

AROUND THE WICKET

with historian Peter Davies

DENBY CRICKET CLUB: the tenth in a fascinating series of cricket histories

Silverware success after 'hibernation'

THERE is some confusion about the origins of Denby Cricket Club, but a team called Denby United were fulfilling fixtures in 1901.

The 'United' might signify the merger of two teams in the village – or a coming together of the communities of Upper and Lower Denby to form a sporting organisation.

In later years, the club would also, occasionally, be referred to as 'Upper Denby' on account of its geographical location.

Some argue that the club was officially established as late as 1908.

If this is true, it means that as far as its own history goes, the club is in the 'nervous nineties', only two years away from its centenary in 2008.

Before moving to Denby Lane (its current headquarters), the club played just round the corner on Falledge Lane.

Howard Moxon, club stalwart, explains: "I'm not sure how long the club remained at the original venue, but I do know that it has been based at Denby Lane for most of the last century.

"It was probably around 1920 when the club moved ground."

Historically, Denby village is part of the Parish of Penistone, and in these early years, the cricket club were members of the Penistone and District League.

As such, they pitted their wits against local sides such as Hoylandswaine, Penistone Church, Silkstone United, Thurlstone Old and Crane Moor.

Half a century on, they still had league fixtures against Crane Moor, but had shifted their focus, and were now mixing with the likes of Greenmoor, Millhouse, Mortomley, Midhope, Thurgoland and Pogmoor Sports.

Denby Cricket Club went into hibernation in 1958. An entry in the club minute book stated: 'Club disbanded owing to lack of members and players'.

In 1960 the club re-formed, re-entering the Penistone and District League. In the same year the club erected some new changing rooms.

Many things changed the year after, in 1961. Calor gas was installed in the tea tent,



□ DENBY CRICKET CLUB MEMORIES: Above a line-up from 1979; left: David Firth and long-serving Howard Moxon open the innings against Thurlstone in 1979 and below: how the Express and Chronicle recorded the juniors' success in the Hazel Gill Cup against Thurlstone in October 1980.



a motor mower was purchased, a weekly draw was inaugurated, the ground was fenced in, insurance was taken out for players, and the club also joined the Huddersfield Central League.

And then, in 1964, the club erected a new tea room.

It was decided at the AGM on November 28 1963 that a professional should be engaged for the 1964 season 'to coach the younger members if possible, on one evening per week.'

B Ely was subsequently engaged and presented to the members present at a meeting on March 3 1964. Ely did not play for the club; he only coached the players and was not retained for the following season.

In 1965 G Adamson was engaged as professional at a fee of 10/- per match.

It was decided at the 1966 AGM that: 'Notices to be inserted in the village requesting volunteers to help provide teas at the club's home matches.'



Since its re-formation, the club has bagged its fair share of silverware – at junior and senior level.

And today Denby Lane stands as one of the most tranquil and attractive local league cricket grounds.

● Readers are asked to contact Peter Davies on 01484 472405 or via p.j.davies@hud.ac.uk if they have any more photos or information relating to local cricket history.