

03/08/05 TT No.8: Barry Neighbour - Pre-Season Notes Part 2 (23rd July to 2nd Aug 05)

The 2nd part of my Pre-Season Friendlies is now complete mainly following the fortunes of Brentford starting on 23/7 where I had the bonus of a `Double` as I made my first visit to the Bees training Ground in Jersey Road Osterley where **Brentford Youth** took on Swindon Youth in a Pre-Season Friendly. I arrived at the advertised kick-off time of 11 am to find they had been playing for 20 Minutes. Luckily, I did not miss any goals with Swindon edging a lively opening half to hold a 1-0 lead at the break. The 2nd half saw a total transformation as the young Bees soon pulled back the deficit and dominated proceedings to run out 5-1 Winners. No programme was issued. Match rating 4*.

In the afternoon it was off to Griffin Park to see **Brentford** (seniors) take on Premiership Charlton; no goals but a good spirited performance by the Bees including Bankole saving a penalty for the 2nd game running. A 12-page programme was issued and cost £1.50. Match rating 3*.

Two days later and it was a visit to The Warren, home of **Yeading**, for a match arranged as part of the deal which saw Yeading striker Dudley (DJ) Campbell joining the Bees in the summer. DJ never got a kick, well apart from his former colleagues, as an impressive looking Yeading outfit ran out deserved 3-1 winners. An informative 32-page programme was issued for £1.50 (20 pages more than Brentford's for the same price). Match rating 3*.

Brentford recorded a 1-0 win at Weymouth the following night which I did not attend but went down again the following Saturday 30/7 to a late goal in a poor game at Woking. The only good point was the colourful 48-page programme issued which also covered the games against Yeovil (27/7) and Southampton (03/8), price £2.50. Match rating 2*

Monday 1st August saw the annual trip to **Hampton & Richmond Borough** where, apart from Stuart Nelson (in goal) and Marcus Gayle (both playing after long spells out with injury), Brentford fielded their Youth Team. With neither side making much progress this looked like heading for another goalless bore. Hampton broke the deadlock 5 minutes from the end when a mishit shot (which cannoned off the Hampton forward's knee) to give the home side victory in an awful game. An 8 page black and white programme was issued at £1. Match rating 1*.

The following night (Tuesday 2nd August) I visited my local club **Sandhurst Town** who entertained troubled AFC Newbury. This gave me the chance to check out the new 100-seater stand which went up in the summer. Newbury have been hit with a financial crisis which has left them with just 3 of last season's first team squad; they put up a good fight in the first half until Sandhurst's better fitness levels told and they tore the Newbury defence to pieces in the 2nd half to run out 6-2 winners. Talking to the Newbury secretary he is confident that the team will be

continuing this season despite their problems. This is always good to hear and hopefully if they can strengthen their squad. Great match to watch. No programme or team sheet was issued. A great match to watch and definitely worthy of a 5* match rating.

03/20