

## **Gareth Rowbotham recalls playing for Hertford Basketball and Snooker Clubs**

Hertford had a good basketball team. They played against teams from the county. Watford Royals were a very strong team but there were other teams from Borehamwood, St. Albans, Hatfield, Welwyn Garden City, Hitchin and Bishop's Stortford. So, they played against those. Their home games, where they played their games, is now Simon Balle, which was Hertford Secondary School, and we played on a Wednesday night. I played for them but I was young and a kind of reserve, I wasn't in the first lot, but they were blokes in their twenties and thirties that played then, and they were a strong team. They were called Hertford All-Blacks.

But basketball was very strong in Hertford, it was a really good night. We used to play and train at Simon Balle as it is now, used to have a drink after the game, so I must have been a little bit older, about sixteen or seventeen then, I wasn't eighteen I don't think, and we used to go in the Plough, which used to be on the corner of London Road. And we used to go in there on a Wednesday night, after the game.

The Castle Club snooker and billiards club was based in Honey Lane as it is now. You had to be a certain age. I played, like, in the youth club in Cowbridge, snooker, so when I came to Hertford, there was a minimum age, they didn't enforce it, you know, to the letter, sort of thing. I went up and played, certainly when I was fifteen, you know, fourteen perhaps. They had competitions up there; the junior one was under-18 and that particular photograph, the best of three frames it was. The first frame I won, the second frame I was twenty up on the colours and I made a foul shot and the referee who was refereeing the game, that meant that my opponent got four points because of my foul shot and it knocked me a bit. He won that game and then he won the third game, the deciding one. So, I do remember quite vividly that particular thing.