

Charting history as Mirfield CC marks 50th anniversary

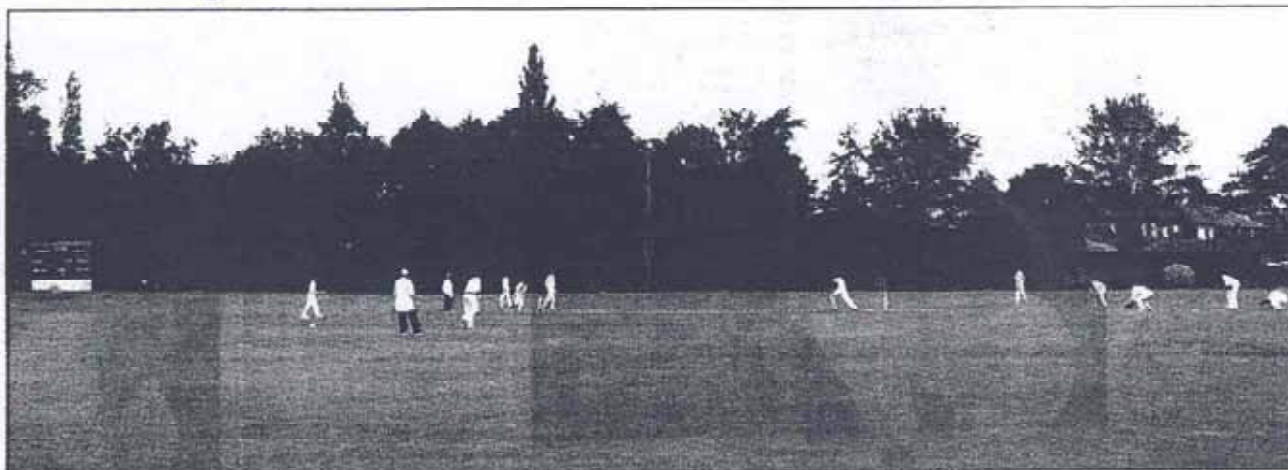
The re-formed Mirfield CC celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. **Andrew Hunt** looks back over the club's history.

WHEN Mirfield Cricket Club was re-formed 50 years ago by a group of local business men, none could have envisaged the changes the club would go through.

There was a Mirfield CC in the late 1800s and early 1900s, but they folded and although Craven Gentlemen played on the Memorial Ground, it wasn't until their lease expired that a group of local businessmen decided to re-form Mirfield.

They set about raising £500 to make Mirfield CC a viable proposition and within three weeks had achieved their goal.

Over the past few months, secretary Patrick Neal has been researching the club's history and has put together a commemorative booklet, looking back at the last half-century of Mirfield CC.



Mirfield CC's Memorial Park ground has been the venue for many great matches and individual performances. (150726)

Players from Mirfield Parish Church and Whitley Lower – who were to later to join forces and become Mirfield Parish Cavaliers – had trials for Mirfield and on Saturday April 26 1952 the new club took their place in the Central Yorkshire League with a home game against Gomersal.

"Mirfield recruited local based players and advertised for a player/coach," said Mr Neal. "Tommy Hyland took the post and brought with him ex-Yorkshire and England player Wilf Barber."

"The booklet was sparked when president Clive Brook addressed the members at the

annual meeting. I set about getting a complete record of first team scores from the first 49 years of the club."

Over the past half-century Mirfield has seen many great matches and individual performances, but perhaps the biggest change of all came at the start of last season when

they moved to the Bradford League.

Hurst Barber played in Mirfield's first game against Gomersal, top scoring with 79, thus becoming the first batsman to score a half-century.

He captained the side when they became the first club to win three CYL titles on the trot,

1958-1960, and is still an active member and current Life Vice President.

Colin Peacock played in the 1962 season as a 16-year-old and went on to break several league records, including scoring 1,000 runs in the 1960 season.

Mr Neal has played for the club for 17 years, during which time he has witnessed equally impressive individual displays, such as when Iqbal Khan became the first CYL batsman to score a double century, making 201 against Ossett at the Memorial Ground and Mohammed Asif – who is still the club's overseas man – taking nine wickets in a match in 1997.

There are plans to celebrate the 50th anniversary with a dinner at the end of the season and on Sunday, August 11, a Mirfield XI will take on a Moorlands XI, when it is hoped Iqbal Khan will guest for Moorlands.

The booklet is available at Mirfield CC and costs £3, with proceeds going to the club.