

TT No. 168: *Dean McClean* - Saturday 3rd March 2007. Midland Football Alliance: **Westfields** v Biddulph Victoria; Res: 1-1; Att: 71; Admission: £4; 20pp Programme: £1; FGIF Match Rating: 3*.

As with last week, the weather ruined my initial plans to visit to Studley. A Friday evening e-mail to the club resulted in a prompt reply to say the game looked like going ahead. It also asked what time I was setting off and whether I could leave my number so they could contact me the next morning. To their word they called around 9 o'clock to confirm the match was off after heavy overnight rain. Now that's what I call superb service and Studley should be commended! If only more clubs could be as helpful. A quick call to Westfields revealed, surprisingly, there was no problem and their game was going ahead as planned.

Travelling south on the A4103 through Worcestershire and over the border into Herefordshire, the wonderful early spring sunshine lit up the countryside to make a beautiful backdrop to the journey to Hereford. It certainly beats the views from the M6/M5 as it snakes through the grim, urban metropolis of Birmingham.

Westfields are currently celebrating their 40th anniversary season. Over this time the club has progressed from its initial place in the Herefordshire Sunday League, through the Worcester & District League and then the West Midlands Regional League and to its current membership of the Midland Alliance. From the early days of playing in local leagues on a park pitch, the club now has a 30-year lease on its new ground. Head of Football Sean Edwards has revitalised the club and it now has a team in the Hereford Premier Division in addition to several youth teams in ages ranging from under 9 to under 18. The club is certainly in good hands and the future looks bright!

As mentioned above Westfields secured a 30-year lease on their new home at Allpay Park. With funding from The Football Foundation, Hereford 6th Form College and the Beaumont Trust, the club moved to its new home in December 2003. This enabled them to step up to the MFA as WMFL champions.

Although the ground is new it is very intimate and by no means clinical. On entering the ground, we were greeted by the friendly gateman, speaking with a thick Herefordshire accent, as he took our £4 admission fee. Located to the left is the smart-looking clubhouse. Decked out in wood it is very pleasant on the eye. Inside, the small bar also doubles up as the tea-bar, where sandwiches, tea and coffee were sold by two friendly tea ladies. Neatly railed-off and paved all the way around, with a nice wood panelled shell on the stand, the ground is neat and tidy. Although within walking distance of Hereford town centre, the ground maintains a semi-rural feel.

The programme is one that quite frankly flatters to deceive. From the outside it looks fantastic but don't be fooled as it is very ordinary with only basic, minimum information inside.

Two teams struggling in the league served up a decent game of football belying their lowly status. It will be the visitors though who may wonder how they didn't win this match, as they hit the woodwork twice and forced over a dozen corners. The home side took the league with a superb strike from 25 yards early in the second half. Biddulph grabbed a deserved equaliser late in the game as the Westfields' goalkeeper unwittingly punched the ball into his own net.

A visit to Westfields comes recommended.

06/20