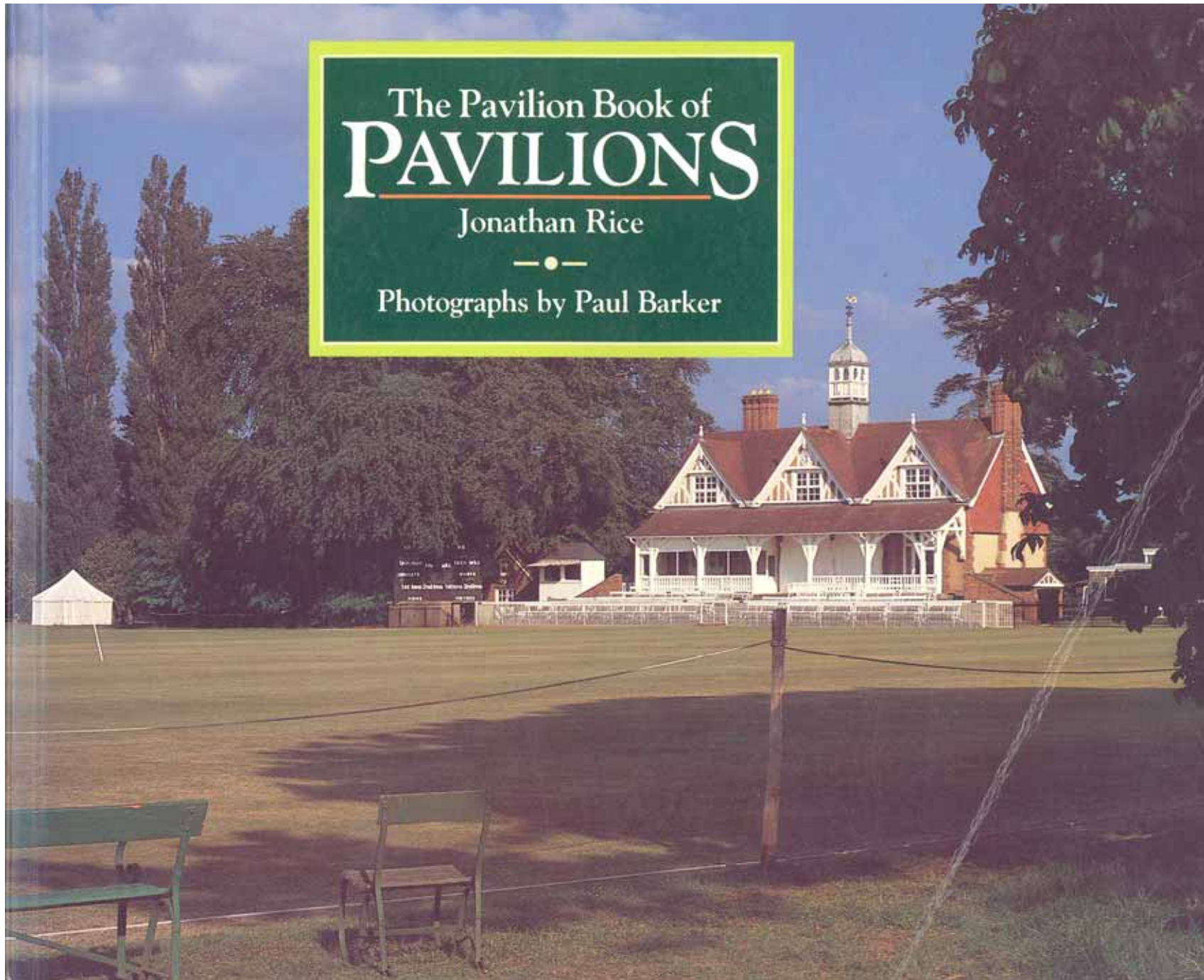


The Pavilion Book of
PAVILIONS

Jonathan Rice



Photographs by Paul Barker





Honley

·NEAR HUDDERSFIELD, WEST YORKSHIRE·

THERE IS no particular reason why the Honley pavilion looks like a Chinese pagoda. Like Topsy, it just grew. Honley Cricket Club was founded in 1878, and moved to its present ground at Far End in 1881. For the first ten years or so, there was no permanent pavilion, so the players had to change in a canvas tent (Latin, *papilio* – a tent) which the club had bought from Hepworth Cricket Club for £16-10-0. In the 1890s, the present pavilion was built, a single-storey wooden building reflecting the stolid confidence of the late Victorian Yorkshire wool merchants, and the records show that by 1902 it was insured for as much as £120.

At some later stage, probably in the 1930s, the second floor was added to the pavilion, and it was then that the close resemblance to an Oriental pagoda emerged. Most cricket pavilions in England are like English churches, homes from home for the true believers who gather every Sunday, not to mention Saturdays and mid-week evenings, to celebrate their passion for cricket. In Honley they have a building that looks like a Chinese pagoda from the outside and the aftermath of a Vicarage Bring and Buy sale on the inside.

Upstairs are the changing rooms. They are painted a colour which once was turquoise but which now merely clashes with all other areas of paintwork on display. The basins are probably more interesting as antiques than as things for washing in, and anyway there is no hot water upstairs. The home changing room has more mod cons than the opposition one, in that it boasts a roller towel, and includes a chest containing various items of

cricket kit and a suitcase with all the old scorebooks.

Below the stairs is a cubby-hole where they keep the kit. It is a Pandora's Box of cricketing all-sorts, a mishmash of pads, gloves and pots of paint. There are cricket bags, complete sets of Kwik Cricket donated by the Lord's Taverners, spare rolls of multicoloured lavatory paper and dozens of stumps. 'I had a friend who had a parrot,' explained committee member John Hutchinson, 'and he used to ask for the old stumps so he could cut them up for the parrot to sharpen his beak on. It had to be the old style stumps, because they were much harder.' Do the manufacturers realize that stumps these days are no good as parrot's beak sharpeners? What can Honley do with their vast stock of dilapidated stumps now?

The Honley pavilion has an even newer part than the second floor of the pagoda: a post-war East Wing which houses the tea room and the bar. The tea room includes a fine tribute to the mandarins of Honley cricket, a photograph of the 1952 committee. It shows seventeen men in severe three piece suits with their trophies, the Greenwood Trophy and the prestigious Hinchcliffe Senior Cup. It is good to see credit where credit is due. If ever the Chinese take up cricket in a big way, they will transform their pagodas into Gwangzhou and District League Club pavilions and on their walls will be hundreds of photographs showing an inscrutable Gang of Fourteen or so formally dressed committee men, guardians of the true power in the club, and no sign anywhere of a pair of flannels or a bat. But Honley did it first.