

BIG MOVE!

Augustinians and the Halifax Cricket League by Duncan Robinson

One of the most significant events in the history of Augustinians Cricket Club was the move out of the Huddersfield Association into the higher profile and well respected Halifax League. Both John Harold and Harold Ainley describe it as “the biggest change” during their careers “along with the ground move to Laund Hill.”



The Halifax Cricket League has members clubs throughout the Halifax area and is currently sponsored by Townergate. The league has recently adopted a new three-division format to ensure that every club is playing regular and competitive cricket. This in turn should help develop the league and raise the standard.

The Halifax League started as the Halifax Parish League in 1914. It began life when the Halifax and District League upset some of its clubs by introducing a new format. Teams feared that an uneven fixture list might have meant they would miss out on the top division and there were also concerns about the state of some of the pitches.



Siddal Cricket Club called a meeting with ten other clubs in August 1913 to discuss a breakaway. These clubs were Sowerby Bridge, Stainland, Greetland, Illingworth, Norwood Green, Triangle, Clifton Britannia, Lightcliffe and Ovenden. By the time the new league had formed in 1914, Ovenden had become defunct and their place was taken by Elland Edge.

The change in rules that occurred with the creation of the new Halifax Parish League were that no professionals were allowed and that all players had to

reside within a radius of five miles of the ground or have played four successive seasons at the club. This could be overturned if the club gained the special sanction of the league committee.

The league remained with ten clubs until 1952 when another six were added. The total rose to eighteen two years later in 1954. There has been continual growth and there are currently 37 teams playing in the Halifax League. Over the years 52 teams have featured in the league.



The 37 teams currently playing in the various sections of the Towergate Halifax League are: Augustinians, Barkisland, Blackley, Booth, Bradshaw, Bridgeholme, Clayton, Copley, Denholme Clough, Elland, Greetland, Halifax, Illingworth St. Mary's, Jer Lane, King Cross, Lightcliffe, Low Moor, Luddendenfoot, Mytholmroyd, Norden, Northowram Hedge Top, Old Crossleyans, Old Town, Outlane, Oxenhope, Queensbury, Rastrick, SBCI, Shelf, Southowram, Sowerby Bridge, Sowerby St. Peter's, Stainland, Stones, Thornton, Triangle and Warley.

John Harold said of Augustinians' move from the Huddersfield Association to the Halifax League: "We decided on the move because we decided we weren't going anywhere in the Huddersfield Association and the club needed a change in order to progress. It has turned out to be the right move because we are playing cricket of a better standard and have gained more exposure. It is also easier to attract players to the club now."

Augustinians have performed well since their transfer to the Halifax League.