

20/10/05 TT No.78: Barry Neighbour - Recent October (Northern) travels...

Last weekend I had a rare `Northern` weekend. It did not start too well as I developed car problems on Thursday night resulting in a new radiator being fitted Friday morning. This meant I was two hours late picking up my travelling colleagues Alan Gulliford and Gerry McGill from Basingstoke station although they found solace in the nearby Queens Arms pub. The delay meant that it was a rush rather than a leisurely drive up to North Wales for our first port of call:

Friday 14/10/2005 **Airbus UK 0 TNS 5** Welsh Premier League Attendance 240. Rating 4*.

This was a pleasant setting and a very impressive TNS side which Mike Latham has already reported on in full and which I feel I cannot add to a very accurate report on the proceedings. After the game we travelled across to Stalybridge where we were staying with friends.

Saturday 15th October 2005 - Gerry headed back to North Wales to see Mold Alexandra whilst Alan and myself headed north via several pubs in Preston before going on to **Bamber Bridge 2** Grantham Town 2, FA Trophy 1st Round, Attendance 162. A newsy 60-page programme £1.50. It is amazing what a few goals can do for a game as people were leaving the stadium saying what a great game this was; in all honesty it had been uneventful for most of the game with both sides snuffing each other out and apart from Grantham hitting the post there had been very few chances from either side. The visitors took the lead in the 78th minute only for Bamber Bridge to equalise after a woefully short back pass was intercepted. Of course, it was not the defender's fault as he rollocked' the 'keeper! Just 2 minutes later Bridge failed to clear a corner and Grantham restored their lead with a close-range header. In the 87th minute Bridge equalized to make it 2-2 and 4 goals in 9 minutes to take the game to a replay (Grantham won the replay 3-0). Incidentally Bamber Bridge have done a lot of work to their ground with an impressive stand alongside one side having replaced the previous stand which burnt down. The side opposite is open. They also have a nice clubhouse/dressing room complex behind the goal. To the side of this is covered terracing. There is also covered terracing behind the far goal.

Sunday 16th September saw the main reason for the weekend as we visited the City of Manchester stadium to see **Manchester City 2** West Ham 1. Premiership Attendance: 43647, Rating 3*, 78-page programme £2.50. The stadium certainly lived up to all the hype as it is a truly magnificent place. We parked in Ashton Under Lyne and caught a 162 Bus from the Bus station which cost £1.50 Return and stopped outside the ground. City deservedly won the game with two strikes from veteran Andy Cole whilst a last-minute goal by Bobby Zamora was too little too late for The Hammers.

