

THE FIRST JUNIOR TEAMS — PROGRESS IN THE 1970s

A junior section of the club was properly established in 1976, though before that teams representing the Methodist youth club in the village, of which Terry Mansfield was leader, had played some matches on the club's ground against neighbouring villages. One of these, between Forton and Scorton in 1973, is of interest because Dave Richmond, Phil Winstanley, Colin Twiname and Mark Yates all played, two on each side. Their individual achievements make interesting reading. Dave, playing for Scorton, took 5 wickets for 1 run, one of his victims being Colin bowled for a duck; then Colin replied by taking 5 wickets for 11, and he also caught out Dave off the bowling of Mark Yates, our current club Chairman. These achievements were hardly pointers for the future, for none of the three developed as leading bowlers! Phil Winstanley played for Scorton and had a poor game, scoring just one run and taking only one wicket for 10 runs; he later became a star bowler and good batsman for Shireshead and subsequently for Garstang.

The first match in June 1976 was a friendly against Garstang when we were captained by Ian Twiname, with Andrew Cragg as wicketkeeper.



THE FIRST JUNIOR TEAM IN JUNE 1976

Left to right: Peter Mansfield John Carr Ewan Richmond James Cleland Ian Twiname (capt) Duncan Howell Tim Mansfield
Andrew Walton Andrew Cragg (wk) Chris Mayor Martin Kirby Chris Cox
Harold Thompson is repairing the roof!

In 1977 we entered a structured competition for the first time. It was organised by Eddie Richardson of Carnforth and involved U-16 and U-14 teams. The U-16s played weekly, and though there was no formal league table it was soon known that Shireshead represented strong competition. We won eight of the 12 games, and Ian Twiname's captaincy as well as his own personal performances played a huge part in the successes in 1977.

On 21st June 1978 Shireshead U-16s played a Carnforth team containing several names now familiar: D Derham, R Nelson, P Weatherill and R Clarkson. Ian Twiname clean bowled the first two of these cheaply, and Shireshead won handsomely reaching 86/4 in the 15th over in reply to 82/9, David Jolleys scoring 50no. On 26th June 1978 there was a fine victory over Lancaster U-16s, with John Carr making 34no. We were, however, easily beaten by Torrisholme U-16s, for whom David Haywood scored 30no. But the greatest excitement was to come on 10th August 1978 in a U-16 match between Shireshead and Dumfries. Keith Thornton, one of our prominent players in the 1970s, had moved to Dumfries where his new club had a good junior section, and a coach party of juniors and adult supporters travelled up for the day. Our strong junior side struggled against some good bowling and only one player reached double figures — John Carr made 101 not out in a total of 146/8 out of which the rest of the team only contributed 33 from the bat. Although the match was only a "friendly" it was a remarkable performance and ***it was the first century ever made by a player representing Shireshead.*** This fine innings was not an isolated achievement by John, for in the 1979 season he made 65no and 48no against Morecambe and 51no in a fine win over Lancaster at Lune Road. The Lancaster IX included Graham Clarke, Duncan Hall and Danny Welbourne. The scorebook has one entry in John's innings which is rare indeed: he was credited with 9 off one ball from Danny Welbourne when a shot just failed to reach the boundary, a misfield allowed 5 to be run, and then in the confusion there were 4 overthrows. In 1978/79 Andrew Cragg appeared in most U-16 games and Tim Mansfield and Phil Oliver appeared for U-14s and U-12s.

The South Lakeland League introduced a Junior Section in 1980, under the leadership of Eddie Smith (Milnthorpe) and Terry Mansfield (Shireshead). The competition was for under-16 teams (league and knock-out cup), and 28 clubs entered in the first season. In the Lancaster area the former under-14 knock-out cup competition was replaced by an under-14 league, though still competing for the former trophy and still organised by Eddie Richardson. Shireshead also entered that competition. Our junior section had expanded rapidly and now, 5 years after its formation, there were 52 members.

