

TT No.156: Robert Davies - Saturday 29th December 2007; Eagle Bitter United Counties League Premier Division; **Blackstones 4**, Newport Pagnell Town 0; Admission £4 incl. 24pp (12 coloured advert) prog; Att: est. 80+.

The ground can be located to the North of the town centre in Lincoln Road which is a second left hand turn off the A6121 north towards Bourne after the road forks with the A16 to the right-hand side.

The car park was nearly full when we got there just under an hour before kick-off but there is ample street parking, so we chose that option.

A cold westerly wind across the pitch in Stamford this afternoon didn't help with the afternoon's entertainment. The Blackstones impressive clubhouse proved a warm shelter before the game as we watched the finishing stages of Sheffield United and Crystal Palace on the big screen.

The pitch at Blackstones looked in good condition and the post and rail inlay of heavy boarding gave it an impressive look. The main wooden shelter had two sets of wooden bench seating and more than adequate standing behind and most important it kept the wind out! As this was my first visit, I would imagine the complex, that also incorporates a bowling green, was probably larger at one time. New houses behind the goal may well have been built on previously used pitches?

The locals were a bit concerned about the injury situation that had robbed them of the majority of the club's forwards. They needn't have worried as the replacements put the home side 2-0 ahead by the half hour mark, with the second being a cracking volley from outside the box by Daniel Cotton.

A well-stocked and friendly run tea bar was worth the half time visit for a warming cuppa. The second half saw the visitors come more into the game and it became a more even contest with plenty of chances at both ends. Newport Pagnell however couldn't find the back of the net and Blackstones were quick on the break and exploited the visitors push forward with two more goals including another well taken effort from Daniel Cotton. The win keeps Blackstones in UCL title contention and they are still in the F.A. Vase with a visit to Lowestoft in the next round. It could well be a memorable season for the Stones.