

RASTRICK RIGHT ARMERS CC - A HISTORY

Formed in 2002 by a group of middle-aged friends and social drinkers whose main cricket connection was the fact that they all drank together at Rastrick Cricket Club. The group were already involved within cricket, providing funds for junior cricket development.

Having played a “warm-up“ during the annual boys trip (Bowness, 2002) the previous year, the first Right Armers game took place during the following year’s trip to Bellingham. In the beautiful setting of the Riverdale Hall Hotel (owned by John Cocker of Elland fame) the Right Armers earned a creditable tie against a Bellingham side made up of Australian professionals and hotel staff! The highlight of the game being the first and last appearance of the Right Armers’ only ever overseas pro, Clyde Darson, who went first ball.

Despite their age, and obvious lack of talent, the Right Armers decided to take up the game more competitively under the guiding hand of Rastrick CC stalwart player Julian Marsh. This resulted in an entry into the Brighthouse Sports Club Workshops competition in 2004 where they went out in the quarter-final. More summer practice and winter nets along with some recruitment from their ever growing band of drinking associates saw the team commit to some serious league action.

In 2005 the team were entered in Division 4 of the Huddersfield Evening League and surprised themselves, and everyone else, on gaining promotion in their first season, albeit due to a reorganisation of the league which saw the third-placed team promoted. A feature of the opening season was the huge and vociferous crowds of assorted wives, children and others seen at every match - at a number of grounds it was commented that the Right Armers’ crowds were far bigger than those seen for first-team matches.

2006 saw the Right Armers gain their first silverware. Having successfully consolidated their place in Division 3 of the Evening League, the team laid down a challenge to Rastrick CC’s second eleven, having beaten the third eleven the previous season. In a closely fought game, tail-ender Mike Stead smashed former first-team captain Lawrence Pearson for 14 off three balls to secure a famous victory for the Right Armers. The following day, despite hangovers all round, the team won their Workshops semi-final against the Prince Albert in the morning to set up a final against the hosts Brighthouse Sports. Despite an age difference averaging 25 years, the Right Armers easily won the game with their best ever all-round performance. The team song (*Two Little Boys* - Rolf Harris) echoed long into the night.

2007 - And the Right Armers again had some moderate success with a mid-table finish in Division 3 and a cup run to the quarter-finals. As with most teams, the season was very disjointed by the miserable weather. Highpoints were the performances of Steve ‘The Power’ Fenies, who topped the batting averages and finished second in the league bowling averages with 10.8 but still managed to win the duck award. The third annual presentation night was held at Rastrick Cricket Club, attracting an attendance of 70 people for a

meal, speaker (league chairman Mr Peter Bottomed) and comedian (Mr Mick Chubby Stringer).

2008 sees the Right Armers mysteriously promoted to Division 2 and with the loss of Steve Fenies to 2nd XI duties for Rastrick CC, it looks like being a difficult season.

For the future - it seems certain that age will eventually catch up with most of the team; even with a squad of 19 it is often difficult fielding a side due to minor injuries. However, with nearly all the current team having sons aged 7-19 it looks like the Right Armers could be around for some time yet