

## CRICKET

## Focus on - Todmorden

## Club that continues to rise from ashes

This is the latest in our series on Calderdale clubs, produced by Dr Peter Davies of the Cricket Heritage Project at Huddersfield University. It will continue every Saturday through the summer.

ALTHOUGH the first recorded match played by Todmorden Cricket Club was against Littleborough on Monday 20 August 1839, we also know that a fledgling club had been in existence since at least 1835.

In 1837 they moved from their first home at Shoebroad and for a brief time played at Old Shop Meadows, before moving to their current HQ at Centre Vale in 1839.

At a special meeting of Todmorden C.C. in 1841 it was passed, 'That this club be broken up'.

Although the demise of the early club is difficult to explain, events over the next decade were to secure the long-term future of cricket in the town.

In 1864 the ambition of Todmorden Cricket Club was demonstrated when, on 19 April, a decision was made to form 'a special committee for the management of an All-England match.'

Later, in 1874, Centre Vale hosted its only first-class match when it staged the North versus South fixture.

Despite a phenomenal run of scores over the preceding month, it was the bowling of W.G. Grace which inspired a South victory by an innings and 30 runs.

The club celebrated its 30th season as a member of the Lancashire League in 1927 by winning the championship for

the first time.

In 1954 Todmorden 1st XI completed the Lancashire League and Worsley Cup 'double' for a second time.

After some disappointing seasons, Todmorden were rejuvenated by two events in 1971.

The first was the adoption of the limited-overs format, and the second was the appointment of Lancashire and Leicestershire player Peter Marner as pro.

In the 1990s Todmorden Cricket Club were plagued by a disastrous run of fires.

In 1990 the tackle shed was burned down. And an accident at a bonfire took place in 1997, before the pavilion was set alight the following year.

After years of painstaking research, a unique and wonderful book chronicling the history of Todmorden cricket from 1835 to 1896 was published in 2004. It was written by long-time Todmorden CC devotees - the Heywood family, Malcolm, Freda and Brian.

## FACT FILE

Founded: 1839  
Ground: Centre Vale  
Nearest Other Club: Walsden  
League: Lancashire League  
Local Hero: Lancashire and England Test star Peter Lever - learnt his cricket at the club



Pristine: The Todmorden team of 1950