

WALSDEN CC

The Early Years

OFF THE MARK!

ORIGINS OF CLUB

Like many cricket clubs, Walsden did not have a continuous existence from its first formation in the 19th century.

The current club, which has existed continuously since 1870, had at least two forerunners. There is evidence that a club was formed in 1856 and re-formed in 1862. It is rumoured that prior to 1856 a club called White Scar existed in the village but no evidence has been found to substantiate this.



Centre Vale, Todmorden

Walsden's first recorded match was played on the land in front of the bandstand on what, since 1910, has been Centre Vale Park.

This was an away match against the 2nd XI of the Todmorden club which had been re-established in 1850.

The Centre Vale cricket ground was so waterlogged that Todmorden's president, Sam Fielden, who owned the whole Centre Vale estate, allowed the teams to play in front of his Centre Vale House, erecting a tent for changing and refreshments there.



A double innings match was completed in one day, Todmorden 2nds (65 and 88), beating Walsden (42 and 26) by 85 runs, and, remarkably, the scorecard for the game has been located. When a batsman was caught, the fielder but not the bowler's name was recorded.

The match was played on a Monday, suggesting that most of the players would be self-employed or employers of labour, able to take time off.

Walsden's First Recorded Match

Todmorden 2nd XI v Walsden

at the Fielden Estate, Centre Vale

Monday, 29 September 1856

Todmorden 2nd XI

<i>First Innings</i>			<i>Second Innings</i>		
Z Law	b TGreenwood	17	E Lord	c Bottomley	17
T Hargreaves	b Marland	7	J Sutcliffe	b TGreenwood	4
J Pickles	b TGreenwood	10	S Lord	b TGreenwood	0
T Crossley	b Marland	5	W Lord	c Wrigley	1
R Sutcliffe	b Marland	0	J Marshall	b TGreenwood	1
D Campbell	b TGreenwood	3	T Crossley	b Bottomley	1
W Lord	run out	7	J Pickles	b Bottomley	2
J Marshall	b TGreenwood	2	R Sutcliffe	b TGreenwood	28
S Lord	run out	5	Z Law	run out	28
J Sutcliffe	b Marland	7	T Hargreaves	c WGreenwood	0
E Lord	not out	2	J Fielden	not out	2
Extras		0	Extras		4
Total	all out	65	Total	all out	88



Walsden

<i>First Innings</i>			<i>Second Innings</i>		
T Horsfall	b Campbell	8	E Wrigley	b Law	8
Simpson	b Law	5	R Bottomley	b Law	1
E Wrigley	b Campbell	2	Simpson	c Sutcliffe	8
T Greenwood	b Campbell	4	T Horsfall	c S Lord	2
R Bottomley	run out	0	T Greenwood	b Law	1
S Fielden	b W Lord	4	W Greenwood	b W Lord	3
W Greenwood	c Crossley	12	WH Fielden	b W Lord	0
W Bottomley	b W Lord	4	J Marland	c Law	0
J Marland	b Law	1	W Bottomley	not out	1
WH Fielden	not out	2	S Fielden	c Pickles	2
J Crossley	b W Lord	0	J Crossley	c Law	0
Extras		0	Extras		0
Total	all out	42	Total	all out	26

Todmorden 2nd XI won by 85 runs

RED LETTER DAY

1863 – EARLY MATCH

CRICKET MATCH.—Hobden-bridge is doubtless aspiring to fame by the honours it has already won in the "enterprising" game of cricket. In three successive battles have our young "gents" come off conquerors, although in the last game, on Saturday, with the eleven of Walsden, the affair was a "tight fit," as will be seen from the subjoined scores. At seven o'clock the stamps were drawn, Knowles and Hellwell being in.

