

WHO'S WHO

DEREK SHACKLETON

Born in 1924, Derek Shackleton is believed to be the oldest living Todmorden cricketer. He enjoyed a wonderful county career at Hampshire and his 2,857 wickets remain the highest taken by any bowler in first-class cricket since the Second World War.



Derek made his Todmorden debut in 1940 at the age of 15 as World War II provided an opportunity far sooner than expected. At the age of 16 in 1941 Derek scored 95 at Bacup and he hit 113 against Burnley the following season. By then he was bowling and he took 20 wickets for Todmorden in 1942.

A natural ball-player, he spent a season as goalkeeper at Burnley Football Club in 1942-43.

ERNEST CREIGHTON

With 918 wickets, Ernest Creighton has taken over 200 more wickets for Todmorden than any other bowler, amateur or professional.

Born at Hemsworth near Barnsley in 1859, he first signed as professional for Todmorden in 1888. A slow left-arm bowler, his benefit match against Rochdale in 1889 pocketed a prodigious £48 (worth about £2,800 today) from the gate receipts.



After taking 564 wickets in four seasons, including a Club record 169 in 1890, he left Todmorden to join Bradford in 1892. He returned in 1894 to take a further 125 wickets, helping Todmorden to second place in the Central Lancashire League and returned to Todmorden for a final stint in 1900 and 1901, taking a further 204 wickets.

Ernest died in Leeds in 1931.

FRED ROOT



Fred Root was Todmorden's professional from 1933-37. Between 1933 and 1937 he scored 2,427 runs and took 533 wickets, including 5 wickets in an innings on 60 occasions.

The Club won the Lancashire League in Fred's first season, 1933, and followed that with Worsley Cup wins in 1935 and 1937.



At the height of his success in 1926, he was the finest in-swing bowler in the world and played 3 Test matches for England against Australia, finishing top of the bowling averages.

HAROLD DAWSON

Born in Todmorden in 1914, Harold Dawson was an outstanding cricketer from an early age. He joined Todmorden Cricket Club in 1931 at the age of 16 and by 1933 was a regular member of the First XI as it won the Lancashire League.



Harold picked up cup winners' medals in 1935 and 1937 and in 1938 was a key member of the Todmorden team which won the league and cup. His club records of 12,329 runs and 204 catches are remarkable as his career spanned the 1939-1945 war years.

After the war he played occasionally for Hampshire and made his county debut against Kent alongside another Todmorden cricketer, Derek Shackleton.

Harold returned to Todmorden in 1950 and captained the side from 1951 until his retirement at the age of 50 in 1964. Under his leadership Todmorden accomplished another league and cup double in 1954, won the league in 1957, shared the Worsley Cup in 1962 and won it outright in 1963.



The fiery Gilchrist

Harold was an exceptional and courageous player of fast bowling. In 1960, at the age of 46, he took on the, the West Indian test player Roy Gilchrist, who was at his peak, and hit an unbeaten 69.

After his retirement, Harold served on the committee at Todmorden, was Chairman for many years and then President. He was President of the Lancashire League between 1985 and 1987.

Harold was still President of Todmorden Park Bowling Club when he died in 1994.

JOHN CROWTHER

After making his Todmorden debut in 1931, he was club professional for Darwen and then Whitehaven before returning to Todmorden as a key player in the 1938 double-winning team.

His finest hour came in the 1938 championship play-off against Haslingden at Turf Moor. He dominated the match with 144 runs and 5 wickets, as Todmorden won by an innings and 71 runs.



John Crowther and Harold Dawson, the only cricketers to score 10,000 runs for Todmorden, were the backbone of the team in the Club's two most successful periods, the 1930s and the 1950s.

John won Worsley Cup winners medals in 1935, 1938 and 1954 and championship medals in 1933, 1938, 1954 and 1957. In total for Todmorden John hit 10,028 runs, took 386 wickets and held 195 catches. Sadly, John died relatively young in 1971, aged 61.

JONAS CLEGG SENIOR

Jonas Clegg Senior was the best and longest serving of the Todmorden cricketers who reformed the club in 1850. Primarily a medium paced round arm bowler, he also scored useful runs as a middle/lower order batsman who hit the ball hard.

