

Kirkburton CC

The club was founded at a meeting on 25 February 1860 at the Rose and Crown Inn by members of the Carlton Working Men's Club with Charles Heptonstall in the chair.

In fact, cricket club members had to be members of the Carlton too.

Sam Rhodes was elected president, with William Stockdale as vice-president and George Watkinson as secretary.

The first playing area was a piece of land at Turnshaws, now part of Oaklands Park. The first reported game was against a Hepworth XI.

By 1863 the club was playing matches as Kirkburton and in 1867 they played a fixture against Kirkheaton.

Games were also arranged against other clubs: Beaumonts Club of Kirkheaton, Netherton, Shepley, Skelmanthorpe, Wortley, Almondbury, Highburton, Thurstonland and Dalton.

2nd XI games were also played, which indicates a high level of enthusiasm.

The club moved to current venue Riley Lane in 1878, opening with a game against Hepworth on 20 April. Ground improvement work began that same year.

Kirkburton became one of the founder members of the Huddersfield & District Alliance in 1893, winning the competition in 1910.

They joined the prestigious Huddersfield & District League in 1911 – and compete in this competition still today.

In 1932 a tea room was purchased and this led to the formation of the club's first ladies committee.

The 1st XI claimed the Huddersfield and District League Section 'B' championship in 1933.

The side was unbeaten throughout the league season and, against Almondbury, created a new record for time-limit cricket: 355-9.

As war approached, the club engaged in payments for players.

In 1938 the club's own player, George Senior, signed as professional for the first time.

Another of the club's stars, Fred Haigh, signed as pro the following summer, 1939.

1944 witnessed a unique BBC radio commentary on the club's Sykes Cup semi-final tie against Broad Oak, played at Paddock.

There was sadness in 1960 when the club's entire dressing-room block, along with all tackle and essential equipment, was completely destroyed by fire on 5 April.

Great efforts were made by the league president, Herbert Robinson, to rally support from many quarters – and this enabled the club to start the season on schedule.

A defunct Huddersfield Corporation trolleybus had to be used as temporary accommodation until the new building was opened.

The club's new pavilion was unveiled by Mr Herbert Robinson on 1 June 1962 – a great achievement.

In 1964 the 1st XI scooped the Sykes Cup. Housing development on the eastern side of ground also began.

Although there were the inevitable problems of 'balls through windows', a number of new residents became club members, including some who went on to serve on the committee.

Around 1970 a women's cricket section was established. The (men's) 1st XI claimed the Huddersfield and District League Section 'B' championship in the same year.

In 1972 the pavilion was extended to incorporate the Stanley Kinder Lounge. The club's 1978 brochure observed, following this development:

'Originally consisting of a bar, changing and toilet facilities, the pavilion now proudly offers year-round, every evening bar openings, teas on match days (and food on many other social occasions) and a comfortable lounge for those who prefer more the atmosphere of a pub.

'It is a popular social centre, not only for people from the village but from further afield. It has an attraction for families, since children are welcomed - and catered for - and as such has every opportunity for the closest links with the village community.'

The 1st XI also bagged the Huddersfield League championship in 1972.

David Barraclough and Geoff Anderson had their loyalty to the club rewarded in 1982 as a benefit match was staged for each of them.

In 1984 the Zimbabwe Under-20 touring side played a fixture at Riley Lane.

Nine years later, in 1993, grant aid of £3,750 was received from the Foundation for Sport and the Arts to help improve facilities at Riley Lane.

Danny Waugh, the younger brother of Test legends Steve and Mark, had a spell as Kirkburton overseas player the year after in 1994.

And former England Test player Phil Defreitas signed up for a short stint at Riley Lane in 1995.

The new millennium heralded an array of Sykes Cup final victories and championship titles – and the future looks bright for the club from Riley Lane.