

Champions!

Shepley CC - 1984 Season Review

By Dave Wooding

This feature takes a match-by-match look at the 1984 season, when Shepley, despite being tipped for relegation, scooped the Byrom Shield

Shepley's side for the 1984 season was slightly different from the 1983 team that failed to successfully defend their 1982 league title. Geoff Gill took charge of the side and became the youngest skipper in the top flight that season. In an attempt to strengthen their bowling line-up, the Marsh Laners brought in Adrian Guy from rivals Meltham, where he had taken 313 wickets in just six seasons.

Also joining the side for his first season in the league was wicketkeeper Dale Skelly, who moved over from Central League side Cawthorne. Opening batsman Peter Walker replaced the outgoing Peter Ingham, who moved on to Hanging Heaton in time for the season opener. The 1984 season also saw a rule change, with the number of overs being increased from 45 overs per innings to 50.

21 April: Shepley's season began with a tricky game away at **Kirkburton**. A bright start by newcomer Adrian Guy, who took 4-51, alongside a good contribution from swing bowler Ian Glover, saw the hosts restricted to just 169-9 off their 50 overs. The visitors, however, were unable to capitalise on a good bowling effort. Newcomer Walker fell for a duck on his debut, as R.Cocking and Robert Kettlewell also failed to trouble the scorers. Other than Geoff Gill, who made 12, only debutant Adrian Guy managed double figures, notching up 23 before being out caught and bowled. Shepley were eventually bowled out for a mere 75, handing Kirkburton all 4 points.



28 April: Shepley, still looking for their first points of the season, travelled to **Meltham**, the former team of Aidy Guy, who was perhaps Shepley's best performer in the opening-day defeat. The side was boosted by the return of David Cocking from a tour of the West Indies. Indeed, Cocking's return seemed to lift the team, and he put on a partnership of 89 with Stevie Carter for the sixth wicket. This came after Shepley suffered a mini-collapse, moving from a comfortable 49-0 to 62-5 in the space of just a few overs. Carter was then dismissed for 40, but Guy stuck with Cocking and saw out the 50 overs - his 26 not out complementing David's knock of 73 not out. Shepley finished up on a solid 210-6. Boosted by a solid batting performance, Shepley then set about dismissing Meltham cheaply. Cocking made sure he put in a complete performance with both ball and bat, taking 4-50 off his 13 overs. He was aided by Ian Glover, who chipped in with 2-49, and Adrian Guy who took 2-46. However, Meltham clung on for a point, ending up at 186-9, meaning Shepley walked away with their first 3 points of the season.

5 May: The first game held at Marsh Lane in 1984 saw the visit of newly-promoted **Bradley Mills**. The highlight of this match was the 102 partnership between Dale Skelly and Geoff Gill for the third wicket. Gill made 59, while Skelly went on to complete his first century for the club, before being caught and bowled by Lakhoni for 102. However, Shepley had a platform to build on and ended on 213-6. Again, however, Shepley were forced to settle for 3 points instead of 4, as Bradley Mills lost only 8 wickets, with Ian Glover and Aidy Guy picking up 3 wickets apiece. They ended their 50 overs on 136, 77 runs short of the Shepley total, but enough to secure 1 point.

19 May: Following a comfortable Sykes Cup win over Section 'B' side Rastrick the previous week, Shepley travelled to **Marsden** full of confidence. Adrian Guy again had a fine day with the ball, taking 6-81, as the hosts were restricted to 161 for 9. David Cocking also chipped in with 2-23. In response, opener Lindley and captain Gill both smashed a six along with five fours each as Shepley raced to victory with Lindley falling just shy of his half-century with 46, and Gill not out on 42 as the visitors lost six wickets before passing their 162-run target, giving the side another 3 points.

***Table Update:** Following this match Shepley found themselves in 5th position in the table on 9pts. Kirkburton, meanwhile, had managed to secure victories in all four of their opening matches, as they raced to the top with 16 points.*

26 May: The fifth league match of the season saw Shepley travel to **Golcar**. A century from debutant overseas player Ohja, who ended on 104 not out, guided Shepley to 198-6, with Jones the second top scorer with 31. The bowling partnership of Glover and Guy again proved deadly, taking nine wickets between them, to give the Marsh Lane side their first maximum of the season after dismissing Golcar for just 162. Glover ended the match with 4-53 while Guy took his second five-wicket haul, with 5-51.