Jonas learned much from Joseph Crossland who was Todmorden's first professional. Crossland and Clegg were a formidable bowling partnership for ten seasons from 1851. His final match was a successful testimonial against Bacup in 1880, by which time he was known as 'the father of Todmorden cricket'.



In a first-team career spanning 30 seasons, he accumulated a minimum of 2,162 runs, 619 wickets and 92 catches for Todmorden's first team, figures which do not include 15 matches for which scores are not available. Jonas continued to work for the Club after his retirement.

JONAS CLEGG JUNIOR

Jonas Clegg Junior was made a member of Todmorden Cricket Club by his father when he was but a few hours old, so Jonas Junior was a member of the club literally all his life.

Jonas Junior made his 1st XI debut alongside his father in 1875 and played until 1903. He was a hard-hitting and devastating batsman - decades later, members would reminisce about his ability to *'block 'em o'ert' schoil'*.



The highlight of his career came in 1896 when he captained Todmorden to their first trophy, the Central Lancashire League championship. His 178 at Milnrow that season remains a record score by a Todmorden amateur.

In total he hit 7021 runs, took 98 wickets with his medium pace and held 155 catches for Todmorden. Although he played in an era when poor pitch preparation often made run-scoring difficult, only six batsmen have scored more runs for Todmorden. Like his father, Jonas Junior served on the committee for many years after his retirement.

NEIL DANSIE

Neil Dansie is a former batsman for South Australia and was Todmorden's professional in 1955 and 1956. In this short interview, conducted on his visit to Todmorden in August 2004, he spoke about his time at the Club.

How did you come to hear of Todmorden's interest in you?

Arthur Richardson played over here in the 1930s [for Bacup & Burnley] and had contacts in the Lancashire League. I was approached through him.



How did you get here?

I was due to come by boat, but I was ill and taken into hospital – tubes coming out of me and all sorts – and by the time I got out I had to come by plane which was a lot quicker. It took two or three days to get here.

Had you been to England before?

No.

What were your impressions of Todmorden as a town?

Beautiful scenery and lots of industry. Most people seemed to work in the factories and looked forward to their cricket on Saturdays. There were fewer motor cars. In my time over here I bought a cloth cap and a raincoat and I still wear them. My Todmorden cloth cap is one of my proudest possessions.

What sort of accommodation did the club provide?

I lived with a family on Ewood Lane. They have moved now but I still stay with them when I visit England – I'm staying at their house this week. That's incredible isn't it? Through cricket I've made friends on the opposite side of the world and here I am visiting them nearly fifty years later!



What were your commitments during the week?

I would practise with the team and I coached everybody from the youngest to the oldest at the club. I ran nets for the juniors from 4pm till 8 and one young man was always the first to arrive and the last to leave. I said at the time, with his determination and enthusiasm he would go a long way in the game, and fifteen years later he was getting off the plane to play against Australia – Peter Lever.

PETER LEVER



PETER LEVER

Born in 1942, Peter's first two first-team appearances were in 1958 and 1959. At first he was selected as a batsman, but a decent all-round season (222 runs and 30 wickets) in 1959 saw his bowling coming to the fore and it was this which caught the eye during trials for Lancashire at Old Trafford.

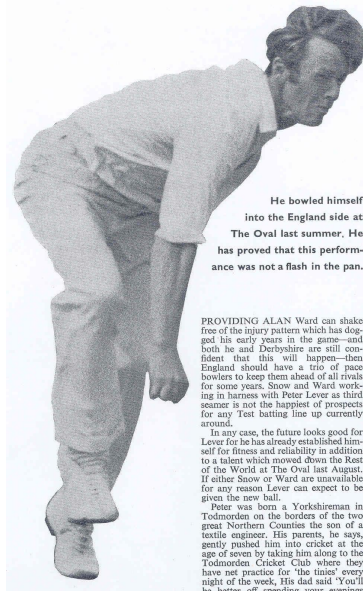
He joined the county in 1960 aged 19, and 10 years later made his England debut after earning a place on the 1970-71 tour of Australia, where he took 13 wickets as England regained the Ashes.

