



UNDERCLIFFE CC

ESTABLISHED 1875

Early Days In The Bradford League

When you turn into Intake Road, right in the middle of Undercliffe, and into the unpretentious gate to the club, you enter an oasis of green space and tranquillity that has been a centrepiece of the area for a very long time. The club joined the Bradford League when it first started in 1903, and seems to have had a thriving membership, both cricket and social, ever since. In the 106 years since then, the cricket at Undercliffe has entertained thousands of people who have followed the club's fluctuating successes and failures. In that time, the club has won the first team championship eight times and the Priestley Cup thirteen times, and the second team championship 27 times.

Even so, our start in the Bradford League was not particularly spectacular, finishing a modest ninth in the first season. Great Horton were the big team in this first decade, and were our bogey team. On one occasion in 1904, they skittled us for 27. The fans must have been very disappointed. However, we got revenge in 1905 when we skittled them for 28. Honours even! Obviously, wickets favoured bowlers in those days, and runs were often hard to come by. In one match, Undercliffe were all out for 48, but still beat Lidget Green by 15 runs. In another, we dismissed Shelf for just 16. This highlights T. E. Wright's achievement in becoming our first centurion, scoring 107 not out against Dudley Hill in 1905.

By 1907, Undercliffe was becoming a club to be reckoned with. We won our first league title in 1907, and followed that with the Priestley Cup in 1908, beating Shelf in the final, and again in 1910, beating Great Horton by 118 runs. But cricket has its ups and downs, and by 1915, during the First World War, the club had slipped down the league and new signings were indicated.

They arrived in 1916 in the form of two world class all-rounders. One was Cecil Parkinson, who had played for both Yorkshire and Lancashire, and went on to play for England. The second, Charles Llewellyn had already played test cricket for South Africa, and county cricket for Hampshire. This must have pleased the fans as they saw the club rise to third place in an expanded league, and then go on to beat Tong Park in both the 1916 and 1917 cup finals, winning the second of these by ten wickets after bowling out Tong Park for a mere 48.

At the end of the war in 1918, George Gunn (Notts and England) led the club to fourth place, with only two defeats in 20 games. That year the Cup provided the story of the season when, after opponents Lidget Green complained that one end of the wicket was wetter than the other, it became known that a donkey had been used in preparation of the wicket. It was reported that the donkey had 'misbehaved' on the square, the complaint was upheld, and Undercliffe won the replay, though they were compelled to play all cup games on neutral grounds, causing them to lose to Pudsey at Laisterdyke.

The Middle Years

Sir Len Hutton said that Sandy Jacques had the finest fast bowling action he had ever seen. He played for Yorkshire, and generated high pace and accuracy for long periods, but unfortunately injury struck, and he turned to league cricket, playing his first game for Undercliffe in 1935. In spite of his presence, the club slumped and we found ourselves relegated to the newly formed second division in 1937.

A left-handed batsman and good close fielder, Vic Wilson was another influential player to join the club, helping Undercliffe back into Division 1 in 1944. Vic went on to captain Yorkshire for three seasons. He died in 2007, aged 87. After this there were a series of ups and downs – relegated in 1950, back up in 1953, down again, and back up again after winning the Division Two championship in 1960. The next few years saw several players from Derbyshire coming to the club, such as Jack Wainwright, who helped them to the title again in 1963, taking 57 wickets to hold off Bingley's challenge. Batsmen David Smith and Ashley Harvey-Walker also featured in the team during the 60s, as did Test fast bowlers Les Jackson and Alan Ward. One supporter well remembers looking at the wicket after Jackson had been bowling, to see a one-foot square patch on a good length where all Jackson's balls had landed!

The Golden 70s

Jim Brailsford, a right hand batsman and medium pace bowler, was another Derbyshire man who led the team to championships in 1970 and 1971. Though primarily an opening batsman, one of his most famous achievements was taking the wicket of England Captain Ted Dexter with his first ball for Derbyshire.

This was the start of a very successful decade for the club, when David Dobson, John White and David Bairstow all came to the fore. David Bairstow hit the headlines when he was chosen for his debut with Yorkshire on the day he was taking his A level examination, and he had to sit the exam early in the morning so that he could get to Headingley in time. He went on to be Yorkshire's regular wicketkeeper for 20 years, county captain, and test player. John White gave sterling service to the club over a long period as fast bowler, and later as cricket chairman. He even turned out with the veteran 'cavaliers' team later on, and could still hit a perfect length.

The team went on to win the Priestley Cup in 1972, 1974 and 1975.

Although the 1980s started in fine style with another cup triumph – beating East Bierley by 32 runs – the club had to wait until 1986 for any more silverware, in the form of the league championship. Very much a team effort, the side included Simon Kellett, Jerry Mytton, Peter Booth, David Dobson and Howard Reeve, who were all regular run scorers, and former Leicester paceman Peter Booth, who took 38 wickets. There were plenty of ups and downs in the 1990s. The team was relegated in 1994 and 1999, but bounced back immediately on each occasion by winning the Division 2 championship in the following season.

The biggest highs were winning the First Division championship in 1997 under the captaincy of Russell Heritage, and taking the Yorkshire Champions Cup the following year.

The Frustrating Noughties

Sadly the club was again relegated in 2003, following a season where, on paper, we should have done well, with a number of excellent players led by Yorkshire's Chris Taylor, a very stylish right hand batsman. Since then, we have remained stubbornly in the Second Division and seen many team changes, but no sign of promotion. In 2008, Russell Heritage returned to the club as team manager, and hopes are high for the future.