The May bank holiday weekend saw Shepley face defending league champions **Elland** twice in just two days. The first match saw them travel to Elland, where they were faced with a wet track. The conditions played their part as Shepley staggered through their innings, making just 148-8, with Geoff Gill top scoring on 57 not out. The only other significant knock came from opener Peter Walker, who contributed 44. Guy and Glover were unable to repeat the heroics of the weekend's performance against Golcar. Although they took three wickets between them, Elland reached their target in the 48th over, leaving Shepley with just 1 point from the first of the two ties. The 2 points awarded to Elland meant that both teams went into the return fixture tied on 14 points. Again batting first, the Shepley side fell victim to their own 'death strip' as the batting collapsed, leaving the team to defend a miserly 76. Every batsman was caught out, with five of the catches coming off the batsmen's gloves. Only Geoff Gill made a significant score, smashing one 6 and six 4s on his way to 32. Elland captain Phil Wilkinson took 5-22, with Vinn Mylett claiming four wickets - three coming in his first 13 balls for the cost of no runs. Despite the best efforts of Adrian Guy, who took 2-24, Elland cruised to victory, losing just four wickets before passing the Shepley total.

2 June: Marsh Lane witnessed the visit of **Huddersfield** as Shepley looked to put the disappointment of a double loss to Elland behind them. With the team needing a big

performance, up stepped Aidy Guy. The former Meltham man beat his previous career best of 8-60 as the Huddersfield line-up simply failed to deal with his dangerous seam bowling. Guy ended up with the remarkable figures of 9-55 in 18.4 overs as the visitors totalled just 102. Despite at one stage being 42-4, the home side finally passed the opposition's total, losing eight wickets in the process but still claiming all 4 points to kick-start their season.

Table Update: *Following their second maximum of the season, Shepley moved to 6th in the league table with 18 points. Kirkburton still topped the table, but the Marsh Laners had moved to just 6 points behind them.*

9 June: Having successfully ended their losing run, Shepley travelled to **Broad Oak**. Here it was Ian Glover and David Cocking who did the damage with the ball. Glover's 17 overs resulted in a haul of 5 wickets for 46, while Cocking ended up with stats of 4-13 from his 8.2 overs. Adrian Guy took the other wicket as Broad Oak were dismissed for 136. Having been 39-5 at one stage, the home side would have been satisfied with this total. In reply, Shepley managed to put together three significant partnerships as they pursued victory. Openers John Lindley and Peter Walker put on 43 for the first wicket. The arrival of Indian batsman Ohja at the crease at no.3 heralded a partnership of 62 with Lindley before the latter was dismissed for 41. Ohja, however, continued his strong start, putting on 33 with captain Gill to see the visitors to victory. Ohja ended up on 49 not out, smashing four boundaries.



16 June: A top-of-the-table clash as Shepley took on second-place **Lascelles Hall**, who stood just two points ahead of the Marsh Laners. With Shepley batting first, openers Lindley and Walker both survived dropped catches before they had even opened their accounts. Lindley was eventually out on 41, while Walker made 37 as they punished Lascelles Hall for the dropped catches. Shepley fell just short of an average four runs per over, finishing on 195-8. Hall will no doubt have taken confidence from the fact that Shepley were without leading bowler Ian Glover, but David Cocking proved a more than adequate replacement. Cocking claimed 6 victims for 59 runs, but Lascelles Hall clung on for a point, finishing the match on 142-8, meaning the two teams were now tied on 25 points after ten matches.

23 June brought with it a trip to **Holmfirth**. Again batting first, Shepley's openers enjoyed less luck than they had against Lascelles Hall the previous week. Lindley made just 1, while his opening partner Walker made 3. Geoff Gill contributed 41, and Dale Skelly also chipped in with 31, but ultimately the Holmfirth bowlers proved too strong, and Shepley were eventually dismissed for 149. Ian Glover marked his return to the side with a breathtaking bowling display, and he, alongside Aidy Guy, took all the wickets as Shepley romped to a 45-run victory, dismissing Holmfirth for just 104. Glover took 6-45 and Guy 4-55 as the openers skittled the home side with no other bowlers needed.

Table Update: *This win made it 15 out of a possible 16 points in the last four matches for Shepley, as the 'relegation candidates' mounted a charge for the top spot. Having defied the odds in the first half of the season, Shepley found*

themselves within touching distance of the top of the table. Their next match saw them host Honley...

