

27/10/05 TT No.88: Mike Latham - Garforth Town (NCELP)

Tues 25 Oct 2005, NCEL Premier Garforth Town 2-0 Sheffield (att.- 110)

Garforth Town have earned plenty of media attention in recent months after the energy, enterprise and ambition of their owner and manager Simon Clifford propelled them into the spotlight.

Clifford has pioneered the Brazilian style coaching schools, known as futebol de salao, and has recently joined up with Clive Woodward at Southampton. If you get chance take a look at the press cuttings on the Garforth Town website- fascinating stuff.

Garforth's ground, opened as Wheatley Park in 1998 after they moved from Brierlands Lane, is now re-named the Marston's Stadium and is easily reached from J47 of the M1 north-east of Leeds. There is only limited parking at the ground, though, and some spectators had to park in the new housing estate next door. The former mining community team, originally known as Garforth Miners, were founder members of the NCEL in 1981 and last season, when they had the Brazilian legend Socrates briefly in their ranks, earned promotion to the Premier Division.

On a horrible night of strong winds and continual heavy rain the pitch was absolutely flawless, soaking up the deluge and providing an excellent flat surface. Garforth's ground is dominated by a distinctive steeply inclined seated stand with terrace in front that provides a fine view of the action, straddling as it does the halfway line. The rest of the ground is flat standing. With several pitches around the site Garforth have an excellent set-up that is clearly well used and highly prized by the local community.

The social club is located outside the turnstiles and a tea bar inside the ground served hot and cold drinks, soup with a roll and tasty hot dogs and onions. Admission was £4 with a newsy 28-page programme full of good reading and with pen pictures of both sides a bargain £1. Garforth scored two well-worked goals in the second half to decide an interesting, hard fought yet skilful contest and a visit to the Marston's Stadium, even on the foulest of evenings weather-wise, was most enjoyable.

04/20