

TT No.234: Mike Latham - Thursday 26 April 2012; Huddersfield & District Association Football League Division One; **Hepworth United 2-2 Shepley**; Attendance: 20 (h/c); No admission or programme; FGIF Match Rating: 3*.

For the groundhopper it was another evening from Hell; driving rain, cold and wind. The chances of finding a new ground seemed slim, especially as this was a Thursday; but we persevere and usually we are rewarded.

It was little short of a miracle that this game went ahead- I must pass on many thanks to both secretaries for returning my calls to confirm the game was on. Coming across the Pennines from Oldham to Holmfirth on the worst A road I've ever travelled upon I severely doubted them as the mist was coming in and visibility was poor in the driving rain.

Hepworth is not easy to find, a small village up the valley from Scholes on the Sheffield road from Huddersfield. I came from the Oldham direction via Holmfirth. There is a severe lack of road signs. I cursed not bringing my sat-nav but fortunately found a local just getting into his car- he kindly drove on ahead for two miles to help me find the ground- what a hero. As was the referee for letting the game take place- he was fully justified as the players produced a good spectacle and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

Hepworth is a small village to the southeast of Holmfirth and southwest of Jackson Bridge in the metropolitan borough of Kirklees. The village is one of the locations in the BBC's long-running comedy series *Last of the Summer Wine*, with the local pub the Butchers Arms featuring prominently.

In the 17th century Hepworth was the most northerly point reached by the spread of the Great Plague, said to have been carried on cloth from London. Thirteen of the residents perished from the terrible disease and thirteen trees were planted in their memory by the side of the village football field. Two subsequently fell down and in 2004 replacements were planted at a small ceremony. The end of the plague in Hepworth is still commemorated on the last Monday in June every year with Hepworth Feast.

The Hepworth ground on Far Lane has glorious views; there is a small shelter and a hut for the groundsman's equipment. There is another pitch alongside. Champions of the league, Hepworth quickly went into a 2-0 lead but the visitors fought back well in the second half and deserved their draw. With rain still coming down in torrents the presentation of the league shield was understandably a rather muted affair. It was another really enjoyable evening in this well organised league.