HEBDEN-BRIDGE

1st Innings.		2nd Innings.	
D. H. Lacy not out	3	b J. Crossley	2
J. Sutcliffe b J. Wade	6	b W. Suthers	0
J. Clegg c Bottomley b Gould	11	do.	0
C. Knowles b J. Wade	2	not out	4
R. S. Huns run out	2	c Stansfield	0
G. Hellwell b Fielden	5	not out	0
G. Lacy c Bottomley b Wade	24		
E. J. Holmes c Suthers b Stans-			
field	10		
J. Werrall run out	7		
T. Sutcliffe c and b Wade	0		
A. Cockcroft, jun. c Suthers b do.	0		
Wides	17	Bye 1, wides 2	2
Total	87	Total	10

WALSDEN.—1st Innings.

J. Wade c Werrall b Knowles	2
Jan. Crossley b Knowles	11
Wm. Suthers b Clegg	24
Wm. Gould b Knowles	17
Wm. Stansfield b Knowles	0
T. H. Fielden c and b Clegg	0
R. Bottomley run out	0
T. Bottomley not out	10
T. Crossley b Knowles	2
Jan. Crossley b Knowles	0
T. Horsfall b Clegg	4
Byes 6, leg bye 1, wides 2	9
Total	79

The "Fair."—The women's "cap fair" was held

HOME SWEET HOME

1870 – NEW GROUND

Walsden have played on their current ground since 1870, but apparently had two former grounds in their earlier incarnations in the 1850s and around 1862.



The current ground

These were at White Slack and at Heights Houses. The latter was still used as a ground in the Todmorden & District Cricket League until it folded in 1959.

The current ground was formerly the site of Inchfield Mill dam and was leased to the Club by E. Smith of Inchfield Villa. 137 members enrolled at that time and the ground was opened in a 16-a-side match on 23 July 1870.

CLOWNING AROUND

1871 – SPECIAL MATCH

A feature of cricket as popular entertainment in the 19th century was travelling troops of clown cricketers.

As Walsden's major fundraising event of 1871, 'XI Gentlemen of Todmorden and Walsden' played Mr Dan Rice's 14 Clown Cricketers at Walsden on 21, 22 and 26 July.



Prior to the match on Friday 21 July, the clowns, dressed in 'grotesque costumes', toured the streets in horse-drawn carriages accompanied by the Todmorden Brass Band.

Rain delayed the start until Saturday, when the locals made 113 all out and the clowns replied with 24 for 3.

The clowns had little skill as cricketers but entertained the crowd with their witticisms and contortions at the fall of every wicket.

On Saturday evening the clowns sang and performed acrobatics on a raised platform and the band played for dancing until darkness fell. Todmorden Cricket Club's Ladies' Tent was borrowed for the occasion.



Rain delayed the match until the following Wednesday when the clowns were all out for 56.

A total attendance of 2,464 raised £66 14s 2d for Club funds.

THE CLOWN CRICKETERS AT WALSDEN—FRIDAY AND SATURDAY LAST.

A party numbering 11, calling themselves the "clown cricketers" have this season been making engagements with the clubs of various towns and places for playing matches, and, a short time back they arranged one with the Walsden club—to come off on the Walsden ground on Friday and Saturday the 21st and 22nd July. The weather, during last week, turned numerous "suro-mersaults," and on the Friday, just before play should have commenced, it took the sulky and gloomy side, and then kept for the remainder of the day. The clowns arrived on Tuesday week. Being a pretty numerous company—some of them having wives (perhaps it would be unmanly to call them clowns) and families—it was requisite for them to be billeted at many different houses in the hamlet. On Friday the 21st they made a parade through the town at from 1 to 2 o'clock, and they would have made a fairly attractive show had the weather been in their favor, but it began to mistle, and before they had gone clear of the town a sharp rain compelled them to whip up and make haste to the ground. They were accompanied on their drive by the Todmorton Brass Band, and by that eccentric knight of the clavier—Mr. W. Barrett—who performed the duty of Jehu to one of the conveyances with a noble dignity which some of our readers have observed in him under other circumstances. We have been told—indeed it is within our own knowledge—that the cricket ground at Walsden is formed on what was once the site of the dam to Inghfield mill; and from the way in which the rain came down, after the clowns and a few others got to the ground (ourselves among the number), one could easily have concluded it was in process of returning to its old state. There was the refreshment tent, set out with refreshments of no mean kind by Mr. A. Crossley, of Todmorton—but not at all refreshing; bottles were on the shelves of Mr. T. Sutcliffe's booth, but the spirit seemed to have departed from them. To parody a verse from the elegy on Sir John Moore—each clown

