

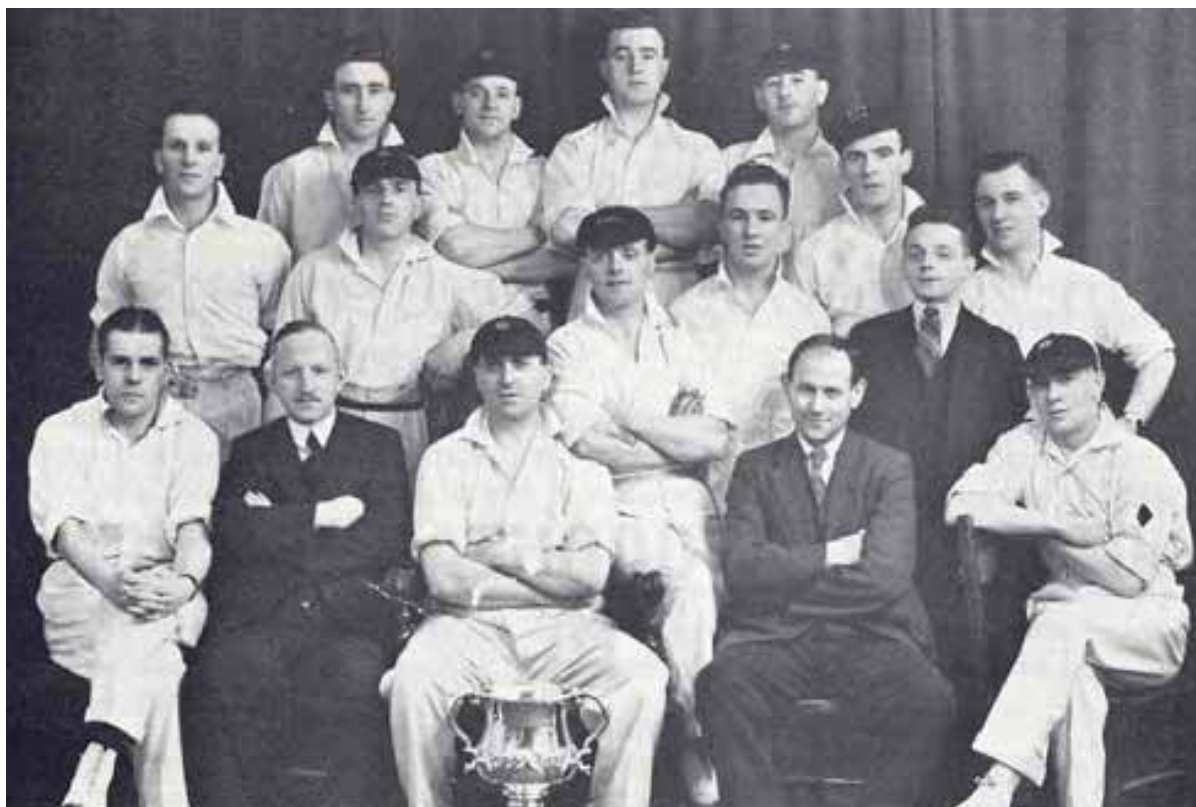
EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY

By Ian Hodgson

It is hard to say when and where cricket first originated. The best pictorial evidence is from around 1300 - an illustration of a man demonstrating a stroke with the stump. There are also later references in the Tudor period and in the mid-1600s.

In this early period, cricket would have been played on a small scale. Stumps were probably made out of sticks. The distance between the two sets of stumps would vary and the material used for the ball could have been anything. Since then, equipment and clothing has improved vastly, which has helped the sport to develop.

By looking at picture one (below), which was after Broad Oak Cricket Club won the Sykes Cup in 1930, we can see how basic the kit is. Some of the cricketers are wearing what looks like a white school shirt and the man on the left of the front row looks as if he is wearing black socks.

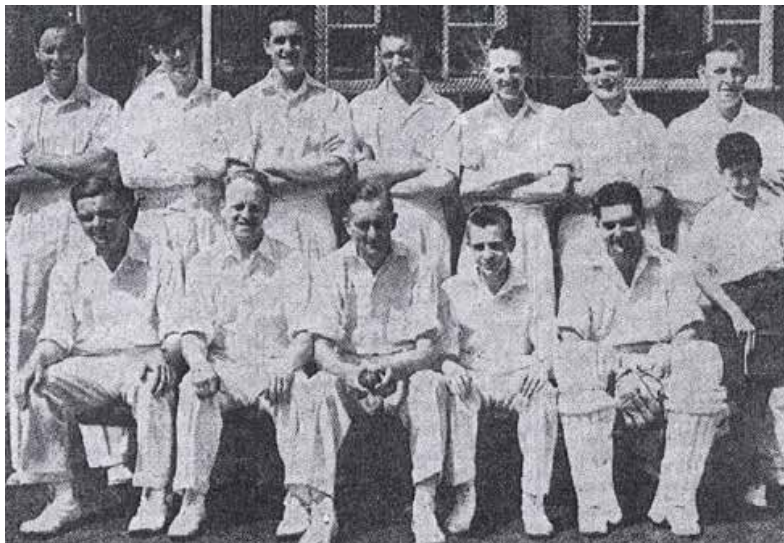


It is likely that teams would only have had a first XI side rather than the two or even three sides that clubs may have today. As the photos get older, we can see that the size of the squad increases. This is a sign of how interest in the sport has increased over the decades

and centuries and the growth of the game. By 1953 we can see blazers being worn - which are now a distinguishing feature at each and every club.



The photo taken in 1957 after the Paddock Shield defeat (below) shows us some post-war equipment: batting pads.



Before this, players would use scarves, hats and padding to protect various parts of their body. Graham Yallop was the first to use a helmet in a Test match while playing for Australia. Mike Brearley would use his own design while Tony Greig believed that it would be dangerous as it would encourage fast bowlers to bowl more bouncers!

Whatever the opinions, cricket has moved on. For example, it is now compulsory at all levels for under-19s to wear helmets while batting and fielding if they are within 15 yards of the batsman. The game gets faster and more ferocious so authorities and clubs have to adapt to this. It is evident that this has been the case both in professional and amateur cricket.