

## A to Z of Copley CC

By Dominic Kureen

**A: All-rounders** – Copley have been blessed with some of the most talented all-rounders in the Halifax League over the years. Currently the likes of Richard Thorpe and Tim Rushton stand out, while opening batsman Nick Pyrah is also a useful off-spinner. In the past the likes of Tom Thorpe, Ian Ball and Chris Goulden have proven equally adept in both roles.

**B: Bowyer** – Denis Bowyer was the best slow bowler in the Halifax League throughout the 1960s and won the bowling prize on no fewer than six occasions while at Copley. He was also a member of the Copley side which won the league and cup 'double' in two successive seasons.

**C: Colin Balme** – A fast bowler who achieved the feat of winning the Copley bowling prize for seven seasons in a row (1956-62). An outstanding performer who took over 1,500 wickets during his career with Copley and Illingworth.



**D: Derek Smith** – Won the Copley batting prize on eight separate occasions throughout the 1960s and 1970s. A solid opener who anchored many an innings in the style of Geoff Boycott or Chris Tavare. His was the wicket that the bowling side wanted the most!

**E: Evening Cricket** – Copley's evening cricket schedule has expanded significantly during the past 20 years. Copley currently play on four evenings a week at various levels.

**F: Fred Hemmingway** – The first qualified coach at Copley, a lot of the credit for Copley's thriving junior set-up must go to Fred. Joined the club as a player at an advanced age to add some experience to a youthful set-up and proved to be a great success initially as captain of the first team and later as skipper of the second XI before devoting his attention to coaching.

**G: Chris Goulden** – Chris Goulden is arguably the best slow bowler in the club's history and was part of a fearsome trio along with Richard Thorpe and Tim Rushton who spearheaded a number of key Copley victories. An attack-minded yet economical spinner who could be a match-winner, Chris left Copley in 2006 and is currently playing for Elland.

**H: Halifax League** – The league in which Copley have had a great deal of success in recent years. Early predictions for the 2007 season suggest that Bradshaw, Warley and Triangle will be Copley's main rivals for the title this time.

**I: Ian Ball** – A brilliant opening batsman who came through the club's junior ranks. Perhaps Ian's most astonishing knock was when he got out for 60 with the score at 60 for one! The man with the Midas touch took over wicketkeeping duties for one season and perhaps inevitably added the league wicketkeeping prize to his eight Copley batting awards! As well as being a star on the pitch. Ian also made an incredible contribution off it and was club secretary for more than ten years!

**J: John Cliffe** – Copley's current treasurer was the oldest player to represent Copley and was still batting for the second team into his 61<sup>st</sup> year, while he also hit a century when in his late 50s. Perhaps fittingly he made his final Copley appearance against his former club, Illingworth.

**K: Keith Goulden** – One of Copley's hardest working administrators, he is a true fan who never played for the side but has contributed a great deal in other areas. Has an astonishing depth of knowledge regarding all things Copley!

**L: Loyalty** – Copley CC will never stand in the way of a player who wants to try his luck at another club and the door is always open for a return. The current side is testament to this policy and also reflects the fact that players are keen to repay the club which set them on the road to success.

**M: Mr Cricket** – AKA Roy Smith, a great man who was loved not only in Copley but throughout Halifax. Unquestionably the most influential person in the club's history, Roy is perhaps best summed up by the plaque devoted to him and his wife Barbara inside Copley's pavilion which states that: 'In Yorkshire he was known as Mr Halifax and in Halifax he was known as Mr Cricket. There can be no better accolade.'

**N: Nick Pyrah** – A truly inspirational batsman who is a particularly good driver of the ball. Nick is Copley's star batsman and few can dispute his place in Copley's all-time best eleven. Currently in his prime, Copley will probably see the best years of a player who is without a doubt the man that opposition bowlers fear most.

**O: Oliver Hannon-Dalby** – Evidence of Copley's incredible record of bringing through fantastic young players, Oliver is currently on the books of Yorkshire CCC. The tall pace bowler earned a 2<sup>nd</sup> XI contract with the county for the 2007 season and has been compared to former England star Angus Fraser!

**P: Parish Cup** – Copley and the Parish cup go hand in hand. After their first Parish cup success in 1952, Copley failed to win the trophy again until 1968 and then had a purple patch which culminated in successive Parish Cup victories in 1973 and 1974. In recent years the cup has remained elusive, aside from the 1990 win, with several appearances in the final ending in defeat. Of all the cups on offer this is the one that Copley want to win the most.

**Q: Quick bowlers** – Copley is a club which has never struggled for quality fast bowlers. The likes of Colin Balme, Brian Hulme, Denis Bowyer, Tim Rushton and Richard Thorpe have all gone on to take huge quantities of wickets for the side.

**R: Rushton** – A legend within the Halifax League, Tim Rushton is one of the greatest bowlers ever to play for Copley and a more than handy batsman who now resides in

Copley's middle order. One of the most consistent performers at the club and now in charge of the club's press matters off the pitch.

**S: Skipper** – Wicketkeeper Steve 'Chickpea' Priestley will take the Copley captaincy for the 2007 season. Widely considered to be the best gloveman that the club has ever had, he will hopefully add stability to a side which has had five different captains in as many seasons.

**T: Thorpe** – A surname synonymous with Copley CC. Tom was a star player throughout the 1960s and 1970s, played a massive role in the development of the pavilion over the years and now looks after the pitch. His wife Judith worked at the club for a number of years in various roles, was the club scorer and a devoted supporter. Meanwhile their sons Andrew and Richard have provided many of Copley's best moments of the past 20 years. It's quite a legacy for Richard's two sons to live up to!

**U: Ul-Hassan** – Rana Naveed Ul-Hassan to be precise! Future Pakistan international superstar Ul-Hassan was in the Pudsey Congs side who Copley faced in the Black Sheep Yorkshire champions trophy quarter-final of 2001.

**V: Victorious** – After many years of limited success, Copley enjoyed a fantastic spell during the 1990s and have continued that into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That success is down to a number of factors, but ultimately it is the all-round quality of the current squad which has provided the platform for it.

**W: Warley CC** - One of Copley's main rivals in the Halifax League. Warley have enjoyed something of a renaissance in recent seasons, particularly in the Parish Cup and are among the favourites in the 2007 Halifax League title race.

**X: eXodus** – In the 1980s seven Copley players left the club to join local rivals Sowerby Bridge. Three Whitehills, three Smiths and a Gledhill decided to make the move, leaving Copley with a huge void to fill!

**Y: Youth** – Copley CC relies heavily upon the fruits of its flourishing youth system. In fact six of the 11 players who started Copley's final league match of the 2006 season came through the club's junior ranks!

**Z: Zip** – One of the key elements of the Copley bowling attack is the zip of their quick bowlers. Most of the bowlers are deceptively quick and can surprise even the most talented of Halifax League batsman!