boldly and valiantly hung his head

And looked all over sorrow,

As he steadfastly gazed on the rain which was shed,

And feared 'twould be so on the miller.

WALSLEY		
W. T. Wade, c. Styrus to Franke	100	0
J. Wade, to Franke	100	0
J. K. Chavon, Bow, to Holman	100	0
W. Dewhurst, c. Styrus to Holman	100	0
J. Crossley, c. Martini to Holman	100	0
T. Hollenby, to Franke	100	0
J. K. Handley, to Holman	100	0
T. Boltonby, New, to Franke	100	0
Wm. Gorman, to Franke	100	0
H. Howorth, to Wallis	100	0
G. Poulton, not out	100	0
White 14, top-tyes 2	100	0
Total		1000
CLAYTON		
J. Styrus, to Clagg	100	0
C. Richards, c. Crosson to Dewhurst	100	0
L. Whittle, to Dewhurst	100	0
W. Franke, c. Crosson to Dewhurst	100	0
R. Holman, c. Crosson to Clagg	100	0
F. Wallace, to Handley	100	0
A. Newell, to Clagg	100	0
— Bennett, to Clagg	100	0
B. Mitchell, to Clagg	100	0
— Butler, to Clagg	100	0
W. Lucy, to Handley	100	0
— Stratton, not out	100	0
— Martini, c. J. Crosson to Clagg	100	0
— Longshaw, to Handley	100	0
White 2, top-tyes 1	100	0
Total		1000
WALSLEY - second innings		
J. A. Smith, to Franke	100	0
Jim. F. Poulton, not out	100	0
J. E. Handley, to Franke	100	0
J. Clagg, to Wallis	100	0
J. A. Crosson, c. Martini to Franke	100	0
White 8, top-tyes 1	100	0
Total		1000

SHOOTING FOR THE TOP!

COMMUNITY LINKS

Walsden Cricket Club has been an integral part of the village community throughout its existence.

Many local groups have used its facilities, including Todmorden Gun Club who met monthly through the latter part of the 19th century.



The standard of shooting was high, competitors travelling from as far as Liverpool, and it was usually necessary to kill eight or nine birds with no misses to win.

WHAT A RIOT!

1888 – HEBDEN BRIDGE AWAY

We are fortunate that the prestigious Central Lancashire League has such a well documented history. Not so well known are the clubs' histories before the league started in 1892.

At that time all played what we would regard as friendlies, except that with no league, they took on much greater significance.



Called 'Challenge Matches', these were fiercely contested town v town battles for local pride. The report of Walsden's visit to Foster Holme, Hebden Bridge in 1888 gives a flavour of this.

Hebden Bridge's deep suspicions about the Walsden umpire from a previous encounter were, in their eyes, confirmed when an appeal for a stumping was rejected during Walsden's 110 all out: ***'...a most deliberate case of giving a batsman a second innings'***.

When the Hebden Bridge pro, D. Pollard from Dalton, was adjudged lbw '***without hesitation***' at the start of the reply, all hell broke out.

Non-striker George Cotton struck down the wickets at his end with his bat and was joined by T. Cheetham who rushed onto the field, seized the wickets at the striker's end and '***attacked the umpires with wholesale oaths and imaginary blows.***'



As the Walsden team shepherded their umpire towards the pavilion, Cheetham ran ahead and locked them out.

Peace was restored, aided by a policeman and the refusal of Cotton and Cheetham to participate further in the match.

