



ECB Yorkshire South Premier League

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HALL OF FAME



No 1

Bill Croft



Bill Croft is primarily associated with Sheffield Collegiate CC, for whom he was a fast-medium opening bowler and tireless committee worker during his 36 years at the club.

Bill started his cricket career in the early 1960s as a junior at Sheffield United CC, playing on the famous old Bramall Lane ground. Playing primarily in the second and third teams up until 1965, he was also selected for the Sheffield & District under 18s and was asked to attend Yorkshire nets in 1964 and 1965.

Between 1966 and 1974, Bill played for a number of clubs, including Rotherham Town in the Yorkshire League, Brighouse in the Bradford League, and Elland in the Huddersfield League. During these years, he also played Sunday friendly cricket for the now-defunct Sheffield Cutlers, alongside some of the best players in South Yorkshire – a team he describes as, ‘a great place to learn how to play cricket.’

In 1975, Bill joined Sheffield Collegiate, where he had already played friendly and mid-week cricket. There, in the Yorkshire League, he earned a complete collection of innings wicket-taking performances, from none through to ten – taking ten wickets against Hull in 1987 and nine against Rotherham in 1979. Other career highlights were winning the Yorkshire League bowling averages in 1984; his Wombwell Cricket Lovers Match Winning Award in 1986 for taking seven wickets for eight runs to beat Barnsley; and helping Collegiate to their first Yorkshire League silverware – a cup and league double in his final season of 1990.

Bill was equally effective off the field, serving on the committee of Sheffield Collegiate for all but one year of his time at the club, holding positions including fund-raiser, treasurer and Yorkshire League representative. For several years in the late 1990s, he served on the board of the Sheffield Amateur Sports Club and he was the groundsman for the Abbeydale Sports Club in 2008 and 2009. Even after retiring to Devon in 2012 he found himself helping out the local club as their treasurer for four years.

Whilst he was a fiery competitor in his playing days, Bill always enjoyed the social side of the game and he remains great company over a beer in the clubhouse on his regular visits to South Yorkshire. He places great value on the friendships he has made with both team mates and opposition during his long career.

Bill was a pro-active and ‘hands-on’ President of the Yorkshire League between 2008 and 2011, during which time his balanced and forward-thinking approach earned him great respect.

Bill Croft was inducted to the Yorkshire South Premier League Hall of Fame on 27th October 2017.