

**26/02/06 TT No.186: Mike Latham - Tynecastle FC (East of Scotland League Division 1)**

Sat 25 Feb 2006: East of Scotland League First Division: Tynecastle 0-1 Coldstream. Attendance: 20 (headcount); Admission: free; 8pp Programme: 50pence; FGIF match rating: 3\*.

With the Hearts-Partick Thistle Scottish Cup quarter-final tie kicking off at 12-15 there was the perfect opportunity for a double header in Edinburgh and Tynecastle's East of Scotland League clash with Coldstream provided it. Don't be fooled, though, by the name and the address on the Tynecastle FC website that lists the club's headquarters as just a mile or so from Hearts' Tynecastle Stadium.

The club are actually an amalgamation between the Tynecastle Boys Club, whose famous alumni include Graeme Souness, and Tolcross United, and play at the Fernieside Recreation Ground on Fernieside Drive, to the east of the city, located just off the A7 Old Dalkeith Road inside the city boundary. This is the ground of Tolcross.

The ground is an open grassed space surrounded by houses and trees. With views of nearby hills there is quite a pleasant village green type feel to the location. The only structure is provided by the changing rooms located behind one goal which bear the legend 'Tolcross United FC'.

The playing pitch is roped off and the respective managers and backroom staff occupy technical areas on opposite sides of the halfway line. Spectators gather around the ropes- there are no stands or seated areas and not even a tea bar.

The Tynecastle secretary, Alistair Wilkie, had helpfully saved a couple of programmes after a midweek email. A basic eight-page production, it nevertheless contained all the necessary information. He explained that it was the aim to bring through junior players from the established Tynecastle club and introduce them to senior football. He was delighted that the club's U19 team had reached the League Cup Final.

Mr Wilkie also doubled up as a linesman with a Coldstream official also doing the honours. They signalled merely for the ball going out of play- it was the referee's task to decide on offside decisions- the first time I had seen this situation in senior football.

The game was well contested and quite skilful, the visitors deciding the issue with a headed goal on the hour-mark. After the game, the home players helped to dismantle the goal nets and perimeter ropes. This was Tynecastle's last home league game of the season- with only eleven teams in the league, home fixtures are at a premium.

A basic venue but there was a friendly welcome for groundhoppers and it was a good taste of grassroots football in Edinburgh.

04/20