The rest of the home team only batted after '***earnest solicitation***' from the captain, their disinterest reflected in a final score of 28 for 8.



Partisan letters from supporters of both teams appeared in the *Hebden Bridge Times and Calder Vale Gazette*, 'A Lover of Fair Play' from Hebden Bridge commenting:

I think if an umpire had given such bare faced decisions on any other ground in the county he would have got what he richly deserved, viz.:- a ducking in the nearest sheet of water.

Extract from: *Cloth Caps and Cricket Crazy: Todmorden and Cricket 1835-1896*

PROBLEMS, PROBLEMS!

1890 – CLOGS AND RUGBY

Walsden Cricket Club's professional and groundsman in 1890, A. Storah, quickly became disenchanted because *'...the members would come to practice with clogs on, thus cutting up the ground and giving him no chance to keep it in good condition.'*

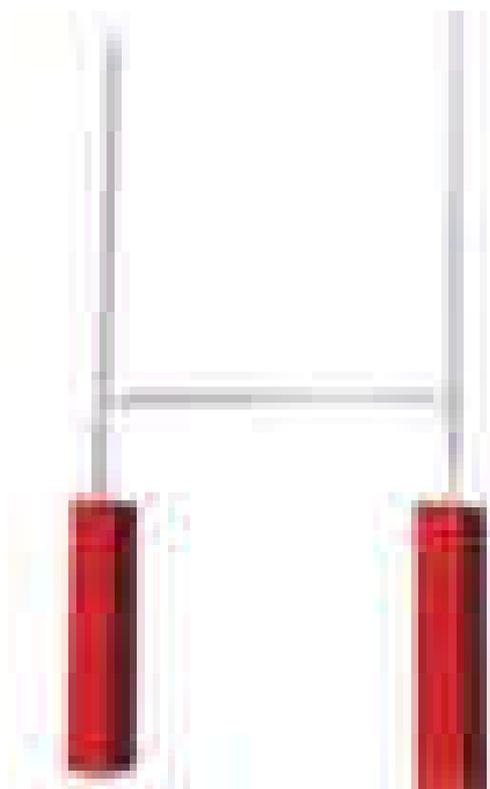


By July he had agreed to sign for Otley, where his package was to involve *'assisting the cricket club organisation in the summer and the football [rugby] in the winter'*.

However, the Yorkshire Rugby Football Union would *'not allow a man to pose as an amateur in a football club*

after playing as a professional with the cricket eleven belonging to the same club’.

These were tense days when, despite huge crowds, the rugby union, fiercely protective of amateurism, would not allow players to earn a penny.



Five years later the world of rugby broke in two. The Northern Union was founded in 1895 – effectively the birth of rugby league which sanctioned first ‘broken time’ payments (for loss of earnings while playing).

