

CRICKET

Focus on - Queens Road

Pakistan
Test aces
inspired a
new team

IN June 1974 the Pakistani cricket squad landed on British shores for their fifth tour.

At the same time, in the back streets of Halifax, a group of young Asian children were hanging around street corners wondering what to do with themselves.

They were watching the Test series on television and had seen in Intikhab Alam, Imran Khan and co. Asian sporting idols to emulate.

So they wandered down Queen's Road and painted some wickets on an unsuspecting Walsh Street wall.

The team that would eventually be known as Queen's Road Muslims had been born.

In the very early days, the club played only friendly games against teams such as George Lumb, Kashmir and United Biscuits.

QRM joined the Halifax Association in 1979 and in their debut season they scooped two significant awards: Mohammed Seraj carried off the young player of the year award and Safdar Hussain shared the Sportsfax Shield, awarded for on-field sportsmanship.

At first the club played at Roils Head and then moved on to Brackenbed Park in 1982.

On September 6, 1982 QRM took on a Halifax Police XI in a special challenge fixture.

Calderdale's Racial Equality Council (REC) had done the arranging, and this 'Community Shield' was the result.

Two years later, in 1984, QRM participated in one of the most amazing knockout matches. Against Halifax Salem in the Collinson Cup, QRM reached a respectable 144 for seven in their 40 overs and then the opposition were skittled for just 12!

QRM moved on to Spring Hall in the early-1990s, then Goldfields, the municipal venue in Greetland, and then back to Spring Hall.

By this time they had become the superpower of the Association, win-

ning title after title.

At the beginning of 2005 QRM were dealt a huge blow. After much discussion at the annual general meeting, the Halifax Association was disbanded.

So the club, now based at Wellesley Park, is now trying to join another local league.

Club spokesman Najabat Hussain explains: 'Commitment and resources are the two big issues for a club like us.

'The final piece in the jigsaw for us would be a ground of our own, and that is something we're still working on.'

This is the latest in our series on Calderdale clubs, produced by Dr Peter Davies of the Cricket Heritage Project at Huddersfield University. It will continue every Saturday through the summer.



Another trophy in the bag: Queens Road Muslims after their 2003 Collinson Cup success

FACT FILE

Founded: 1974

Greatest achievement: Winning four Association league and cup 'doubles' between 2001 and 2004.

League: Ex-Halifax Association

Local hero: Mohammed Seraj, who went on to play Bradford League cricket and then work as a physio for Yorkshire CCC at Headingley.

Bizarre fact: In one season in the late-1970s, QRM played Exley, another local cricket team, 25 times – and won 22 of these encounters!