

Council owed £2,500 rent

Club gets reprieve in fight for life

By **DARREN THWAITES**

PADDOCK Cricket Club has been given one month's breathing space in its fight for survival.

The 120-year-old club owes Kirklees Council what is believed to be at least £2,500 in unpaid rent on its Church Street ground.

Paddock must pay off the debt before it can press ahead with an estimated £23,000 deal to buy the ground's freehold.

Kirklees estates chiefs have agreed to give the club until the middle of November to find the cash.

The Drakes Huddersfield Section B club faces extinction if it fails to pay off the arrears.

But, in an official statement to

the *Examiner*, club members accuse the council of appearing to want the club to fold.

"For many years Kirklees has been overcharging the club for business rates," says the statement.

"The matter was resolved when the case was proved at a tribunal.

"This resulted in not only the club being credited with payment of rates to March 1994, but also a cheque in excess of £1,700 being refunded by Kirklees.

"The club provides a valuable recreational service. It is a great pity that Kirklees seems to wish its extinction."

But Kirklees valuer Robert Halstead said business rates are set by the district valuer, independently of the council. The club's unpaid rent was a separate issue.