

**TT No.037: 27/02/05 Club/Ground Focus: *Andy Sneddon* - Barnoldswick Town (West Lancashire League Prem Division).**

Saturday 26th February 2005; West Lancashire League Premier Division; Barnoldswick Town 4 Hesketh Bank 7; Att: 40; Admission: £2; Programme: No

Another freezing cold Saturday and another feast of goals at an excellent venue.

Barnoldswick is high up on the Lancs/Yorks border North of Colne and in some ways, it seems a bit odd them being in the West Lancs League. However, when you take into account that this is the best route up through the pyramid in this area it seems a logical progression for a club that is obviously as ambitious as Barnoldswick are.

The current name came about due to a merger between the former United and Park Rovers clubs and the merged club now uses both grounds. The firsts using the United ground (the one featured here) and the Barnoldswick Park Rovers ground today being used by the club's third XI. This ground is separated from the main ground by a cricket ground, but all three grounds are separate and distinct. The former Park Rovers ground (who use to play in the East Lancs League) still has a quite sizeable cover behind one goal and is enclosed and railed.

The main ground is undoubtedly one of the best in the West Lancs League. It is pretty much fully enclosed with a pay box at the entrance through West Close Park. The whole pitch has hard standing, with the near side as you come in having a small grass bank running the length of the pitch which raises you 4-5 feet above pitch level affording excellent views of the pitch and the hills beyond. The near end at the entrance is stone walled to separate a very ground private house from the ground. The far side has an excellent covered terrace (built in 1983) with 5 concrete steps and would easily hold 100-150 spectators. The far end is a mixture of old and new. The dressing rooms and the old tea room which are rather starting to show their age somewhat, whilst next door is a superb new clubhouse with excellent views of the pitch, two TV's and a tea bar serving some of the best pasties I've tasted in a long time. In front of the dressing rooms and the old tea room is a mixture of terracing and some park benches. No doubt very pleasant in August but the stand was a better bet on a day like today!

The home side are currently involved in a dogfight to avoid the drop from the Premier Division, visitors Hesketh Bank were safely placed in mid table.

The game was a curious affair, very even in the first half and 1-1 at half time. The turning point was a disputed penalty to the visitors early in the second half. The keeper saved the first attempt but the ref ordered a retake. The keeper's protestations earned him a red card and with the stand in unable to stop the resulting retake the odds were stacked against Barlick (as they are known locally). In no time at all they were 5-1 down but refused to cave in and when they got it

back to 6-4 with about 10 minutes remaining the seemingly impossible did look just about possible after all. However, a late 7th for the visitors killed the game off and left us all breathless trying to make sense of what had been a frantic and incident packed 2nd half.

Barnoldswick Town are a friendly and welcoming club and the ground is well worth a visit. The facilities put many clubs in higher leagues around the country to shame and what they've achieved over the last 20 years or so speaks volumes for the hard work of the dedicated Committee.

A visit comes highly recommended.

03/20