

**TT No.200: *Mike Latham*** - Thurs 29 March 2012: **Carleton** 1-1 Grassington United; Craven & District League Prem Division; Attendance: 62 (h/c); No admission or programme; FGIF Match Rating: 4\*.

The Craven & District League was founded in 1905 but its charms remain vastly under-publicised for groundhoppers; it contains many scenic grounds in rural settings and a decent level of competitive football.

This early evening kick-off showed the league in a good light; another beautiful, scenic setting at Ramper Park on Limehouse Lane just out of Carleton near Skipton and a game that always held the interest.

Visitors Grassington arrived in dribs and drabs for the 6-15pm kick-off after a mad dash from work. Their players were still screeching onto the car park while the home side were concluding an extensive warm-up routine.

Clearly unprepared for kick-off, the visitors were at sixes and sevens and Carleton started strongly. The home side took the lead with a sixth-minute header from a corner. They might have added several more before Grassington got their game together.

The game turned on a penalty miss early in the second half, the visiting 'keeper making a fine save diving to his right. But Grassington equalised midway through the half and might have won it late on. This was great entertainment on another lovely evening, the game ending the gloaming at 7-45pm.

Ramper Park is shared with cricket and there is a decent pavilion for the players. The cricket scoreboard though looked a little forlorn and needing some 'tender loving care.' With good support for both sides this game had the feel of a real local derby with a competitive edge. The glorious scenery added to the enjoyment of the game for the neutral spectator.

The first week of the 'silly season' for groundhoppers has been blessed by amazing weather but the clouds are coming in- a forecasted fall in temperatures, with rain and night frosts and added to that panic buying at the petrol stations and the threat of a fuel shortage. It just shows that you have to take your chances when they fall- and a Thursday evening in Carleton was simply idyllic.