

RISING THROUGH THE RANKS

Profile of Richard Horner by Ian Hodgson

Since the age of 21 it has been hard but steady progress for Richard Horner. In 1967 he left Sheffield, where he had spent the previous three years at college, and moved to Huddersfield where he chose to play for Broad Oak. Since then he has worked his way through the club as player, captain, coach, chairman and now president.

Horner has had the president's job for three years. But he is heavily engaged at the Leeds University Centre of Excellence so finds it hard to find the time to get involved with off-field club events. "I tried to give it up but they kept telling me they still wanted me to do it," said Horner.



Weetwood, where the Leeds University side plays its home games

It is testament to his hardworking nature that he agreed to stay on. However, having fulfilled many roles within the club, Horner uses his experience and knowledge to offer guidance when needed. He sometimes helps out with coaching in the summer, but there are many hardworking people at the club doing a good job – and so he can take a relatively *laissez-faire* approach.

Before he arrived at Broad Oak, he played youth team cricket in Lincolnshire, where he was brought up. And like most cricketers, Horner became interested in the sport because of his Dad. "He was a very keen cricketer himself," Richard says of his father.

"So I played all sorts of sports from a young age," he adds. I played football at Scunthorpe United FC for five years as well as playing cricket, so those two sports along with tennis were the main three that I played. I was interested in pretty much all sports when I was younger, though."

The Lincolnshire-born president was part of the 1981 team that reached the Lord's final. The competition started off at a local level where teams played in a group format. After getting past the group stages, Broad Oak had to get through a quarter-final and semi-final to book their place at Lord's. He described this as an unbelievable experience - with the ambition of every amateur cricket player to play in a final at Lord's.

Since retiring as a player, Horner has taken up coaching. He first of all had a coaching role with Broad Oak and now he is head coach of the Leeds University side. He studied for an advanced coaching qualification and is now up to level 3 with his coaching badges. After spending the last 20 years taking coaching courses, he is more than able to help out at Broad Oak when he has the time.

And when the university term finishes in June, the president gets to follow his beloved Broad Oak in the Huddersfield League.