

The achievements continue for former Central League cricket

# Heroes of leather and willow

SINCE Skelmanthorpe Cricket Club left the Huddersfield Central League at the end of the 1986 season they have won every honour that the District League has had to offer.

Foreign stars have graced the hallowed turf of their Lidgett Lane ground, which incidentally at the start of the present season looked an absolute picture.

They are very much the team that everyone likes to beat and all credit to them.

When they left the Alliance to become founder members of the Central League in 1914, success didn't come quite so readily. They were the first ever winners of the Holden Cup in 1928 and won it again in 1937. They picked up the championships in 1930 and 1933.

It was the appearance of a small schoolboy who made his first team debut, probably just making the side

decade.

That youngster was David Auckland Tyas. How the club must wish they could unearth someone of similar talent today! David had already taken over 100 wickets at junior and second team level when he established a first team place at the end of July 1948 before his 16th birthday.

The following season he turned out in his first big match, and what an epic it turned out to be — a four day Holden Cup Final at Shelley, before the advent of limited over cup ties.

The game started on the Saturday and continued on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday before young Tyas got hold of his first trophy, deservedly so as he returned figures of 5 for 70.

There were other heroes and one big act of sportmanship that could have changed the destiny of the match.

Skelmanthorpe amassed a total of 332 with Jack Kenworthy taking advantage of



Long serving Skelmanthorpe CC players...

# heroes Skelmanthorpe BOB HAIGH looks at the team's history



Skelmanthorpe were Auckland Cup winners (Championship Section A) in the 1955 season. From back left: P Mathews, L Jebson, D Waddington, D Tyas, A Kittle, G T Spring, scorer B Greaves; T Redgewick, R S Littlewood, (captain) W Booth, H Lockwood, M Horton.

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Wilf Booth would have been prepared to play for nothing. This was a player who, in 1951, had performed the unique feat of taking 106 wickets in the season at a cost of 5.69. Only Bob Blackburn, of Nortonthorpe, had done it before in the Central League. That was in 1923 when Blackburn took 117 at an amazing cost of 2.93.

Skelmanthorpe now were to dominate the Central League. They won the championship that 1954 season. They did it again the following year. Only newly promoted Holmbridge prevented the hat trick in 1956 but Skelmanthorpe won it again in 1957.

They finished runners up in 1958, a year that completed the break-up of the formidable Booth-Tyas partnership. Trevor Heeley, who was "Mr Skelmanthorpe Cricket Club" himself had a terrific shock when he

returned from holiday on July 1 to find that there was to be the presentation of a farewell gift to Wilf Booth.

Wilf had decided to leave the mines and the area to take up the stewardship of the General Engineering Social Club in the Radcliffe area.

David Tyas went on to become the second Skelmanthorpe player to take 100 wickets that season with his league and cup haul amounting to 103.

He was presented with a mounted cricket ball recording his feat, together with his record of 594 wickets for the club. These included three hat tricks against Cartworth Moor, Thurstonland and Penistone.

David Tyas has many reminiscences of his early cricket at Skelmanthorpe and his association with Wilf Booth. Neither were renowned as batsmen but he remembers a last wicket stand of 89 with his bowling partner. Booth scored 80 with Tyas just making nine in a game against Nortonthorpe. Booth once scored 50 off two overs from Steve Wray at Clayton West.

As Tyas only took four paces in his run up, a

maiden over didn't take very long and Wilf used to say, "Take thi time between thi bowls and give me a chance of a rest".

On a cracking session at the Headingley nets, Arthur Mitchell showed Tyas how to grip the ball and said: "If it was good enough for Hedley Verity it's good enough for thee".

1958 was the end of the Skelmanthorpe association for the pair, although David Tyas did make a brief return at the end of a glorious career that saw him appear successfully at Paddock and inbetween times at Liversedge in the Central Yorkshire League where he partnered Sonny Ramadhin who nicknamed him "Valentine" after his West Indian spin twin.

For the 1959 season his professional fee at Paddock amounted to £3 including expenses. His successes included a Sykes Cup win in 1963 and championship successes the following two seasons. During this period the famous Garfield Sobers was in the Paddock line up.

Coincidentally although little has been heard from Wilf Booth since his

Skelmanthorpe days (news would be very welcome) he, too, played in the same team as Sobers.

He wrote to the Skelmanthorpe club in 1959 to say that when his work commitment permitted he did play for Radcliffe in the Central Lancashire League and they had a promising young professional, the same, Garfield Sobers.

Booth was always described as a very nice affable man, but that depended exactly where you were stood. Anyone stood 22 yards away with a bat in hand as the big man roared in to deliver the ball might use a different adjective. Brian Ibbotson playing for Emley was rendered speechless for weeks after being struck in the throat by a lifting delivery.

As for David Tyas, who is not impartial to the odd glass of lager, he has lasting memories of the last full pint of beer he consumed, that was bought by the great Sonny Ramadhin from one of his collections when the pair were team mates at Liversedge. Cricket is a great game for memories.



Jonathan Owen, David Tyas's grandson, is already showing interest and promise as a cricketer. He is attending the Headingley nets and playing for the Slazenger CC junior team — though the SCC may one day stand for Skelmanthorpe Cricket Club . . .

. . . Very much the team that everyone likes to beat, and all credit to them . . .



David Tyas in the Paddock team that included the famous Garfield Sobers. This 1962 team went on to win the Section B Championship at the start of a golden era that brought trophies in four successive seasons. Team from back left: E Langton, H Fearnley, R Shaw, E Graham, K Hallas; G Sobers, C Beaumont, C E Gill, J Pearson, B Holroyd, D Tyas.

Clayton West had started their innings disastrously, losing their first two wickets with only one run on the board. But Percy Bedford (46) and Horace Wray put on 100 for the third wicket. Eddie Gibson (23) and Don Hayes (43) continued to give Wray valuable support but when Wray was eventually out for 102 lbw to Tyas it looked to be all over bar the shouting.

However, a ninth wicket stand of 70 between Ronnie Poulter (39) and Reg Garforth (27) caused tension to rise. In the end though, the last wicket fell at 307, just 15 runs short of the target.

At the dawn of the new decade Skelmanthorpe Cricket Club made two vital decisions that were to improve the club's fortune both on and off the field.

At that time the mines around Barnsley were a hotbed of cricket talent with the Kexborough and Darton area being the particular magnet for Central League clubs.

Names like Schofield, Bowden, Gibson and

to team up with slow left arm Tyas to make them one of the most formidable partnerships for several years.

Off the field the club also had very ambitious plans — the building of a new brick pavilion complete with showers and clubroom. On Friday, July 9, 1952 the ambition was realised.

The pavilion was officially opened by Mr A B Sellars of Yorkshire County Cricket Club.

A representative team from the Central League including E Booth and H Schofield (Scholes), G W Scargill (Emley), G Schofield (Shelley), H Bowden (Clayton West), K Morris (Cumberworth), T Thackra and R Frankland (Denby Dale), K Bower (Nortonthorpe), E H Whittingham (Bretton) and S Townshend (Penistone) took on the Skelmanthorpe side.

The pavilion was insured for £2,000 and the contents for £200 which was a very large sum in those days, so much so that the

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