30 June: With Honley visiting Marsh Lane, Shepley looked to keep up the pressure on league leaders Kirkburton, who faced second from bottom Bradley Mills on the same day. The home side suffered the worst possible start with opener John Lindley falling victim to a rare golden duck, out first ball of the match. His partner Peter Walker followed shortly as he was dismissed on 3. The left-handed Naresh Ohja and captain Geoff Gill gave the home side hope of a big total with 25 and 35 respectively, but with Steve Carter's knock of 31 the only other significant contribution, the home side mustered only 138. The Honley innings saw Ian Glover strike with only his fifth ball, and a top-order collapse saw the visitors collapse to 21-4. David Cocking took a couple of wickets, but the recovery saw Honley reach 121-7, bringing them to within touching distance of the Shepley total. However, Cocking was not finished, and his 6 wickets for 48 helped Shepley slice through the batting, and Honley fell short of their target on 130.

Table Update: *A surprise result that weekend saw Bradley Mills emerge victorious over Kirkburton, thus putting Shepley 1 point clear heading into July.*

7 July: A mouth-watering start to July saw the top two go head to head. Having moved ahead of them in the table, Shepley now had to travel to Kirkburton and attempt to consolidate their position at the top of the table. Batting first for the fourth game running, Shepley were somewhat restricted by some good Kirkburton bowling. Dale Skelly top scored with 35 not out as the visitors reached 154 for 8. Peter Walker also made 31, with Steve Carter finishing on 16 not out. Having declined to 67-6, Kirkburton looked in trouble. However, two good lower-order partnerships saw the hosts reach their target with just eight balls to spare. Indian spin bowler Ohja took 3-41, David Cocking took 2-52, and Ian Glover and Adrian Guy took a wicket apiece. Following this victory, Kirkburton leapfrogged Shepley back into first place, but with just one point still separating the two teams.



14 July saw Meltham visit Marsh Lane. Meltham opener Conway lasted the entire innings as he sought to frustrate the Shepley bowlers, ending up not out on 61. His innings helped Meltham to 175 for 4. Wickets were spread evenly between Glover, Guy, Ohja and Bucci. In response, a 74-run opening stand between Lindley and Walker gave Shepley a dream start. Following their dismissals, Gill and Skelly stepped up, the former hitting a half-century as Shepley cruised past their target in the 44th over. Skelly ended on 25 not out as Shepley claimed three valuable points.

Table Update: *A surprise loss by Kirkburton to bottom-of-the-table Golcar saw Shepley again on top. After 14 matches the leading sides were:*

*Shepley 37
Elland 36
Broad Oak 35
Kirkburton 35*

On **21 July** Shepley travelled to Bradley Mills, but without opening bowler Aidy Guy. A good spell of bowling from then Yorkshire Colt Graeme Lilley, who conceded just 9 runs in 12 overs, meant Shepley failed to find top gear, as they settled for 150 for 8. Ohja and Barber both contributed 27 to the cause, but Shepley were still left defending only a modest total, a task made even harder without their leading wicket-taker. The absence of Guy appeared to make little difference, as Ohja eventually tore apart the Broad Oak top order, claiming 5 wickets for 58 runs. David Cocking took the other five as Broad Oak collapsed from 103-3 to 134 all out.

The **4 August** tie at home to Marsden fell victim to the wet weather, meaning a point was awarded to both sides. However, as all matches in Section 'A' were unable to be finished due to the rain, every other team in the league was awarded 1 point as well.

Having had an unexpected week off, Shepley hosted Golcar on **11 August**. A stunning knock of 79 from opener John Lindley, despite lack of support, gave Shepley the foundation for a good score. Shepley ended their innings on 174-6, with Gill and Guy both contributing 18. In reply Aidy Guy's seam bowling gave him another six-wicket haul, but Shepley were denied all 4 points as opposition captain Kevin Plant dug in, ending the innings on 59 not out as Golcar reached 147-9.