THE JUNIORS IN THE 1980s

We won no trophies in 1980, but some personal achievements are worth recording. In the first league match against Galgate, Mark Rogerson made 51no and later against Morecambe he made 49no [at that time there was no rule requiring batsmen to retire on 30]. Mark was a good all-rounder, and he later joined the RAF, became a wing commander, and played cricket at a high level for the RAF and Combined Services. He returned occasionally to play for Shireshead when he was on leave. The U-14s had significant wins at Morecambe and at Lancaster, Tim Mansfield being top scorer in both (59no at Lune Road). In an U-11 friendly played at Morecambe Phil Oliver top-scored with 32, and then took 4 wickets for 7 runs including that of Phil Thornton (later a Morecambe 1st team star) for six.

The 1981 season brought the first trophy for the junior section of the club — we won the Lancaster area U-14 competition. There were some memorable victories, and a crucial one over Morecambe in the last league game of the season.



Philip Oliver
and Paul Yates
Old Trafford 1983

The 1983 season is still remembered for the achievement of the U-13s in the Lancashire-wide 8-a-side competition. Managed by Colin Wilcock, they lost only one game in the north of the county, defeating some major clubs from the Northern League and in the Furness area, leading to a day at Old Trafford along with three other teams.

Although we lost in our semi-final to Roe Green, the great occasion will never be forgotten by the young players and the large number of supporters who accompanied them. The team changed in the dressing rooms used in county and test matches, and were served in the restaurant like VIPs.



John Bleasdale leads his
team down the famous
steps at Old Trafford

The 1984 season. Stuart Dennison and Paul Dennison (not related) became regular opening bowlers for the U-16s and very soon they would be making their way in senior cricket. Stephen Taylor took a hat-trick in his 4 for 9 v Galgate U-16s. Peter Mansfield made 54no at Heysham where Stephen Taylor again excelled, taking 4 for 4, all 4 in one over. At Westgate on 25th July we made 93/5 (P Mansfield 42) and Peter Wilson fell for 0 to Paul Dennison as they replied with 89/8. There was a brutal little knock of 26 by Phil Oliver against Morecambe, with a six and 4 fours. Mark Sutcliffe played some good innings for the U-16s giving a foretaste of things to come.

The 1985 season. Even more players who would soon make their mark in senior cricket began to show their abilities for the juniors. Andrew Larkin and David Carter both played for the U-16s. Phil Oliver continued to develop his taste for hitting boundaries, for example in the first U-16 game v Bolton-le-Sands he made a quick 22no with 4 fours, then at Carnforth on 10th July he made 52no with 3 sixes and 6 fours. Another hard-hitter and feared bowler was Stuart Dennison, who made 50no against Warton (in a 2nd wicket stand of 76 with Phil Oliver) — he was soon to become one of the most effective bowlers in the 1st division, though sadly for only a short period. The U-16s had an excellent season, and qualified for the league play-off against the Northern Section winners, Kendal. We lost a low-scoring final on 15th September at Milnthorpe (Kendal 76, Shireshead 62) but it brought a memorable bowling performance from Phil Oliver who took 6 for 14, all bowled.

The 1986 season. John Bleasdale (50no) and Philip Swarbrick (32no) made a 1st wicket stand of 86 v Galgate U-16s until John had to retire under the rules prevailing at that time. Phil Oliver made 53no (6 fours and a six) in the first round of the U-16 cup against Ingleton, and in the next round Andrew Larkin demolished Coniston with 6 for 1. In the 3rd round at Westgate John Bleasdale (43) and Phil Oliver (35 with 5 fours and a six) helped us to 117/7, then Stephen Taylor took 4 for 14 as the home team were dismissed for 62. Sadly, we then lost the semi-final to Morecambe despite some good batting from John Bleasdale. The regular opening bowlers for the U-16s were Phil Oliver and Paul Yates.

Andrew Flintoff. On 22nd May 1986 Shireshead's U-13s played host to a Dutton Forshaw team, two members of which were Chris & Andrew Flintoff. Shireshead won and Andrew Flintoff made 10 with 2 fours, but his bowling analysis was the worst in the match (0 for 19 off 3 overs) — he was, however, only 8½ whereas most of our players were 12 or 13.

