

TT No.250: *Bill Williams* - Wed. 14th May 2008; West Yorkshire League Premier Division; **Bardsey** (0) 4 **Field S&S** (2) 3; 6.30pm at The Sportsfield, Keswick Lane, Bardsey, Leeds, LS17 9AQ.

So, with the final games of the season almost upon us it is a time when some of the most crucial matches that decide the championship or cup winners take place. This was a fixture that had little meaning save where the two clubs finally finished in the West Yorkshire Premier.

Both Bardsey and Field have been up with the leading pack for most of the season but in the end Carlton Athletic proved to be championship winners by at least eight points (dependent on results over the next five days). This does not detract from the effort that both clubs put in, Bardsey have for several seasons been amongst the title challengers and Field have enjoyed a meteoric rise through the ranks since reforming four years ago and have won four trophies this season.

Having already won the League Trophy their Reserve Team won their last match last Saturday against previously unbeaten leaders Horbury Town Reserves to clinch the title on goal difference from the visitors. The Under 19 team took the League Cup and the first team won the Bradford and District FA Cup just over a week ago.

Bardsey lies north of Leeds and is situated in the so-called 'Golden Triangle' bounded by Harrogate, Wetherby and Leeds where the villages are semi-rural retreats from city life and the area positively oozes prosperity. The football club share their ground with the local cricket club which means that any late season home games have to be played in midweek.

As you enter the Sportsfield from Keswick Road through a gap between two houses, there is a car park beyond which stretch both the cricket field and football pitch. This is enclosed by a post and rail fence in the far-right hand corner. Another football pitch is located to the left of this and the cricket field boundary intersects both pitches meaning that one corner of the main pitch perimeter is roped off rather than having a permanent barrier at this time of the season.

The shared clubhouse and changing rooms are situated midway down the cricket field boundary to the right and all of this is bordered on three sides by mature trees beyond which are open fields which stretch away into the distance. Like the majority of clubs in this league programmes are a bonus and Bardsey are no exception.

The game itself provides great entertainment with both teams playing fast, attractive football on a bone hard surface. Field go into the break with a deserved two goal lead only for the home side to pull three goals back and lead midway through the second half. Both sides have a glut of chances before Field restore parity from the spot with three minutes left and just as it looks as though the

spoils will be shared, a header at the far post from a corner settles the contest in favour of Bardsey.

All-in-all a satisfactory way to see out the season in an ambitious League which (as Andy Gallon pointed out in his Travellers Tale from Knaresborough - see *TT78-249*) is pushing to be re-designated as a step six competition, and certainly from the games I have seen this season, the standard of football is good and the competition is healthy. Long may it continue to be so.

FGIF Rating: 4*.

06/20