



A HISTORY OF MIRFIELD CRICKET CLUB

Although evidence of a Mirfield Cricket Club existing between 1870 and 1919 can be found, the club we know based at the Memorial Ground was reformed in 1951.

A group of local businessmen led by John Hardy, Colonel James Walker and Joe Burnhill grabbed the chance to reform the club when the Craven Gentlemen's lease ran out at the Memorial Ground.

The club joined the Central Yorkshire League for the 1952 season and recruited, Tommy Hyland and ex-Yorkshire and England player Wilf Barber as professionals. The side was captained by Charles Buckley. On Saturday 26th April the club entertained Gomersal and after various speeches Hyland and Barber walked out to open the batting and make Mirfield CC history. The game was a draw with Hurst Barber making the first half-century for the club.

The following season under a new captain, Squire Radcliffe promotion was achieved. Wilf Barber won the League batting trophy for the second year running. The second eleven captained by Philip Squire won the Crowther Cup beating East Arsdley by two wickets. Cyril Spencer and Len Peckover both making fifties. This still remains the only occasion that the club has won the Crowther Cup.

1956 witnessed the first century on the Memorial Ground by a Mirfield player when Albert Holroyd scored 100 against Hanging Heaton. George Curry won the League batting award.

1958 began the start of three great years when under the captaincy of Hurst Barber Mirfield ruled the roost with three Championships on the trot. This was the first time this had been done in the history of the Central Yorkshire League.

Colin Peacock won the League batting award in both 1959 and 1960. In 1960 he set a new League record with 1,001 runs.

In 1962 the club gained its first Heavy Woollen Cup victory when Clive Brook's side beat favourites Hanging Heaton by 19 runs. The seconds won the League for the first time under the leadership of Cyril Spencer. Bert Wilcock won the League bowling award.

1963 brought the first League and Heavy Woollen Cup double. In the Final played at Savile Town, Batley were bowled out for 33 in 85 minutes. Peacock once again won the League batting award.

The second eleven again won the League in 1964 and 1966 under Cyril Spencer.

In 1968 after being relegated Clive Brook led the firsts back to the First Division when they won the Second Division.



The 1970's saw the side yo-yo between First and Second divisions. In 1972 Stuart Nichols' side won the Second Division with Peter Wood claiming the League bowling award.

In 1979 Clive Brook's side regained First Division status winning the Second Division title. Richard Needler won the League bowling award and Andy Bolt the League wicket-keeping award. Eddie Thompson won the second eleven wicket-keeping award.

1985 saw the pavilion improved with the opening of the lounge extension. The year saw the start of a remarkable run by all-rounder Russell Heritage in which he won the League bowling award for five successive years. He also won the League all-rounders award in 1986 and 1988. The first eleven, captained by Peter Westerby lost out in a rain affected Heavy Woollen Cup Final at Ossett losing to Kirkheaton by four wickets.

In 1987 the second eleven came so close on three fronts. They finished runners up to Heckmondwike in the League and would have won the title if they had not been pained off at Heckmondwike with the eventual champions 88 for 9. They also lost two cup finals. The Crowther Cup was lost by 6 runs against Birstall a game hosted by ourselves and the Wheatley Cup by 13 runs to Batley at Thornhill. In this game Eric Bell won the man of the match award scoring 65 and taking three wickets.

1988 saw the first eleven regain First Division status after one year in the Second Division. Heritage's side lost only losing League matches. However, it was the arrival of a young Indian from Bombay called Iqbal Khan that set the batting alight; Iqbal winning the League batting award.

The following year saw heartbreak on all fronts for the firsts. They suffered at the hands of Batley as they finished runners up in the League and lost all three Cup Finals (the Heavy Woollen, the Jack Hampshire Memorial Trophy and the Yorkshire Council play-off) all to the same Batley side. Iqbal again won the League batting award.

In 1990 David Johnson arrived as captain and virtually the same team as missed out in 1989 brought the League and Heavy Woollen Cup double to the club for the first time since 1960. Shepley were beaten in the final at Ossett by 80 runs, Andy Bolt scoring 67.

1991 saw the second eleven win the Wheatley Cup beating Ossett at Birstall under the captaincy of David Paige. Eric Bell won the second eleven League bowling award. In this year Iqbal Khan became the first batsman to score a double century at the MMG and the first in the history of the Central Yorkshire League when he scored 201 not out against Ossett. His innings included 12 sixes and he moved from 150 to 200 in 7 overs.

In 1994 Andy Bolt led the firsts to the club's first success in the Jack Hampshire Memorial Trophy (named after a great stalwart to both Mirfield and the League and a



great influence on Andy's cricketing career). Methley were beaten by one wicket as Eric Bell's pads secured victory!

In 1995 Pat Neal won the second eleven League batting award.

1997 brought about a second Wheatley Cup triumph with the seconds beating Morley at Batley by eight wickets. Overseas player Mohammed Asif won the first eleven League bowling award taking a club record 116 wickets. He also created a club record when he took 9 for 28 against Gildersome.

In Millennium year the firsts again won the Jack Hampshire Trophy beating Liversedge at Methley. Ibrar Latif scoring 113 not out. David Jackson's side just missed the League title but won the Yorkshire Council Play-off for the first time in the clubs history beating Wickersley Old Village in the final at Methley.

2001 saw a new venture with the club joining the prestigious Bradford League, leaving the Central Yorkshire League for the first time in 48 years. The firsts just missed promotion but the seconds captained by Andy Kaye won the Verity Section to be promoted at the first attempt. In the Championship play-off Woodlands defeated them.

In 2002 after finishing third the firsts gained promotion and in their first season in 2003 avoided relegation by finishing 12 th. However, it was the Cups in which they faired well. They reached the semi finals of the Priestley Cup but went one better by beating Spen Victoria by eight wickets at Liversedge to win the Heavy Woollen Cup for the fourth time in the clubs history.

2004 as it turned out was the clubs last in the Bradford League. The season was a very hard one for both sides. The firsts saw three players leave by mid season and this had a knock on effect for the seconds who were shorn of players and were subsequently relegated. The firsts however avoided the drop on the last day. Despite loosing to relegation rivals Spen Victoria, they were saved by Bankfoot's defeat.

The end of the season saw captain Mark Fairburn and long serving pace man Neil Parkinson leave and the winter saw very little progress in recruiting a new first eleven. The committee decided to bite the bullet and requested to leave the League. The League's management committee accepted this with regret.

Steps were taken to ensure cricket was still played by Mirfield CC and we were accepted into the Huddersfield Central League and at the AGM we welcomed onboard Harry Lime CC as the clubs amalgamated.

2005 saw the first eleven promoted as Champions of Section B in our first season in the Huddersfield Central League. Only two League games were lost as 106 points were a mast 16 points clear of second placed Upper Hopton. They also reached the Semi-Finals of the Allsop Cup defeated by Premier Champions Cawthorne. The second eleven, a mix of Harry Limers and juniors had a mixed season ending in mid table.



Andy Kaye topped both the Section B batting and bowling averages and Andy Bolt won the Section B wicket keeping award and also the whole League award for 33 dismissals.

**Patrick JA Neal
November 2005**

NB: Club & Individual Records can be found at www.mirfieldcc.co.uk