The Winning Tens

In 2009, Undercliffe won the Second Division Championship and gained their long sought after promotion back to the First Division. After a good start to the first half of the season, Undercliffe actually topped the First Division for three consecutive weeks. However, this wasn't maintained and they finished midway down the table. This year 2011 we have a younger team, which look good on paper, and we hope they can do well.

UCC finished a respectable 8th with a young side and looked forward to 2012. However things did not go as well as expected, with injuries to key players and a loss of form by some players, meant that UCC finished bottom of the league and relegation to Division 2.

However UCC look forward to building a team that will get promotion back to Div. 1.

In the end the 2013 season finished a disappointing one for the 1st XI as UCC finished 5th in Division 2. Ben Heritage did score over a thousand runs but the team fell short in the big games.

The 2nd XI under the captaincy of Phil Dixon narrowly missed promotion by 3 points but things look brighter for 2014.

New 1st XI Captain for the 2014 season will be Michael Kelsey with some new signings promised that will hopefully get UCC back into Division 1.

Adrian Raynor, UCC Vice President

2014 A Fantastic Season



UCC 1ST XI

**B/R LR - F Hussain, H Khan, Z Qasim, A Robinson, M Kelsey [Capt], M Crowther [Wk],
F/R LR – S Hussain, N Sardar, A Hussain, L Brearley, A Raja**

This season we have achieved and surpassed all what we set out to do.

To start with the junior teams have had a great season with the under 15s winning their league unbeaten and reached the semi-final of the cup, captained by Umair Iqbal and managed by Liam Brearley also the under 17s winning their league captained by Adam Frost and managed by Ian Pratt. The under 9s and 11s and 13s also had good progressive seasons.

The First X1 have played excellent exciting cricket led by Michael Kelsey this season culminating in winning the 2nd division championship with a game to spare and getting to the Priestley cup semi-final and also the 20/20 cup semi-final. The enjoyable thing on this season has been the team effort with everybody contributing whether it be bat, ball or in the field.

The Second XI also won Division 2 and their season mirrors the first XI with great team effort led by Phil Dixon with pleasing contributions from our junior players with help from the seniors.



UCC 2nd XI

**B/R LR – J Frost [Scorer], A Frost, A Mahmood, D Drake, M Khan, S Dawson, A Mahmood
F/R LR – A Holroyd, A Ahmed, Z Ghaffer, P Dixon [Captain], D Pratt, T Amin**

The Third XI have had an up and down season with winning the cup which was a great achievement led by Ian Pratt and then fought off relegation. The very positive thing to come out of the Third XI is the progression of the juniors who when required to step up have not let anybody down with their ability and attitude.



I would also like to thank the members and supporters who have watched and hopefully enjoyed this season as much as I have and let's hope the season to come is as rewarding. It has also been great to see the players frequent the bar creating a good atmosphere after games.

The hard work has begun to build a team to keep us in the 1st Division next year.

Nasa Hussain, UCC Cricket Chairman

CLUB HISTORY 2015 – 2017

2015 saw both the 1st XI and the 2nd XI in the 1st division of the Bradford Cricket League.

A decision was taken before the start of the new season to withdraw the 3rd XI from the Dales Council Cricket league. This was largely due to the lack of junior teams that Undercliffe now had entered in the Bradford Junior League and as it was felt that the 3rd XI was thought of as a feeder for the other teams it would be difficult to operate.

The 1st team under Captain Michael Kelsey had a particularly difficult season. Midway through the season Cricket Chairman NASA Hussain stood down and his place was taken by Andy Wilsdon. The team fought right to the end but unfortunately were relegated on the final game of the season.

The 2nd XI finished mid table under the captaincy of Phil Dixon.

2016 brought the introduction of The Bradford Premier Cricket League.

The 1st XI were now entered in the Championship A division with only 1 team gaining promotion. Still under the captaincy of Michael Kelsey and Cricket Chairman Andy Wilsdon the team had a good start to the season. Again our Cricket Chairman resigned part way through the season. The team were now assisted by Mick Brearley and members of the cricket committee and finished 4th in the league.

The 2nd XI now playing in the Premier 2nd XI division under Captain Darren Drake had a torrid time and finished bottom of their league and were relegated.



UCC 1st XI

**B/R LR: M Loubser, J Rich, Z Qasim, M Kelsey (Captain), Craig Wiseman
F/R LR: C Mitchell, A Hussain, G Ahmed, J Hughes, J Barton [Wk], T Thorpe**

The start of the **2017** season brought renewed optimism to both senior cricket teams.

A new Cricket Chairman was appointed by the Cricket Committee. Dean Skillicorn arrived with a wealth of experience of Bradford League cricket.

A new captain of the 1st XI, Scott Etherington, saw the 1st team finish 4th in the Championship 1 Division of the All Rounder Bradford Premier Cricket League. What was particularly satisfying was reaching the Priestley Cup Semi Final and only just losing out to the eventual winners of the trophy - New Farnley. There was also the satisfaction of reaching the Leagues 20/20 final only to lose to a strong Hanging Heaton who would go on to win the Premier Division title.

The 2nd XI complete with some new signings, again captained by Darren Drake, fought right to the final game of the season to try and gain promotion to the 2nd XI Premier Division, only to lose out by just 1 point.

This was a remarkable start for our new Cricket Chairman and bodes well for the coming season.

Phil Marks, UCC Bradford Junior Cricket League Representative