

07/09/05 TT No.41: Mike Latham - Thackley (NCELP)

Tues 6 Sep 2005, NCEL Premier Division, Thackley 1-1 Brodsworth MW (Att. - 100 est.)

Thackley FC play at Dennyfield, a ground located in a pleasingly rural location just off the Leeds- Keighley road in the village of Thackley, about three miles from the city-centre of Bradford. It is far from the easiest of grounds to find as a car traveller but the search is worthwhile.

The ground is to be found up the hill from Thackley corner, off a private tree-lined lane past Thackley CC. A riding-stables is next-door and the lane eventually leads to a sewerage works which, a club official informed me, was once the envy of Europe in the 1930s. The football ground was built on an old refuse tip. There is plenty of car-parking and a small but welcoming club house stands just outside the small ground. As the refreshment caravan was burnt out a few months ago and a new solid structure to house the new tea-room is being constructed the club house serves hot drinks and pies at half-time. The welcome from the club official on the turnstiles was equally friendly as £5 secured admission and a 20-page programme with an atmospheric front cover and a decent amount of reading material. It takes very little effort for the man on the turnstile to say; 'Welcome to Thackley. I hope you enjoy the game'. But it immediately puts the neutral groundhopper in a good frame of mind. Other clubs take note.

The ground is enclosed by a concreted panel fence and a red and white post and rail fence surrounds the playing area. The main feature of the ground is a small seated stand with the legend 'Thackley Football Club' in distinct white letters on its roof. There is a small cover for standing spectators to its right and the rest of the ground is open standing on newly-concreted standing areas. The dug-outs are opposite the main stand.

The game was well contested and sporting for the most part but unfortunately contained two injuries- one to each side- which necessitated nearly ten minutes' overtime. Brodsworth, who had led to a headed goal from a corner, looked set for their first points of the season until the home sub struck the equaliser in the last minute of normal time. Ironically many felt he should have been sent-off before the goal having committed a two-footed foul which brought out only a yellow card and then a dangerous late challenge on the visiting goalkeeper for which he escaped with a warning. A home spectator who wrongly berated the goalkeeper for play-acting was then shown the deep cut on his thigh during a break in play.

Thackley are a friendly club and the rural nature of their ground comes as a surprise considering its close proximity to the metropolitan districts of Leeds and Bradford close-by. A visit there comes recommended. Game rating: 3*.

