

ALMONDBURY CRICKET CLUB: the third in a second series of cricket histories...

# League founders' distinguished history

## AROUND THE WICKET

...with historian Peter Davies

ALMONDBURY CC was founded by a group of local cricket enthusiasts who had played in the vicinity in 1873.

They raised funds by holding a concert during the winter of 1873-4 and formed the club in 1874, playing 19 matches that season, winning eight, drawing five and losing six.

Two local men were instrumental in the founding of the club: Edward Dyson, a surgeon, and Charles H Taylor, a merchant. In the same year — on November 24 — the club acquired a lease for Fernside Avenue, and has played there ever since.

The first AGM was held at the Radcliffe Arms and was attended by 50 members.

Almondbury were one of the founding members of the Huddersfield Central League in 1913, and they won the championship two years later.

But they decided to join the Huddersfield & District League in 1926, the year of the General Strike.

Eddie Leadbeater made his Almondbury debut during the Second World War, in 1941. He was a leg-spinner by trade and went on to win England Test caps, in 1951 and 1952.

Almondbury were a force to be reckoned with in the 1940s and 1950s, winning Section A of the Huddersfield League in 1950 and 1951.

In the 1951 publication, *60 Years of Glorious Cricket! Huddersfield and District Cricket League Diamond Jubilee 1891-1951*, it was stated that: 'Last winter the players themselves not only stripped the turf at the bottom end of the field but also levelled the ground with tipping from the adjoining housing estate, and re-laying the turf made a great improvement to playing conditions.' Almondbury went on to lift the Sykes Cup for the first time in 1962.

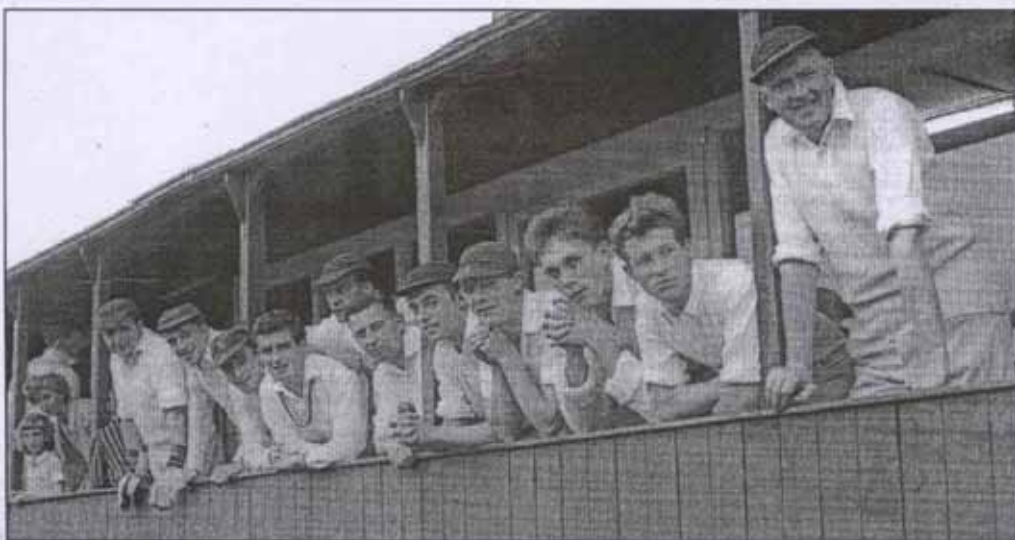
The club hold the distinction of being one of the last Huddersfield League sides to lift a very famous piece of silverware: the Heavy Woollen Cup.

Originally, clubs had to be located within six miles of Batley Town Hall to take part in this competition, but gradually this rule was relaxed; hence Almondbury's historic 1976 adventure.

Today, the club is are renowned for bringing on talented professionals.

One recent example was Shahid Nawaz, who began his career at the club before moving on to Read CC, in the Ribblesdale League, in 1996.

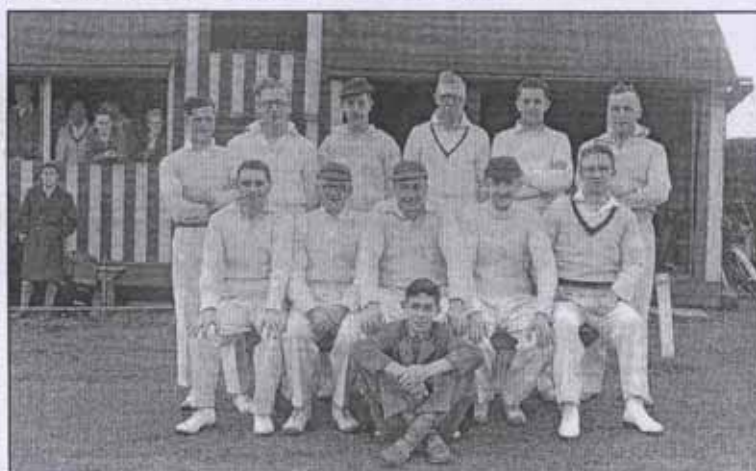
The club also boasts one of the most dedicated and hardest working stalwarts in the area: Donald Earnshaw or 'Mr Almondbury' as he is known.



☐ CUP WINNERS: The 1962 Sykes Cup-winning Almondbury side line up in the pavilion before that season's semi-final clash



☐ CLUB MEMORIES: Clockwise (from above): a club cap; a team line-up from May 29, 1950; a member's card from 1965; the Walker Cup final line-up from August 3, 1953 and a programme cover from the Heavy Woollen Cup final of 1976.



HEAVY WOOLLEN DISTRICT  
CRICKET CHALLENGE CUP FINAL

SUNDAY, 18TH AUGUST, 1976  
WICKETS PITCHED 2.00 P.M.

ALMONDBURY  
VERSUS  
OSSETT

