

Upper Hopton CC

Before Upper Hopton Cricket Club was founded in 1904, cricket was played by Upper Hopton Working Men's Club.

Before Upper Hopton CC could start playing, the cricket square had to be dug out of the field above the Travellers Rest Public House.

No mean feat when all that was available was a spade!

All the effort proved to be worthwhile when the club's first match was staged in 1905.

In their first year, Upper Hopton had made it through to the final of the Dewsbury & District Shield competition. However, the final had to be halted due to bad weather conditions with Upper Hopton 78 for five wickets.

When the match resumed, Upper Hopton proceeded to score 105 and then dismissed Savile Town Wesleyans for 71.

The *Dewsbury Reporter* remarked that, 'At this time last year they were non-existent and it was only by hard work and sacrifice of leisure that they were able to provide themselves with a proper playing field'.

The newspaper went on to say that, 'For a new club to beat all-comers in the first season is something to be proud of.'

With the outbreak of the First World War, Upper Hopton - like a lot of clubs - found it difficult to survive, and disbanded in 1915.

In February 1920 the club was re-formed. This same year a lawnmower was purchased for the princely sum of £1!

Local cows would no longer be needed to keep the grass short for match days!

Along with other organisations, Upper Hopton Cricket Club found it hard to raise funds in 1926, the year of the General Strike. This situation forced the club into selling three pieces of corrugated iron to a Mr Arthur France for 3s or 15p in today's money.

During the first years of the Second World War, Upper Hopton played charity matches against Mirfield Parish Church C.C. and Whitley Lower C.C. to raise money for the Red Cross Society.

But in 1942 the club once again had to close due to world war.

In 1951, 46 years after it was first mentioned in the Upper Hopton committee minutes, the club was finally connected up to the water supply by Huddersfield Water Corporation at a cost of between £20 and £25.

The club switched grounds in 1962: from the Travellers Rest to Jackroyd Lane, where they currently reside. The committee accepted a £1,850 quote for a pavilion from S. Johnson's & Sons.

The new pavilion was finally ready in 1963, and the official opening was performed by Mrs T.R. Sutcliffe (part of the Sutcliffe family, that had done so much for the village via Charles, a key benefactor, and Reggie), Howard Walker J.P., chairman of Mirfield Urban District Council, and Canon H.N. Myers, club president at the time.

The 1st XI brought the first piece of silverware to the new pavilion in 1965 when they triumphed over Birstall Carpets in the final of the Sheard Cup.

After losing to Mirfield Parish in the semi-final of the 1974 Sheard Cup, Upper Hopton were given a second chance when it was discovered that one of Mirfield's players had not been registered with the league. Upper Hopton won the replay!

The final of the Sheard Cup that ensued, between Upper Hopton and Howden Clough, resulted in an 'easy victory for Upper Hopton', according to the *Dewsbury Reporter*.

But controversy reigned when Upper Hopton played Calder Grove in the 1978 Sheard Cup. The West Indian test cricketer Collis King was a surprise addition to the Calder Grove side!

By 1982 the club felt it was time to move on from the Dewsbury & District League. An application was made to join the Huddersfield Central League and the club was accepted for the following season.

So the final match of 1982 proved to be Upper Hopton's last appearance in the Dewsbury & District League.

Upper Hopton's first year in the new league saw both 1st and 2nd XI win their respective sections.

Like every other local cricket club, Upper Hopton have relied upon the commitment of its female members to provide both cricket teas and to help with fundraising.

To this end, the club minute book records that a Ladies Committee was established in 1990.

And to celebrate their centenary in 2004, Upper Hopton published a wonderful history of the club.

The book was researched by stalwart Peter Jaggard and then compiled and written by Jack Carson, hardworking club and league official.

It is a wonderful tribute to the rich history and heritage of cricket in Upper Hopton.