

STONES MUST

GET ROLLING

NEWLY promoted Stones are finding the going tough in the top flight but skipper Stuart Milner isn't one to give hope so early in the season.

The Ripponden-based outfit romped to the second division title last term finishing 18 points ahead of second-placed Mytholmroyd but their skipper admits he was never under any illusions about this season's prospects.

"We knew it was going to be tough and that's the way it has turned out," said Milner.

"But we are learning week by week and we have to be confident of getting out of trouble.

"As skipper I have to make sure that people's heads don't start going down. It is very much an individual game and if players go to the wicket feeling they are not going to make runs they tense up and don't go for their shots."

Tomorrow Stones face another stiff test of the ability to compete at the top level when they play hosts to third-placed Sowerby Bridge.

Milner feels it is their batsman which have let the side down so far with only opener Chris Houliker performing consistently.

"Our bowlers have been doing a good restricting job and have kept most sides we have faced down to around 180.

"Our openers have got us off to good starts but we just have not capitalised. If we can improve in that area and just get a little bit more luck I feel reasonably confident we can climb up the table.

Skipper Milner confident his side can bounce back

"We were going really well against Copley last week and threw it away and we also played well at Triangle and should have beaten Luddenden Foot when we only tied.

"Three wins there would have really eased the pressure but we will just have to keep working at it."

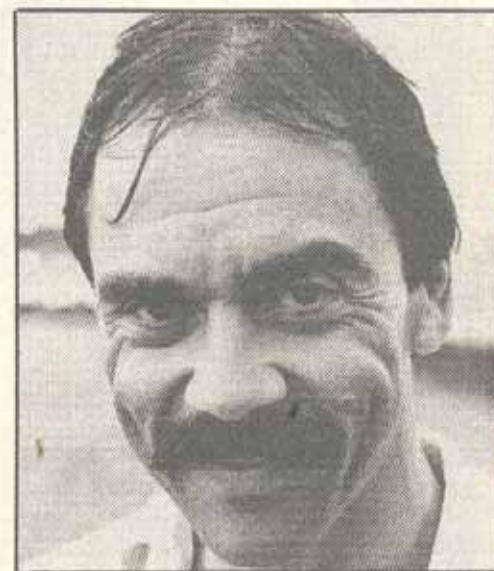
Fellow first division newcomers Mytholmroyd are only two points better off and they too face stiff opposition in Triangle.

Elsewhere new leaders Copley visit mid-table Bradshaw and second-placed Barkisland, knocked out of the Parish Cup by Triangle mid-week, must now concentrate their efforts on the league title.

Tomorrow they take on reigning champions Booth who improved their lowly position slightly last weekend with a four-point success over Mytholmroyd.

Warley who have improved greatly after a shaky start make the trip to Luddenden Foot who will also be desperate for points having slipped into third from bottom spot.

In Division Two impressive early leaders Old Crossleyans put their fine record on the line at home to Blackley.



□ **LEARNING QUICKLY . . .** Stones skipper Stuart Milner is backing his side to find their way.

**STONES C.C. 2nd XI - 1991
CROSSLEY SHIELD RUNNERS UP**



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