

National glory is just the beginning as Foster's heroes eye more success

PROUD captain Ed Foster insists Shrewsbury's cricketers are hungry for more trophies after leading the club to a thrilling National Knockout triumph at Derby, *writes* **STUART DUNN.**

Foster, also the Shropshire skipper, led from the front with a brilliant, unbeaten 98 as Shrewsbury toppled East Anglian Premier League champions Cambridge Granta by three wickets with just two balls to spare last weekend.

It means the current side join the class of 1983 in the club history books by lifting the biggest prize in English club cricket.

Just a year after the club won the Birmingham League premier division for the first time, Shrewsbury are now established as the country's leading

club side – with Foster targeting further success.

"There's no reason why we shouldn't go on and win more," said Foster. "In the last three years, we've won the National KO, reached the semi finals and won the Birmingham League. I would like to win them again in the next couple of years.

"It was a great day and it's probably the club's biggest achievement for many years, purely because this is a national competition. The Birmingham League is a great league, the strongest in the country, and it was fantastic to win that, but this is another brilliant achievement."

Foster, at 26 the oldest in the side, said: "Paul Bedford, one of the top guys at the English Cricket Board, was at the final and said a lot of nice things about the club and how well we've done.

"He watched us lose in the semis to Chester-le-Street a couple of years ago and has noted how much we've improved as a side since then.

"He's also aware of how well our junior teams have performed in national competitions and the success of Ed Barnard in getting onto the England under-15 development programme."

Talented

Foster believes many of his talented young side could play in the First Class game if they choose.

He also praised the input of chairman Andy Barnard in driving Shrewsbury forward and making them such a force. "What we've achieved comes from the top and Andy is always keen for the club to have success at every level," said Foster. "Cricket and sport is all about winning and you always

enjoy winning things with your mates.

"We're from a fairly small town and we're not even the only club in Shrewsbury."

Foster has had messages of congratulations from around the world, with club mate Joe Hart, the England goalkeeper, among well wishers. And he said he was grateful to all the local supporters who cheered the team to victory at Derby.

"We had great support and it was fantastic to see so many people from Shrewsbury there, including a lot of the guys from the 1983 National KO winning team," he said.

The celebrations will continue at Shrewsbury's club dinner at the Greenhouse Meadow on Friday, October 14. Tickets cost £25.

Cheques can be sent to treasurer Bryan Hinton at Shrewsbury CC, London Road, SY2 6PT.



Shrewsbury skipper Ed Foster is mobbed by delighted team-mates on his way off the pitch after his superb 98 helped Shrewsbury to a sensational victory over Cambridge Granta in the National Knockout final at Derby. For more see page 92

Picture: Pete Dawson