Table Update: *Following this win, the 3 points saw Shepley move on to 45 points, 1 ahead of Kirkburton on 44.*

The 18th league match of the season on **18 August** saw Shepley travel to mid-table Huddersfield. With Lindley the only one of the top-four batsman to trouble the scorers, Shepley appeared in deep trouble early on. However, coming to their rescue was Steve Carter, whose quickfire 63 included two sixes and eight fours. He eventually succumbed to captain Nadim Ahmed, but important knocks from Brian Kettlewell (29) and Louis Bucci (11 not out) saw Shepley make 169-8. In reply, only Ahmed managed to get into double figures, as he hit 10 fours in a 33-over knock of 55. The failure of any other batsmen to hit double figures saw Huddersfield eventually bowled out for 95. David Cocking was the pick of the bowlers with 4-27.



As the summer drew to a close, Saturday **25 August** brought Broad Oak to Marsh Lane. With Shepley again struggling, being at 59-4 in the 25th over, a saviour appeared in Steve Carter. Having been let off the hook early on in his innings, he sought to punish Broad Oak, and smashed his way to 77, a knock that included six sixes and 14 fours. Eventually Shepley were bowled out for 199, with David Cocking the next highest scorer, contributing 29. Broad Oak managed to make it to the last over of the match needing 18 to win, meaning a tense finish ensued. Two runs were taken from the first ball, and after a dot ball a six was hit, leaving Broad Oak needing 10 from three of Steve Carter's deliveries. Two more twos meant that if Broad Oak were to win another six would be needed off the last ball. However, a wicket followed and Shepley survived this late scare to win another close match, giving them 3 more valuable points.

1 September: The 20th league match of the season saw Shepley travel to Lascelles Hall. The match was one that Shepley dominated, with Ian Glover taking 6-31 as the

hosts collapsed to 89 all out. A 53-run 8th-wicket partnership was the only bright point in what was a terrible display from the home side. In reply, having lost both openers early on, Shepley rallied through Geoff Gill, who hit 24 in just 11 minutes at the crease. A 50-run partnership in just five overs between David Cocking and Steve Carter saw Shepley reach 93-4, enough to give them all 4 points, meaning they stayed a point clear of Kirkburton.

8 September saw the last league match of the season at Marsh Lane, with Holmfirth the visitors. With Holmfirth batting first, the hosts took three wickets in the first three overs, and Holmfirth found themselves eventually on 63-7. However, an unbeaten 48 from Stuart Kellett salvaged some pride for the visitors, who amassed 139 all out. Again, Shepley lost both openers cheaply and, despite Gill hitting 53 in just 50 minutes, they found themselves on 95-6. However, Guy and Carter steered the home side to a four-wicket victory in the 30th over. The victory saw Holmfirth relegated to Section 'B' with one game left to play. Shepley, however, were now four points clear of Kirkburton, with just one remaining fixture.

15 September: The final match of the season took Shepley to Honley, where they needed just one point to secure the title. In an effort not to be all out, Shepley crawled along to 72-6, enough to secure the point they needed even if Honley surpassed their total. Indeed, Honley did pass their total, winning by 5 wickets, but it was ultimately Shepley who were victorious, lifting the Byrom Shield for the second time in three years.



1984 SHEPLEY BATTING & BOWLING STATISTICS (LEAGUE ONLY)

Batting (selected):

| Name | Innings | Not Outs | 50s | 100s | Best | Runs | Average |
|------------|---------|----------|-----|------|------|------|---------|
| Lindley | 21 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 79 | 409 | 19.48 |
| Walker | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 44 | 288 | 13.7 |
| Gill | 21 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 59 | 483 | 28.4 |
| Skelly | 17 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 102 | 321 | 21.4 |
| D. Cocking | 18 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 73* | 216 | 13.5 |
| R. Cocking | 14 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 59 | 4.54 |
| Carter | 18 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 77 | 334 | 27.83 |
| Guy | 15 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 32* | 204 | 20.4 |
| Ohja | 11 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 104* | 324 | 36 |
| Jones | 8 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 31 | 65 | 16.25 |

Bowling (selected):

| Name | Runs | Wickets | 5wkts+ | Best | Average |
|-----------|------|---------|--------|------|---------|
| Glover | 710 | 38 | 3 | 6-31 | 18.68 |
| Carter | 142 | 10 | 0 | 4-32 | 14.2 |
| Guy | 736 | 61 | 4 | 9-55 | 12.06 |
| Ohja | 217 | 12 | 1 | 5-43 | 18.08 |
| D Cocking | 620 | 47 | 3 | 6-48 | 13.19 |