

TT No.51: *Dean McClean* - Sat 28th October 2006. West Lancs. League Division 2: **Askam United v Mill Hill St. Peter's**; Res: 2-2; Att: 30 (-ish); Admission/programme: n/a; FGIF Match Rating: 4*.

After days of continual rain across glorious Lancashire, meticulous planning was needed on a wet Saturday morning so as not to be disappointed by the bane of every ground-hopper: Match Postponed!

After being told of the delights of Askam United by a discerning fellow traveller, my heart was set on a trip to the Cumbrian seaside. His observations certainly make a deep impression upon myself, so my trust was put in him.

Being a native of a coastal town I know first-hand that pitches near to the beach will have a good chance of being good draining pitches, so I was never overly worried about the match being in doubt. Though as mentioned before, with the heavy rain of recent days, a quick phone call was needed just to be 100% sure.

Askam-in Furness owes its existence to iron ore and the resulting industry it brought. The second largest Iron Ore deposit was founded here in 1850 by H.W. Schneider. The industrial building was eventually demolished in 1933. In addition to street names, another sign of the former iron works is Askam pier, made of slags from the works. All so typically northern.

Duddon Road, home of Askam United FC, is easily reached by the A590 heading towards Barrow. Upon reaching Dalton, simply take the A595 (Workington) until you reach the village of Askam. Turn left over the rail line and almost immediately right into Duddon Road. The ground is about 300 yards on the left. Also, within walking distance of the Football Club is the local Cricket Club, Duddon Sports, and Askam Amateur RLC.

As you enter the ground the most striking feature is the spectacular views one can see across the Duddon Estuary behind the far goal. Truly magnificent. The ground is fully fenced off (as opposed to railed). No hard standing or cover are available to shelter from the elements. Probably the best place to shelter from the gale force wind is behind an adjoining garden wall, though this was heavily populated with the regulars. Near to the entrance is a small well-appointed club house which served tea, coffee and delicious hot pies which were gratefully scoffed by my fellow traveller and I. Thankfully I was in the company of a fellow pie connoisseur!

Since joining the West Lancs League in 1999, Askam have generally had modest seasons and this one is no exception. The homesters propping up the table in 14th, though the visitors are faring little better in 12th. So, as the table suggested this would be a closely contested encounter and so it proved, with both teams trying to play positive football in testing conditions.

A very enjoyable trip indeed.

A trip to Askam United comes highly recommended.

Canine Rating: 5*.

06/20