

KIRKBURTON CC: the 13th in a second series of cricket histories...

Riley Laners rise in strength from blaze

KIRKBURTON CC was founded at a meeting on 25 February 1860 at the Rose and Crown Inn by members of the Carlton Working Men's Club with Charles Heptonstall in the chair.

In fact, cricket club members had to be members of the Carlton too. Sam Rhodes was elected president, with William Stockdale as vice-president and George Watkinson as secretary.

The first playing area was a piece of land at Turnshaws, now part of Oaklands Park and the first reported game was against a Hephworth XI.

By 1863 the club was playing matches as Kirkburton and in 1867 they played a fixture against Kirkheaton.

Games were also arranged against other clubs: Beaumonts Club of Kirkheaton, Netherpton, Shepley, Skelmanthorpe, Wortley, Almondbury, Highburton, Thurstonland and Dalton. 2nd XI games were also played, which indicates a high level of enthusiasm.

The club moved to current venue Riley Lane in 1878, opening with a game against Hephworth on April 20. Ground improvements began that same year.

Kirkburton became one of the founder members of the Huddersfield & District Alliance in 1893, winning the competition in 1910. They joined the prestigious Huddersfield & District League in 1911 – and compete in this competition still today.

In 1932 a tea room was purchased and this led to the formation of the club's first ladies committee.

The 1st XI claimed the Huddersfield and District League Section B championship in 1933. The side was unbeaten throughout the league season and, against Almondbury, created a new record for time-limit cricket: 355-9.

As war approached, the club engaged in payments for players. In 1938 the club's

own player, George Senior, signed as professional for the first time. Another of the club's stars, Fred Haigh, signed as pro the following summer, 1939.

In 1944 there was a unique BBC radio commentary on the club's Sykes Cup semi-final tie against Broad Oak, played at Paddock.

There was sadness in 1960 when the club's entire dressing-room block, along with all tackle and essential equipment, was completely destroyed by fire on April 5.

Great efforts were made by the league president, Herbert Robinson, to rally support from many quarters – and this enabled the club to start the season on schedule. A defunct Huddersfield Corporation trolleybus had to be used as temporary accommodation until the new building was opened.

The club's new pavilion was unveiled by Mr Herbert Robinson on June 1 1962 – a great achievement.

In 1964 the 1st XI scooped the Sykes Cup and housing development on the eastern side of ground also began.

Although there were the inevitable problems of 'balls through windows', a number of new residents became club members, including some who went on to serve on the committee.

In 1970 a women's cricket section was established. The (men's) 1st XI claimed the Huddersfield and District League Section 'B' championship in the same year.

In 1972 the pavilion was extended to incorporate the Stanley Kinder Lounge. The club's 1978 brochure observed, following this development:

The 1st XI also bagged the Huddersfield League championship in 1972.

David Barraclough and Geoff Anderson had their loyalty to the club rewarded in 1982 as a benefit match was staged for each of them.

AROUND THE WICKET

...with historian Peter Davies



□ **SHIELD WIN:** Pictured with Paddock Shield in 1997 are, back: S Thornhill, J Horner, D Moss, M Thornhill (cricket chairman), A Steers, M Steers, N Garrity; front: C Sheard, S Jepson, J Burkinshaw, J Eaton (capt), R Kettlewell, A Guy, W Keighley, A Keast.

In 1984 the Zimbabwe Under-20 touring side played a fixture at Riley Lane.

Nine years later, in 1993, grant aid of £3,750 was received from the Foundation for Sport and the Arts to help improve facilities at Riley Lane.

Danny Waugh, the younger brother of Test legends Steve and Mark, had a spell as Kirkburton overseas player the year after in 1994.

And former England Test player Phil Defreitas signed up for a short stint at Riley Lane in 1995.

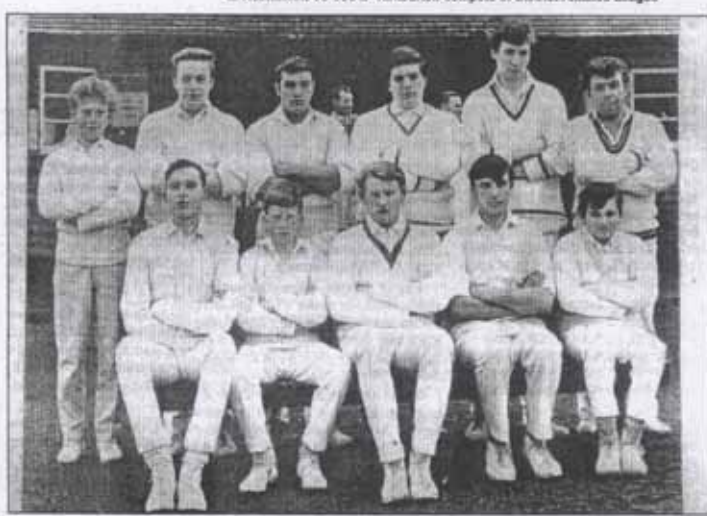
The new millennium heralded an array of Sykes Cup final victories and championship titles – and the future looks bright for the club from Riley Lane.



□ **FASHBACK TO 1964:** Kirkburton compete in District Alliance League



□ **PRIZE-WINNERS:** The 1933 Kirkburton first XI line-up which claimed the Huddersfield and District Cricket League Division 2 championship title



□ **WALKER CUP WINNERS IN 1985:** Back row: R Anderson, G Tindall, D Broadbent, R Booth, I Rangeley, D Hennigan; front: J Palmer, R Holdroyd, J Senior (capt), M Fitton, J Bowers.