

CARDINAL LANGLEY BASKETBALL CLUB

The club is the oldest member of the Manchester Area Basketball League (MABL). The Manchester YMCA (now the 'Y') is actually a founder member of the league so in that sense they are older members. However the 'Y' took a break from MABL for two years. It was a time when the club were experiencing difficulties so they were not able to enter a team. Thankfully they restarted when Mike Sheard (sadly dead now) took over the reigns and they are now flourishing. To my mind that does mean that Cardinal Langley is the oldest continuous member. It is a claim that the club members are justifiably proud about. I am fairly confident of the claim, however if there is anyone reading this who thinks differently then I will be delighted to hear from them.

The following is a potted history made up of anecdotal evidence and information from records I started and kept fairly well until a few years ago. I stopped when meetings of club members became less well attended and it was apparent that we (possibly I mean 'I') could run the club fairly efficiently without having to meet.

- The club was started in 1967 by a group of people who had attended De La Salle Teacher Training College at Hopwood Hall, which was directly opposite Cardinal Langley High School in Middleton. They were students who had played basketball at the College and wanted to continue. They were called De La Salle Old Boys and the driving force was a man called Mike Cudehey. He should be regarded as the founder of the club.
- Very soon after forming the name changed to Cardinal Langley Basketball Club. This was because Mike had got a job (he was a PE teacher) at Cardinal Langley School and he managed to get the use of the sports hall at the school so the club name changed to the one we have now. This was in 1970.
- The club joined the Manchester Area Basketball League...date unknown but certainly very shortly after the name change. The unfortunate thing was that the MABL management committee condemned the sports hall as being unfit to play basketball at that level. It was pretty bad.....tarmac floor.....bit of a slope and fairly cold.
- So in 1979 (approx.) the club moved to St. Peter's RC High School in Prestwich. The court was not much better BUT it had one great advantage. We struck a deal with the caretaker. We paid him £5.00 per night for the use of the court!! Incredibly cheap. That stopped one Friday night when just before a crucial game, with the sports hall full of players and spectators and things 'buzzing' a gentleman stepped into the hall and began questioning me about what was going on. His questions kept coming until I asked him why it was his business and he told me he was the head and the school knew nothing of our use of the sports hall!! We then began to hire it officially.
- Wilf Byrne (ex England international) began to coach then (prior to this we had 'muddled' through with coaching) and in his second season we achieved our greatest success. We were equal top of the division. We only needed to win one of our last three games to claim the title. True to Langley tradition we lost all three!! Nevertheless a great season!
- 1981 saw the formation of a second team. Progress!
- 1983 was a momentous year in Manchester basketball. Cardinal Langley held the first 'Kings' tournament. A pre-season one day tournament. It was to become a prestigious event in the area calendar until its demise in 1990. It was held at Cardinal Langley High School (court had been renovated) and the first winners were an impressive Oldham. This side eventually entered the first national league under the guidance of Pat O'Donnell and Yaro Martinuick (I think that is the spelling). The tournament was hugely popular and, inevitably ended with a fine meal and a few drinks at the 'School House' a Middleton restaurant.
- In the summer of 1983 Chris Wood (an old boy of the club and one of our finer players) brought a team from ERAGNY (France) where he had moved to work. We organised a days basketball ending with a splendid evening at 'The Village' in Prestwich. Needless to say the French did not win a game.....but they had a great time.
- During that same season we achieved our very first honours! The second team won their division.....under the expert guidance of Wilf Byrne.
- Publicity came in 1983/84 in the form of weekly reports in the 'Prestwich Guide' the local paper. They were written by one of our players (Tom Allen) who made us sound fantastic and for which we are eternally grateful. I hope to be able to put a couple of examples of his literary skills at the end of this 'history' but I am not sure my computer skills are up to it!! We were a club with style!!

This has been written by [John V. Cihlar](#). Club member since 1970 and Secretary since 1979.

Anyone who has any further recollections about the club history, or, notices any mistakes please contact me.

- In 1988/89 we started a third team.....which included two girls. During the seven years since the onset of publicity we trundled along happily without ever winning trophies but without ever doing badly. But we did enjoy ourselves.
- In 1990/91 we returned the French favour and took a team out to play them. It was a good, skilful team and we should have been successful on the court but our organiser(Bob Gill of Bacup fame. Another of our old boys and another fine player) had other ideas. The long weekend trip (I think it was a long weekend) only contained one game.....and that happened after a two hour trip round a wine bottling plant during which every player took advantage! We rolled on court (literally!!) and predictably lost our only game.....but had a fantastic time. The French were great hosts.
- In 1992 the third team scored our second success in taking the MABL Division Three title.
- 1994/95 saw the club move back to Cardinal Langley, our spiritual home only to be 'turfed' out in 2000 because (so we were told) our being there interfered with their stage productions!
- The club moved to the newly built 'Lancashire Health Club' and the ensuing seasons there (until we had to move again in 2005/06I think it was that year) were fairly humdrum. We had been out of the top division for some time and our two teams were marking time in division one and division two.
- We moved to Matthew Moss High School (our present home) and things began to look up. New players were attracted and we became an ambitious club. Promotion to MABL premier division came in 2006/2007. Our third trophy success. We held our own in 2007/08 ending mid table.