Alongside his 17 Test-match England career, Peter played in the very first one day

international at Melbourne in January 1971 and bowled effectively in the first World Cup tournament of 1975.

He was also a key member of the outstanding Lancashire team of this period, famed for winning many one-day competitions.

Lancashire's captain, Jackie Bond, admired Peter's *'hard work, concentration, determination and faith in his own ability'*. He retired from first-class cricket in 1976 and has since been coach at Lancashire in the mid-1980s and was England's bowling coach in the mid-1990s.



He bowled himself into the England side at The Oval last summer. He has proved that this performance was not a flash in the pan.

PROVIDING ALAN Ward can shake free of the injury pattern which has dogged his early years in the game—and both he and Derbyshire are still confident that this will happen—then England should have a trio of pace bowlers to keep them ahead of all rivals for some years. Snow and Ward working in harness with Peter Lever as third seamer is not the happiest of prospects for any Test batting line up currently around.

In any case, the future looks good for Lever for he has already established himself for fitness and reliability in addition to a talent which moved down the Rest of the World at The Oval last August. If either Snow or Ward are unavailable for any reason Lever can expect to be given the new ball.

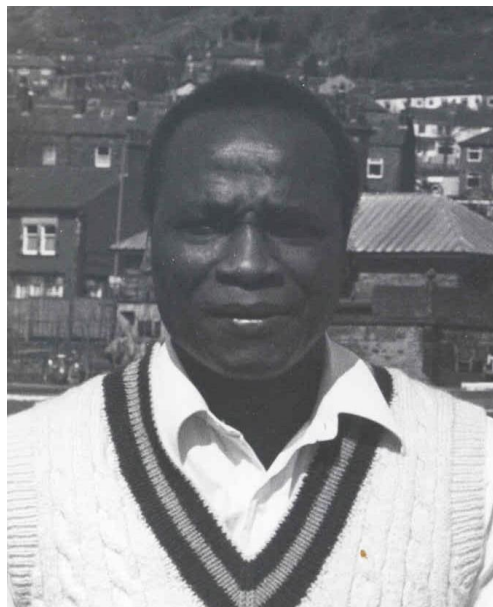
Peter was born a Yorkshireman in Todmorden on the borders of the two great Northern Counties the son of a textile engineer. His parents, he says, gently pushed him into cricket at the age of seven by taking him along to the Todmorden Cricket Club where they have net practice for "the linnies" every night of the week. His dad said "You'll be better off spendin' your evenings

Peter has retained his contacts with Todmorden. He brought a Lancashire team to play a special match in 1967 during his father's term as Mayor of the town, played in benefit matches in 1978 and 1980, and continues to support the cricket club and local schools when asked to attend special functions.

SYLVESTER OLIVER

*'TO THE MEMORY OF SYLVESTER OLIVER,
PROFESSIONAL & FRIEND'*

This simple message on the board which lists the names of Todmorden Cricket Club's professionals tells us that the relationship between Todmorden and 'Syl' Oliver was a special one.



Syl signed as Todmorden's professional in 1959, a young West Indian from Trinidad. He was a natural and talented all-rounder and had been twelfth man for the West Indies in 1958, the closest he came to playing in an international. Syl was instantly popular, the most exciting and entertaining cricketer seen in a Todmorden team. His fielding was electrifying, athletic in the

outfield and brilliant close to the bat. He batted with style and aggression and bowled with pace and hostility.

After a disappointing season in 1960, Syl was not re-signed and he played for Marsden in the Huddersfield League in 1961. He was re-signed by Todmorden in 1964 where he remained as professional for a further five seasons, bringing his total to seven, which remains the most by one professional at the Club since the 1850s.



In total for Todmorden, Syl scored 3,942 runs, including 31 fifties, and took 504 wickets, including 5 or more wickets in an innings on 46 occasions. Syl remained popular with everyone at Todmorden and returned as coach in the 1980s. He also played for the Lancashire over-fifties team, still a formidable cricketer.

In 1999, he picked up a virus and died suddenly. A memorial service held in Todmorden was attended by representatives of all his league clubs. There was standing room only in St. Mary's Church.