

**TT No. 160: Mike Latham** - Weds 1 May 2013; **Midgley United** v Sowerby Utd; Halifax & District Football League Prem; Result: 3-2; Attendance: 45 (h/c); FGIF Match Rating: 4\*.

I have praised the Huddersfield & District League on several occasions recently and am happy to report that their counterpart league in Halifax appears to be equally as fine a footballing body- a superb web site, regularly updated, and a professional organisation of an amateur football league.

On the first day of May the weather was glorious which made braving the traffic jams in that well-known bottleneck of Sowerby Bridge a chore that could be tolerated with the prospect of a good game in prospect.

So, it proved, as the journey was well worthwhile, the ground location stunning, the football excellent. Midgley is a hill top village in Calderdale close to Mytholmroyd and Hebden Bridge with amazing views from all sides. Midgley Rec is within easy walking distance of Mytholmroyd station if you have the aerobic capacity and stamina of a Nepalese Sherpa, but mere mortals might find it slightly more challenging- the narrow road ascends for a long, long way and the Rec ground is approached up a tiny one-track lane with stone walls on either side close to the village centre.

The home side had won the title at the weekend but never slackened despite it being the final game of the league campaign. The visitors, second bottom of the league, more than played their part in a fine game on a lovely sunny and warm evening.

Midgley went 2-0 up and missed several more chances. There was an urgency about their play which suggested they had an agenda. A few enquiries revealed that their no.9 needed three goals to become the leading scorer in the league and that they were fare-welling their veteran no.11 who was playing the final game of his career, The no.9 began well with two quickly taken goals, the no.11 played with a sure touch, showing he had played at a much higher level earlier in his career.

The visitors were hanging on against the onslaught, but to their huge credit showed great fighting spirit to pull level with goals either side of the interval. But the home striker then completed his hat-trick to earn the league's 'Goal-den' boot award and the no.11 scored a popularly acclaimed goal; the no.8 with a fantastic dipping volley rounded off a convincing win.

Many thanks to the home secretary- that's John Murphy not Teresa May for his invaluable directions and friendly welcome. Basically, turn second right after the junior school and hope nothing's coming the other way. There's a small cover at the Rec ground and the views are simply awe-inspiring. Groundhopping doesn't get any better than this.