The club has been in existence for 41 years.....consecutively. This season we have three teams in MABL. The first team in the Premier Division, the second and third teams in Division Two. The first team remain unbeaten. They are in the semi final of the K.O. Cup and if things go well for us we are on course for a 'double'. Heady days! (Why could we not have waited until our 50th year!!)

Club coaches over the forty years:

- Mike Cudehey
- Martin Wilde
- John Cihlar
- Chris Wood
- Wilf Byrne
- Don Davies
- Steve Lavallee

Our guiding lights!?!?!?



Mike Gaffney , Steve Lavallee , Greg Byrne.



**Back Row: S. Lavallee, P. Richards, J. Cihlar, C. Morgan, T. Allen, G. Burton
Front Row: W. Byrne, M. Gaffney, P. Leonard, G. Byrne, C. Ward**



Emma Davison, Fran Taylor, Sarah Carney (table officials)

This has been written by [John V. Cihlar](#). Club member since 1970 and Secretary since 1979.

Anyone who has any further recollections about the club history, or, notices any mistakes please contact me.



The perfect jump shot????!!



Classic 'inside' play????!!

This has been written by [John V. Cihlar](#). Club member since 1970 and Secretary since 1979.

Anyone who has any further recollections about the club history, or, notices any mistakes please contact me.

BASKETBALL:**CARDINAL LANGLEY
TOURNAMENT**

THE tournament last Sunday featured two leagues of three teams with the winners to contest the final. League One contained Cardinal Langley School, Ladyburn and Cardinal Langley I, and League Two held Oldham, Cardinal Langley II and Burnley.

Game 1 (League Two):

Cardinal Langley II (14) 34
Oldham Saints (35) 69

IN a slow opening, the Cardinals led briefly. They played the better basketball till midway through the first half when the Oldham set shooters hit a series of good shots to lead 16-6. When the Cardinals spurned several good chances Oldham went further ahead through successful fast breaks. By half time the visitors held an insuperable advantage of twenty-one points.

After the interval, the Cardinals improved all round. Their zone defence tightened considerably and in attack they handled confidently. Oldham's scoring, though, was consistent throughout their squad. Cooper contributed twenty points for the visitors. John Cihlar, who scored half the Cardinal's total, could have been better supported.

Game 2 (League One):

Cardinal Langley School ... (18) 26
Cardinal Langley I (13) 38

THE Kings and the School were well-matched for the first quarter, after which the School had a good spell to lead by four baskets. Shortly before half time, the Kings scored, mainly close in, to halve the gap.

The second half was a complete contrast. Loz Webb turned the match convincingly the Kings' way. He marked the School's Johnston out of the game and provided excellent distribution to the Kings' forwards, who quickly found their touch. The final quarter produced the Kings' best basketball and a 14-4 tally. Nick Samuels earned fourteen points, and for the School Keith Johnston got ten.

Game 3 (League Two):

Burnley (22) 41
Oldham Saints (25) 53

THESE M.A.B.L. Division One rivals produced a stirring first half. Both played man-to-man defence and fast fluent attacks. They were twelve all after ten minutes and never separated by more than a couple of points. White, Burnley's play-maker, fed his side with incisive passes. Oldham relied heavily on Cooper and their scores were mainly close range.

After the break, Oldham changed to zone defence and Burnley lost their rhythm. In a couple of minutes midway through, Oldham converted turn-overs and were quickly six baskets up. Assured of a place in the finals, Oldham relaxed in the final quarter allowing Cedillo easy shots which he took well.

At the finish, Cooper's seventeen prints were outstripped by Cedillo, who won half of the Burnley total.

Game 4 (League One):

Cardinal Langley I (20) 35
Ladyburn (17) 41

THE Kings led early against Ladyburn, but the South Manchester side fought well to keep in touch. Ladyburn, though relegated to M.A.B.L. Division Two just recently, fielded two outstanding players in Dave West and Jeff Curtis and they maintained the recovery.

As the Kings eased further ahead following the interval, their smallish squad of seven members faced increasing foul trouble. The Kings had to hold back on challenges. In two minutes the game was reversed. Ladyburn drew level and Cardinal Langley had suddenly four players fouled out. Twelve minutes remained and they had three men on court. An unexpected defeat loomed.

Colin Tomkinson assumed the role of ball handler, often confronted with three opponents. Ladyburn pressed hard, forcing an eight-point lead. Yet despite the considerable odds the remaining Kings played coolly. Indeed, they outscored Ladyburn in the final five minutes of the game and urged on by a sympathetic crowd they all but caught Ladyburn. The closing minutes were stormy and, more surprisingly, scoreless.

Nick Samuels finished with eleven points and for Ladyburn Jeff Curtis had fourteen.