THE JUNIORS FROM 1986-2000

For around 10 years from 1986 the juniors continued to flourish, and although no trophies were won, some good cricketers emerged. These included Jonathan Lamley, Matthew Yates, Joe Gornall, Ben & Giles Harrison, Rajeev Balasubramanyam and Peter Bunting. Some of these now play in other parts of the country, for example Jonathan Lamley is with Quarndon in Derbyshire, for whom he scored 97no on 11 May 2008. Jonathan's reflections on his time with our juniors are on our website at www.shireshead-forton.co.uk.

1997 heralded a new period of success, beginning when the U-13s defeated Lancaster to win the league championship, the President's Shield. The story is best told in pictures.



Back Row
Colin Twiname (coach)
Tom Jacques Stuart Pye
Matthew Baldwin Andrew Pye
Jeff Winder

Front Row
Tony Richmond Phil Callaghan
Stuart Nisbet Richard Bradshaw
Graham Wilson Stephen Yates

In 1999 the U-13s beat Warton to win the Westmorland Cup



In 1998 the Shireshead U-16s beat Lancaster to become League Champions

Back Row
Colin Twiname (coach)
Danny Hagen Robert Skipworth
David Bradshaw Philip Savage
Graeme Swindlehurst
Front Row
Chris Yates Richard Bradshaw
Sean Twiname Stuart Pye
Tom Jacques Tom Battarbee

The U-16 Cup was won in the same year following victory over Ingleton in the final

Also in 1998, we entered a U-15 team in the Cumbrian junior competition, and defeated Wigton in the final at Netherfield to become Champions.



UNDER-15 CHAMPIONS OF CUMBRIA IN 1998

Left to right: Stuart Nisbet (12th man) Richard Bradshaw Graham Wilson Robert Skipworth Tom Jacques Graeme Swindlehurst Matthew Baldwin Sean Twiname Stuart Pye Danny Hagen Tom Battarbee Stephen Yates (kneeling) Peter Hamill of Sun Life



WINNERS OF THE U-16 CUP IN 2000

Shireshead 146/6 (T Battarbee 40no, R Bradshaw 28, T Jacques 26) Lancaster 137 (S Nisbet 3/27)
Back row: Colin Twiname (coach) Richard Bradshaw Andrew Quinn Stuart Pye Andrew Pye Kevin Brier Stephen Yates
Front row: Robert Charles Tom Jacques Tom Battarbee Graham Wilson Stuart Nisbet

THE JUNIORS FROM 2001 TO THE PRESENT

We had some strong U-13 and U-16 teams during this period, and the U-13s twice played in finals, both times losing to Netherfield. In 2002, however, the U-16s did exceptionally well to reach the final of the league competition, beating the favourites Lancaster in the final at Heysham.



In 2002 the Shireshead U-16s became League Champions after beating Lancaster

Back Row: Colin Twiname (coach)
Chris Gardner Richard Cragg
Duncan Singh Andrew Pye
Chris Pye Lawrence Singh
Front Row: Ben Collins
Danny Lawson*
Alastair Holmes
Robert Charles Robert Jacques

**Danny Lawson played a great part in Shireshead's victory, and we were all deeply saddened by his tragic death in a car accident.*

The next victory was in the U-13 Cup in 2008, when Shireshead with 96/9 narrowly succeeded in chasing Lancaster's 95/5. See the centre pages for a photo of this winning team and also of our youngest team of 2008 which had a convincing win over Netherfield for the U-11 championship. In 2005 the league introduced a U-24 cup competition, and the "Shireshead Show Ponies", under the management of Colin Twiname, were able to draw upon the strengths of the junior section from previous years. There was delight when they beat Warton overwhelmingly in the final in 2007.



The U-24 team, the Shireshead Show Ponies in 2007

Rear: Manager Colin Twiname
Dave Jack Chris Gardner
Simon Harrison Liam Parkinson
Lawrence Singh
Front: Jack Dodd Robert Charles
Robert Jacques
Graeme Swindlehurst
Graham Wilson Rahil Shah
*Scores in the final at Milnthorpe against Warton: Shireshead 164/6
(R Shah 60, G Wilson 32,
R Charles 23)
Warton 31 (D Jack 6/15,
L Parkinson 4/12)*