

**TT No.170: Ian Hill - December 2007 Travels.**

Match 1 - Saturday 15th December 2007: League Two: **Peterborough United** 1-2 MK Dons. Att: 10,351; Admission: £20; programme: 68p/p £2.50; FGIF Rating: 3\*.

Christmas Shopping duties required a game near a decent shopping area so the table topping clash between Peterborough United and MK Dons was ideal. I purchased my £20 Main Stand ticket (what a rip off) at 1.00pm and set off into the Peterborough city centre.

On my return at 2.45pm there was chaos around the ground with large queues of people trying to buy tickets to get in. I made my way into the ground quite easily but it was equally chaotic inside - basically just grab a seat. Searching supporters as they enter the ground does not happen at Peterborough. This was clearly demonstrated by one home supporter who spent a lot of time waving an artificial Christmas tree in the air!

The London Road ground is a traditional football stadium. Covered standing behind both goals with two grandstands along the sides of the pitch. One is fairly new and modern the other, where I was sitting, is dirty and dingy.

For some reason the majority of Peterborough supporters were really fired up for this game. There was a real hostile atmosphere. It was like going back in time. The Posh have a very large number of "Casuals" supporting them but you are quickly brought up to date by the equally large number "Chavs" in the ground.

This was a very good game as MK dominated the game for long periods but nearly threw it away at the end after last 10-minute attack fest by the Posh.

The match programme at Peterborough is very good. A nice A5 size issue is produced in full colour and is very bright with quality photos. It is also reasonably priced at £2.50.

Match 2 - Saturday 22nd December 2007: UCL Premier: **Wellingborough Town** 3-0 Wotton Blue Cross. Att: 108; Admission: £4; programme: 20p/p £1.00; FGIF Rating: 2\*.

The Dog and Duck ground is named after a pub next to the ground. This is an ever-changing venue and is unique as it shares a drive with the ground of Whitworths FC. Whitworths is on the left and Wellingborough is on the right. If you climb over a fence at the back of the Dog and Duck you end up in Whitworths' ground.

The ground has been done up since the club reformed in 2004. The only spectator cover is provided by a decent sized grandstand. The rest of the ground is flat standing except behind one of the goals where in front of the clubhouse is a patio area with a refreshment's "chalet". In a corner to the left of the clubhouse is a small sponsors lounge. There is also a burger van providing food near the clubhouse.

A nice touch by the club was to offer a free mince pie as you entered the ground. Christmas presents were also given out to children. Wellingborough appear to be a very well-run progressive club. They issue a very nice match programme. It may not be big at 20 pages but it has good content.

The game was a comfortable victory for Wellingborough who won easily without much effort.

It appears that a move to a new ground may be on the cards in the future so this is a ground to tick off before if you haven't already been.

Match 3 - Wednesday 26th December 2007: UCL Div. 1: **Whitworths** 3-2 Irchester United. Att: 94; Admission: £2; programme: 40p/p £1.00; FGIF Rating: 3\*.

Whitworths FC is located in Wellingborough with the club ground located behind the Dog and Duck ground - home of Wellingborough. A long drive to the left of the Dog and Duck takes you to a very basic set up. At the bottom of the drive is a burger van which provides food and there is a small social club on the left outside the ground but I don't think this belongs to the club. A two-storey changing room block dominates the ground. If you go upstairs you can buy teas and coffees from an "old dear" who is a right character.

The pitch is railed off and there is hard standing on one side. There are small scratching sheds on the half way line and behind one of the goals. The ground is not fenced in and is surrounded by football pitches and there are no floodlights. Entrance is alongside the changing room block with a garden shed being used to accommodate the club official who sells programmes as well. I didn't know that Whitworths issued which was a bonus. Unfortunately, there was nothing to read inside the 40-pages except the UCL newsletters and some various stats. The programme is computer printed on very thin cheap paper. It is a nightmare to keep flat as it has a life of its own with every page curling up. You are left holding a mass of paper.

An unusual feature of this ground is that there is a cricket field behind one of the scratching sheds. The unusual thing is that there are two golf greens at either end it. During the game four people were having a game but I don't know what happens during the cricket season!

The game started off at a furious pace with both sides scoring within five minutes of the kick-off much to the dismay of the late arriving spectators. This was good game to watch with Whitworths taking the local bragging rights as you could call this game a derby.