The other place in the final hinged on the game 6, in a delicate balance. Any of the three teams could still go through. Ladyburn could win outright; but depending on the margin, if they lost, one of the others would make it. Any less than eighteen points meant the Kings in the final, otherwise it would be the school.

Game 5 (League Two):

Cardinal Langley II (24) 42
Burnley (22) 43

THE Cardinals made a much better hand of this match, again versus first division opponents. They employed zone defence and harried Burnley vigorously. By the first quarter they deserved the 14-8 advantage. Jimmy Wood and new Cardinal Jan Korab chased hard and Don Davies provided bite under both boards.

Burnley gradually reduced the arrears in what produced the closest match of the competition. Once more White and Cedillo played a significant part.

When the Cardinals widened the two-point lead immediately after half time, they looked much the better side. Going to the last quarter, they were seven points up, and well marshalled by Wilf Byrne.

As earlier, Burnley left their recovery late. The lead swapped hands five times in the last couple of minutes. The Cardinals were beaten by the narrowest margin.

Game 6 (League One):

Cardinal Langley School ... (26) 55
Ladyburn (16) 34

THIS was a decider. Ladyburn led first and the School side hit back. After ten minutes of tight play, injury to Jeff Curtis reduced him to a passenger. Then taking advantage, the School scored ten points unanswered and were on target for the necessary points difference of more than eighteen which would place them and not the Kings in the final.

The first five minutes of the second half were important, as the School added nine points. Ladyburn responded well and the margin hovered either side of eighteen. With three minutes remaining the score stood at 45-26, and in a grandstand finish nine baskets were scored. The School won by 21 and with it, a chance for the trophy.

FINAL:

Oldham Saints (29) 68
Cardinal Langley School ... (20) 40

THE School held Oldham for much of the first quarter. Thereafter it was a question of how large would be Oldham's winning margin. The youngsters, who had just beaten Ladyburn handsomely, were still enthusiastic but out-classed. The First Division side kept a good lead till half time.

Oldham's Cooper and Buckley dominated the third quarter. Their eighteen points produced a 51-30 scoreline with ten minutes left. The School rallied in the final quarter with ten points to the Saints' seventeen.

The School team, led by Peter Wood, were presented with losers' awards and Oldham Saints, under Yarro Martyniuk, received the Kings' Trophy, won last year by Cardinal Langley I, and winners' awards. Referees Ian Woistenholme and Terry Makulin also were presented. The score keepers were Angela Bennett and Nicola Allcock, and the whole event was smoothly organised by John Cihlar and Colin Tomkinson.

This has been written by [John V. Cihlar](#). Club member since 1970 and Secretary since 1979.

Anyone who has any further recollections about the club history, or, notices any mistakes please contact me.

CARDINAL LANGLEY FIGHT BACK TO WIN



Cardinal Langley Basketball Team, pictured before their game against Burnley last Friday night. Back row: left to right: D. Kirkham, N. Samuel, A. Martin, C. Tomkinson, A. MacFarlane. Front row: J. Cihlar, W. Bryne, R. Finlayson.

Cardinal Langley I ... (25) 53
Burnley (32) 52

FRIDAY'S game at St. Peter's was one of contrasting halves. Burnley had much the better early on and their shots went in. Both defences were of zone formation and resisted well, which meant that scoring would be low. In attack, 1-3-1 was most used, though with Cardinal Langley's late revival, several variations were witnessed.

Burnley were worth their first-half lead; they took their chances cleanly, especially from driving. And at the back, their good rebounding gave the home team no second attempts.

Things were even after the first quarter, but Cardinal Langley lacked their usual composure due to Tony Potter's absence. He unfortunately has a broken leg so will be out of action for at least ten weeks.

Cardinal Langley Kings had a nervous spell lasting several minutes and Burnley scored comfortably. At the end of the half, the Kings coach had the harder task as they trailed by seven points. Tony Martin's shooting was a bright point; he scored 12 points.

Half time: Cardinal Langley 25, Burnley 32.

The Kings were their own worst enemies through the first seven minutes of the second half. Time and again the final pass went astray. Meanwhile, Burnley drove through the Kings zone with ease, and led by 15 points.

Nick Samuels provided baskets when they were most needed. His six points heartened his team-mates, and despite being well behind, the self-confidence was obvious.

Burnley rather rushed their shots as the game became more evenly balanced. Even so, they led by seven, going into the final quarter. Both baskets escaped narrowly, but the Cardinal Langley forwards showed improving enthusiasm and with five minutes remaining they levelled the scores

with a couple of flamboyant moves.

At last, the home side were marginally ahead and that with two minutes left. Perhaps Burnley should have pressed full court but they did not. The Kings were allowed to pass the ball unchallenged, to the full 30 seconds, which the rules allow. And they did that more than once. In the end, they had won by a whisker.

New to the Kings colours is Tony McFarland. He will be with us till February.

There is a break from local basketball until January 14th. On that night, the seconds are at home to Rochdale Scorpions and the first team visit last year's champions, Brinnington.