

CRICKET: Season's previews

Veteran Bruce tries to lift Rams

NORTHOWRAM Hedge Top and Old Town have suffered setbacks in their attempt to bounce straight back to Division One.

Northowram's aspirations for a speedy return have been frustrated in the close season by a series of moves and unavailability.

Bowler Andrew Gardner has moved to Northowram and talented youngster Gury Severn has transferred to Lightcliffe while Peter Westoby has retired, Ian Stocks is unavailable and Chris Jagger is reported to have joined Stones.

Despite the setbacks captain Bruce Doodman, preparing for his 44th season in league cricket, is counting on Richard Leach and the club's rich seam of talented youngsters to settle quickly into

senior cricket.

Old Town's Richard Butterworth has joined Union Croft and Ken Weatherhill has been appointed president after retiring at the end of last season.

Old Crossleyans, who narrowly missed promotion by three points last season, have added three new players to their squad in an attempt to finish in the top two positions in Section B.

Batsman Gwyn Griffiths has been recruited from Siddal and batsman and medium pace bowler Michael Kettlewell has joined Old Crossleyans from Bradford Central League side Thackley. Bowler Ben Fewler has returned after one season at Halifax.

Captain Charlie Daly will be hoping John Pearson repeats the form which led to him gaining the fourth best batting

averages in section B last term.

Greetend will have to sit out the start of the season tomorrow following Siddal's decision to drop out of the league due mainly to a lack of players.

Union Croft, who were re-elected in 1904, are optimistic of finishing much higher. Butterworth has moved from Old Town and his experience will prove vital to help the younger players develop.

Secretary Neil Myers said despite the club going through a transitional period the first XI contained several promising young guns.

They are also building for the future having entered U17 and U15 teams in the Halifax Leagues for the first time.

Luddenden Foot and SBCI both finished in mid-table last season and will

be aiming to push harder for honours. Vice-captain Chris Hutchinson will be spearheading Luddenden's battling along with Karl Whippi, who hit 549 runs last season, and Steve Smith will be leading the bowling attack.

Kevin Lord is back at SBCI after a spell at King Cross and opening batsman Martyn Summerscales will be aiming to lead his team by example.

Michael Wild and Tony Milnes have left. Myholmroyd Methodists and Mackintosh's had a solid pre-season work out when beating Altrincham-based Oldfield by 40 runs which included 62 runs from John Thompson.

It has always been a mystery why the West Vale men, with their fine facilities, have struggled to raise teams but they do have some new faces this time.

16/6/95

RAMS READY TO COME BACK FIGHTING

New skippers breathe life back into Northowram neighbours

1994 was a black year for the Northowram clubs with the neighbours, separated by the thickness of a wall, both relegated. But 1995 promises better things with two new skippers at the helm.

The Halifax League side struggled for all of last season and it turned out that their late heroics in 1993, when they performed a great escape on the last day, only prolonged the inevitable.

The drop led to the departure of several key players, including almost the whole of the bowling attack, and former captain Andy Whitehead is not missing at the moment after moving home.

New skipper Bruce Deadman was left with a fairly unenviable task at first sight but the Hedge Top men have put a distinctly unpromising first day defeat by Greetland behind them to move up the league and gain a surprise place in the semi-finals of the Parish Cup.

Northowram's Bradford Central League neighbours were perhaps a shade unfortunate to go down from their top section.

They finished joint second from bottom with Idle UC but went down by virtue of fewer six point wins. They were also denied a good winning opportunity on the last day of the season when their match at Sandy Lane was washed out.

Chris Howes, who has done the rounds in the Bradford League with clubs such as Queensbury, Hanging Heaton, Spen Victoria and most recently Heckmondwike in the Central Yorkshire League, is the new man in charge and things have gone quite smoothly so far.

Wide margin wins over Girtlington, Eldwick and Gilstead. Denholme, Crossflatts and Bingley Congs took them to the top of the table and they are still in the firing line despite last week's losing draw at home to Allerton.

So things are looking up, but can the Northowram clubs keep it going?

25/6/95

Parish Cup

MATT'S FINISH PUTS SHINE ON A LAST-BALL SIX THRILLER

PARISH CUP

SEMI-FINALS

Sowerby S P v Northwram

Sowerby won by 4 wkts

NORTHWRAM 169 for nine

B. Deadman run out.....	59
D. Birtwistle c Grimley b Hoyle.....	16
R. Leach c Grimley b Schofield.....	27
N. Scott st Bridges b Hoyle.....	3
S. Parlinson st Bridges b Hoyle.....	15
M. Reed lbw Allott.....	0
K. Galvin c Marshall b C. Marshall.....	7
I. Stocks b Allott.....	9
M. Oldman not out.....	7
F. Holt st Bridges b Marshall.....	5
C. Hoey not out.....	2
Extras.....	19

Bowling: R. Allott 10-2-27-2; C. Marshall 10-1-28-2; J. Hoyle 8-1-32-3; L. Baxter 10-0-33-0; M. Schofield 7-0-35-1

SOWERBY ST PETERS 171 for six

J. Bridges b Oldman.....	22
M. Grimley lbw Stocks.....	52
J. Hoyle c Reed b Hoey.....	25
M. Schofield lbw Hoey.....	0
R. Allott c Birtwistle b Hoey.....	1
M. Greenwood not out.....	26
I. Marshall b Oldman.....	5
N. Fielden not out.....	12
Extras.....	27

Bowling: I. Stocks 10-0-24-1; F. Holt 5-2-20-0; M. Reed 10-0-29-0; M. Oldman 10-3-32-2; C. Hoey 10-1-41-3