71	Walsden v. Middleton (first innings) — Played at Walsden on Saturday last and ended in a draw. Score:—			
72	WALSDEN.			
73	A. Thomas, b Brown			
74	W. T. Wade, b Brown			
75	J. Howarth, b Dannatt			
76	H. Roberts, c Moore b Brown			
77	E. Whittaker, c Wood b Dannatt			
78	H. Wilson, lbw, b Copper			
79	J. W. Crabtree, not out			
80	Extras			
81	Total			
82	MIDDLETON.			
83	Brown, not out			
84	F. Louch, b Whittaker			
85	Aspell, c Roberts b Crabtree			
86	Dr. Moore, b Whittaker			
87	P. N. Dannatt, not out			
88	Extras			
89	Total			
90	BOWLING ANALYSIS—WALSDEN.			
91	Overs	Mans	Runs	Wickets
92	T. Whittaker	15	24	5
93	H. Ashworth	5	12	2
94	Wood	5	12	1
95	J. W. Crabtree	5	11	1
96	Walsden v. Middleton (second innings) — Played at Middleton on Saturday last and ended in a draw. Score:—			
97	MIDDLETON.			
98	Thorpe, b Swindells			
99	Jackson, c Batcliffe b Swindells			
100	Hinwood, c Howarth b Swindells			
101	Whiteleggs, not out			
102	H. Ramsbottom, b Swindells			
103	Smother, b Shawforth			
104	Farr, b Shawforth			
105	Ward, b Shawforth			
106	Dunford, c Gibson b Shawforth			
107	A. Ramsbottom, b Shawforth			
108	Haywood, c J. T. Fielden b Gibson			
109	Extras			
110	Total			
111	WALSDEN.			
112	G. Batcliffe, c Dunford b Thorpe			
113	J. Swindells, c H. Ramsbottom b Ward			
114	W. Hargreaves, b Whiteleggs			
115	F. Aspell, c Ward b Whiteleggs			
116	A. Howarth, b Whiteleggs			
117	J. Fielden, b Ward			
118	W. Gibson, c Smother b Whiteleggs			
119	J. T. Fielden, b Ward			
120	J. Shawforth, b Whiteleggs			
121	J. Fielden, not out			
122	J. Lord, not out			
123	Extras			
124	Total (for 5 wickets)			
125	Walsden v. E. Barber's Team			

WOMEN ON TOP

1893 – LADIES CRICKET

The first ladies cricket match in Todmorden was played at Walsden on 6 June 1893 at a time when women were just beginning to strive for greater independence.



The match, between women of the Walsden district, provoked a predictably chauvinistic response from the male preserve of local journalism, the *Todmorden Advertiser* stating:

Whether those of the feminine gender are as fit to indulge in the good old English pastime as those of the opposite sex I do not care to argue, but evidently the fairer sex in the Walsden district...seem to think they are, as a match was played on the Walsden Cricket Club's ground ... between members of the 'Petticoat Club'.

OLD FOES

1896 – RIVALRY WITH TODMORDEN

Walsden have not played Todmorden in a league or cup match since 1896.

But often since then there has been a challenge match between the two and, until the last decade, these have been very competitive.

The Donald Rigg trophy was inaugurated in 1976, and for the next few years, and there was a full day of cricket, with the second teams playing a 30-over match in the morning and the first teams playing a full game in the afternoon.



Honours were about even in these affairs over the ten or so years.

More recently, the teams wore coloured clothing for the first time in the fixture in 2000 and 2001. Following the counties' example, the Walsden Wolves were adorned in an impressive red.

The Todmorden Tornados contrived an offensive lemon and sky blue combination in 2000 and an improved claret and blue in 2001, the last time the teams met.

But rivalry was never more fierce than when the clubs were both in the Central Lancashire League between 1893 and 1896. After a Todmorden victory in 1894, one Walsden supporter was moved to verse.



‘Play up Walsden’ by ‘Spectator’

**Play up, Walsden, heed not defeat;
Think not that Todmorden cannot be beat;
The tide may turn when next you meet
And bring you joy – entire, complete.**

**Play up, Walsden, your last score
Is greater than it has been before;
This your opponents will deplore,
More anxiously wait for what’s in store**

**Play up, Walsden, think what renown,
Should victory your next effort crown,
Your hamlet beat the little town,
The scales be turned upside down.**

The Todmorden cricket writer was very defensive in 1895 when Walsden had much the better of a draw.

He wrote that a Walsden victory over Todmorden, ***‘would cause as much delight to reign in the hearts of the victors as a visit of the Queen to Walsden would occasion. It would make the villagers feel such transcendental joy that they wouldn’t know where they were for weeks afterwards’.***

‘Todmorden have no need to put on any supercilious airs when they come to Walsden,’ riposted Walsden committee man Dr Stephenson.



The finances of both clubs would benefit if the fixture was revived with genuine rivalry. In this age of Twenty20 cricket, a series of evening games at the height of summer might well capture the public’s imagination.

