John Prentice who took command.

The mainstay had not had the best of luck with injuries but with David Bruce resting a broken strain and Blakeley for some not required Prentice grabbed the opportunity with a 3-1 spell in four overs that virtually sealed the match.

He persuaded Eddie Walker to give Harrison a sharp catch at point and then grabbed the prize wicket of New Zealand Martin Pringle who has been such an able deputy for Ron Hart this summer.

After scoring 300 runs in his last four outings Pringle edged Prentice to Hazard at short leg and when Russ Greenwood mistimed a drive to mid-off at 23-4 the game was virtually over.

Then it was the turn of spinners Lovell and Paul Heaton, who have provided valuable back-up all season without being regularly in the front line.

They got their chance because Dove did not want to risk the obvious light as he sought to end the night season in the best possible way.

And well they rewarded his faith by taking the remaining six wickets as Gomersal, sensing the inevitable, tried a range of ambitious end-of-season strokes though there was time for Thompson to show his promise with the bat and veteran Bill Duncrope, recalled to the ranks in the closing stages of the season, to top scores with 25.

After hearing at bedtime that Murfield had been unable to bowl last East Yorkshire and that the title was there on a superior average there was a certain anticlimax about the second half with Gomersal never showing the determination that had opened Murfield the previous week.

Murfield were left with the slight consolation that the title was not settled by the extra few points Batley had won so controversially against Liverdale three weeks before.

BATLEY 1st XI: R. Cooper, P. Heaton, J. Prentice, D. Dove, D. Lovell, P. Blakeley, N. Harrison, G. Thompson, B. Duncrope, M. Pringle, E. Walker, R. Sidle, T. Rukin.

Team of the season: D. Dove, D. Lovell, P. Blakeley, N. Harrison, G. Thompson, B. Duncrope, M. Pringle, E. Walker, R. Sidle, T. Rukin.

Team of the year: D. Dove, D. Lovell, P. Blakeley, N. Harrison, G. Thompson, B. Duncrope, M. Pringle, E. Walker, R. Sidle, T. Rukin.



DAVID DOVE: Man of the match (240/0).

Follow that...

HOW do we follow that? That was the question in the minds of Batley players, officials and supporters after they had won Sunday's Yorkshire Council play-off at Glassborough to add to their three other trophies this season.

Certainly while the four-cup feat might conceivably be repeated in the future it is a racing certainty that never will the same team have to be content with runners-up spot in all four as has been the case with poor Murfield.

While outside in the crowd would not have been aware of seeing Murfield have something to show for a marvelously entertaining season they could have no complaints about Batley's emphatic seven-wicket margin with 13 deliveries to spare.

If Batley were fortunate to win their semifinal at Garfield they approached the final with such a thoroughly professional way that they were able to ride out two potential crises that the only controversy at the

end was whether captain David Dove (96 not out) or Elliott Noble (43 wickets all round) should receive the man of the match award.

Dove shaded it possibly as a reward for both his batting and captaincy all season and his part in a match-winning third wicket stand of 104 with Paul Blakeley.

But he was first to admit "It was a super performance by Elliott. He must have been very near winning the award."

I always thought 100 was gettable and felt in ready good nick and enjoyed my innings tremendously. Paul Blakeley always likes to get on with it so I let him have his head and just plodded on at the other end. When he was out I was able to take it off from there."

This view was shared by his opposite number Russell Heritage who said "I was sorry that Elliott did not win it to reward a magnificent spell by a young bowler. As a bowler myself and without taking anything

away from David too often you find such awards automatically go to batsmen."

Dove's innings was of a highest quality — indeed the best he has seen from a home-grown CYL batsman all season — and he had to see after Blakeley needing 103 were struggling at 20-3 in the eighth over.

Lee Morritt had picked up the prize scalp of David Lovell, caught low at gully by Simon Gilder after he had put the previous delivery perilously near short leg.

Then Dennis Grainger had Neil Harrison say the ball, again to Gilder. With Murfield cock-a-hoop not wanting a turn to their ill-fortune Dove had to produce the goods and in Blakeley he could not have found a better ally.

Blakeley's contribution to the Batley cause with both bat and ball this season has been of inestimable value and again he did not let them down. With Dove adopting the anchor role Blakeley was able to adopt the more positive role he is



Batley 1st XI, leading candidates for the club team of the season with four trophies to their name: (back l to r) Robert Cooper, Paul Heaton, John Prentice, Elliott Noble, Paul Blakeley, David Bruce; (front) David Lovell, Neil Harrison, David Dove, Richard Sidle, Tim Rukin.



Central Yorkshire Cricket
League

Season 1989

**JACK HAMPSHIRE
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TROPHY
WINNERS**

Batley Cricket Club

Captain: Mr. D. Dove