



Hope Valley RFC are a Rugby Union club based in Castleton in the Peak District.

The Club was founded in 1979 following a game between Castleton & Hope and Bamford & Hathersage, organised by Paul Holwell and Malcolm Unkles. The score remains a mystery, but Hope & Castleton won and received a barrel of beer for their efforts.

The first fixture was played at Sandal on the 3rd March 1979, losing 22-3 with a penalty by Richard Mosley Valley's lone score. The following day the club played De La Salle (Sheffield) and won 15-0, with tries to Nick Beeley and Colin Field.

The Club has always been based in hostelries around the Hope Valley, the majority of that time being in The Peak at Castleton, but The Woodroffe Arms in Hope is the Club's current home.

The Club joined the RFU in 1984 and the Notts, Lincs and Derbyshire leagues in 1987. In 1988 we leased and built our current facilities in Castleton, which provide great views towards Mam Tor and Peveril Castle.

Like many small clubs, we have had our ups and downs, but over the years have fielded players from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, Poland and the Czech Republic. Our players have gone on to play for Derbyshire and NLD and several have played in the national leagues for Sheffield RUFC.

The Club's glory days of the late 90s saw an impressive run in The Pilkington Shield and an unbeaten league campaign before the rigours of long-distance fixtures saw a switch to the NOWIRUL leagues in 2004, meaning that most of the fixtures are now in Cheshire and Greater Manchester.

The past decade has been a mixed bag with successive promotions to Division 3 South before a slump back to Division 5 East. However, with the guidance of a determined committee and the leadership of captain and leading points scorer, Ben Somerton, the Club were crowned champions of Sale Sharks Division 5 East following a successful 2016-17 campaign, which saw the team go unbeaten at home.

With an exciting young side, bolstered by a few more experienced heads like Andy Woodall, who has played in every season since the Club's 1979 inception, and the formation of a popular youth rugby section, coached by Phil Edge, the future of Rugby Union in the Valley looks bright.