NATIONAL SERVICE

FIRST WORLD WAR

Local cricket clubs pulled their weight during the First World War.

Walsden played Todmorden to raise funds for the War Relief Fund in 1914, and in support of the Centre Vale Military Hospital in 1915 and 1916, the latter match realising the considerable sum of £50.



George Hirst

As added attractions in 1915, the Todmorden side included Wilfred Rhodes and Percy Holmes, while Walsden had the services of George Hirst.

Walsden had three England players in their ranks in 1916, Rhodes playing alongside Lancashire opening batsman Johnny Tyldesley and Warwickshire bowler Frank Field. The Todmorden team included Hirst and double cricket and football international Jack Sharp.

As well as supporting the war effort, clubs had to adapt to wartime conditions.

Walsden, like most clubs, did not employ a professional during the key years of both world wars.

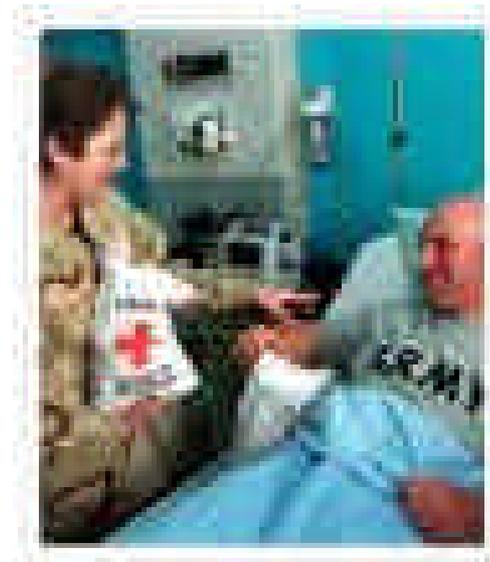
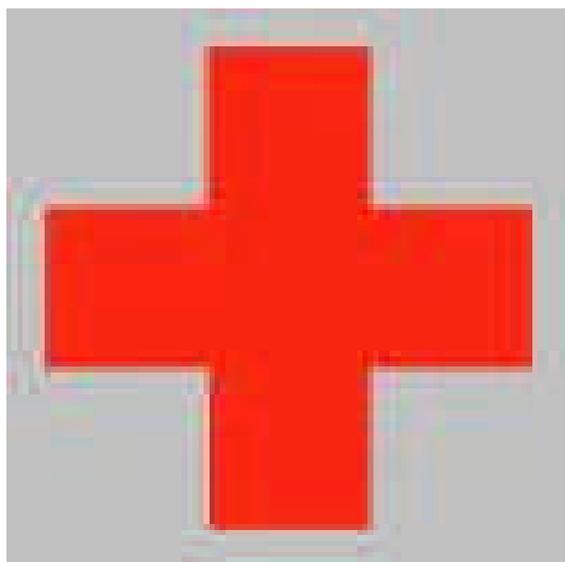


In 1916 the players were asked to forgo their usual half-pay broken-time payments for wages lost while playing. In the same year the pavilion, tea room and bowling green pavilion were insured against damage by air raid.

In 1917 this was extended to talent money as the Club came close to winding up, at least temporarily.

WAR EFFORT

1916 – CHARITY CUP MATCH v TODMORDEN



TUDMORDEN.

E. B. Shackleton, c Halliwell b Rhodes	47
A. Marshall, c Sunderland b Field	18
J. Ratcliffe, b Field	0
O. H. Hirst, c J. Greenwood b Rhodes	8
E. Stansfield, run out	8
J. Sharp, c F. Greenwood b Rhodes	8
W. Law, not out	29
H. Wood, c Tyldesley b Rhodes	6
W. Storch, c Hargreaves b Rhodes	7
Extras	22

Total (for 8 wickets) ... 150

WALSDEN.

