

Criticism of pitch after shock defeat

STRONG criticism of the wicket followed Carlinghow St. John's unexpected victory over Mirfield Parish Church, whose defeat cost them the lead in the Dewsbury League's 'A' section.

"We were beaten, but my criticism of the pitch would have been the same had we won. It was not cut properly and the grass, which was an inch long, had just been rolled down," said Mirfield captain Gary Dawson.

Mirfield wicket-keeper Alex Joy was taken to hospital where eight stitches were inserted in a cut upper lip after he was struck in the face, but the wicket was not responsible for his injury.

A ball from Ken Blackburn, who was Mirfield's most successful bowler with four wickets for 40 in 20 overs, by the top edge of Tom Whitaker's bat and then struck the wicket-keeper in the face.

Dawson claimed he was hit in the face when the ball reared up off a good length and he was helped off the field in a dazed condition and did not resume his innings until after the fall of the eighth wicket.

Carlinghow, who were without their two regular opening bowlers, Horsfield and Wigglesworth, defeated Mirfield by 16 runs and Mirfield lost a three-point lead in 'A' Section. Howden Clough, who beat Wrenthorpe by nine runs, now have a two-point lead over their championship rivals.

Replying to a Carlinghow total of 102-8, only two Mirfield batsmen "got their heads down" — Trevor Jackson, who made 29, and Philip Ackroyd, who scored 10. They put on 40 for the eighth wicket. Mirfield were dismissed for 86.

When Carlinghow batted, Malcolm Brook (27) and Lloyd Illingworth (28) shared a third wicket partnership worth 49 after two wickets fell cheaply and 18-year-old Nigel Yarrow then hit a lively 21.

Lumb was soon out when Mirfield Parish batted and Laycock and Griffiths then took the score to 25. Jackson and Ackroyd batted well later in the innings. Wilkinson, with six for 36, took the bowling honours for Carlinghow.

Mirfield's captain said that when Carlinghow batted, he had to take Graham Peacock, his fast bowler, off because the ball was bouncing three and four feet over the wicket-keeper's head.

"We were defeated mainly because of the wicket. On a good wicket, we would beat Carlinghow nine times out of

ten," said Dawson, who was dropped before he scored when he batted. He had to retire hurt when he had made two.

"Dawson's criticism of the wicket is a bit strong. It was damp and they sent us in and one or two balls did get up. The grass was rather long, but we rent the ground from another club and we do not prepare the wicket," said Carlinghow captain Alex Sutherland.

"I would say Dawson took Peacock off because he was not bowling well, having taken one for 30 in seven overs. Very timid batting by Mirfield's middle order batsmen contributed to their defeat," he added.