

09/11/05 TT No.103: Mike Latham - Burscough (Unibond Premier League)

Tuesday 8 Nov 2005, Unibond Prem- Burscough 2-2 Runcorn FC Halton (Att.- 350)

On a day when rain showers of an almost tropical intensity hit parts of the north-west the search was on for a game with many fixtures falling by the wayside. Burscough came to the rescue. Despite large pools of standing water on the approach roads from the M6 at Standish the playing pitch at Victoria Park, helped by the sandy soil with its close proximity inland from Southport, was in immaculate condition.

After their FA Cup heroics over Gillingham, Burscough were made to fight hard for a draw by Runcorn in a fast and skilful encounter. The visitors twice came from behind to earn a draw their display thoroughly deserved after spurning an early penalty. Both of their second half goals came from corner kicks. But Burscough played some terrific attacking football at times, particularly in the first half to leave the 350 crowd- 1,600 down on the Gillingham game- richly entertained.

Victoria Park is a pleasant and civilised place to watch football. The ground is situated just off the main shopping street of the Lancashire village and there is a friendly air about the ground as soon as you dispense £7.50 at the turnstiles. A 40-page programme packed with interesting editorial cost £1.50.

With a small elevated main stand and standing cover on two other sides (the far side terrace does have a few seats, as well) there was plenty of accommodation for the squally showers and in brief interludes without rain close-up views of the action could be gained from behind the dug-out areas on the main stand side and behind the nearside goal where the well-stocked club shop is situated. An excellent snack bar did a roaring trade and the cheese and onion pasties (£1.10) come highly recommended.

Burscough run a large number of junior sides and have made a real effort to become a community club and there is a sense of pride from their supporters. They can look forward to a new ground, to be situated virtually next door to the current one, in a couple of years or so, so a visit to Victoria Park needs to be near the top of everyone's 'hit list' if not ticked off. Highly recommended. Match rating: 4*

04/20