F. Greenwood, c Hirst b Stansfield	8
J. T. Tyldesley, b Storch	8
H. Smith, c Hulson b Storch	2
W. Rhodes, not out	45
F. Wood, b Stansfield	2
A. Halliwell, b Hirst	2
J. Greenwood, b Hirst	2
F. Hargreaves, b Stansfield	3
R. Sunderland, not out	0
Extras	7

Total (for 7 wickets) ... 72

BOWLING ANALYSIS.—Walsden.

	O.	M.	R.	W.
F. Ormerod	8	2	16	0
F. Field	13	4	27	2
W. Rhodes	20	2	76	5
F. Wood	3	1	9	0

Tudmorden.

W. Storch	5	0	11	0
E. Stansfield	9	1	12	2
O. H. Hirst	9	3	15	2
J. Sharp	2	2	9	0
W. L. Greenwood	7	0	11	0

HORSE PLAY

1914/38 – BIG ASSET

For many years equipment for cutting and rolling the ground was literally horse-powered. There was a stable on the ground and buying, selling or renting, and feeding and controlling, the animal was all part of the committee's annual cycle, as this selection of minutes illustrates.



11 September 1914

That we let horse out on hire if we get someone to have it.

12 September 1914

That we sell horse as soon as possible.

16 February 1921

That F. Sutcliffe supply corn for horse.

14 September 1921

That the question of disposal of horse be left to the Horse Committee.

26 March 1923

That [there] be a sub-committee to repair stable.

21 April 1923

That Wm Helliwell [be asked] for permission to graze horse on Strines Meadow.



19 July 1931

That sub-committee repair window damaged by horse.

12 September 1938

That our horse be put in the Co-op sale.

LUCKY 13 – PRIDE OF THE CLUB!

1920 – TEAM PHOTOGRAPH



- But how many faces do you recognise?
- And who are the two gents in the black suits?
- And what does their choice of headgear say about them and their socio-economic background?

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

1922 – CLUB DECISION



Quote from Minute Book, 26 February 1922:

‘That Vice-Presidents be re-elected with the exception of those resigned and dead.’



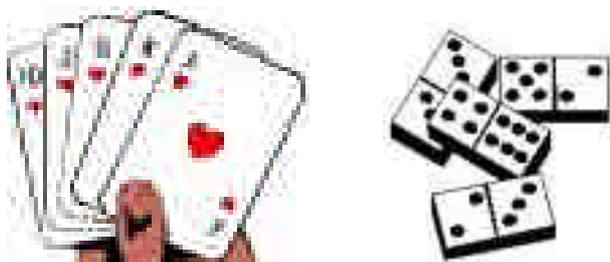
ROOMS TO RENT

1920s & 1930s: MORE THAN JUST CRICKET

Various activities have taken place in the pavilion at Walsden over the years.

In 1922, with moving pictures the new craze, an offer of £50 was made to use the pavilion as a 'Picture Palace' for six months during the winter, but the committee rejected it.

Inchfield Bottom drama group staged several plays there and several slide shows and lectures have also helped boost Club funds.



The Club has staged its own functions, including whist drives and dances, and in 1939 a 'gramophone concert' was held.

For decades there was a 'Winter Club' for indoor activities including table tennis and dominoes.

Walsden Football Club and others also let the dressing rooms for many years before changing rooms were built on the adjoining field.

TEAS & TENNIS

INTER-WAR YEARS: ODDS & ENDS

Minute from 3 May 1920: ***‘That we oppose Rochdale’s proposal to supply teas to visiting XI.’***

In 1924 the secretary enquired about renting land at the Strines Street end for tennis courts. Tennis was played on the ground for many years.



On 29 April 1930 it was minuted ***‘that a notice be put up in dressing room requesting that players wear spiked boots’***.

Electricity was installed in the Walsden pavilion in 1938.

TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

1934 – SPECIAL MATCH

This newspaper cutting tells the story of a set-piece cricketing occasion that took place at Walsden in June 1934.

Local cricket officials were holding a special 'trial' game – in advance of selecting their North Lancashire Schoolboys side.

