

TT No.177: Ian Hill - Saturday 29th Dec 2007: Scottish Football League Div. One - Clyde 1-3 St Johnstone; Attendance: 1149; Admission: £15; 12pp programme: £1.00; FGIF Match Rating: 3*.

A chance to visit a new Scottish ground came along during the festive holiday period. A quick look at the fixtures offered quite a selection of grounds around the Glasgow area. I chose Clyde mainly because I had read in Programme Monthly about their excellent matchday programme. Programme of the Year in Scotland for the last 10 years no less.

I decided to travel by train from Carlisle. Is Carlisle the wettest place on earth? After parking my car in the station car park, I managed to get absolutely soaked running to the station. I may as well have jumped in a river. At least I had the consolation of knowing that the heating would be nice and hot on my train and I could dry out my clothes a bit. Little did I know that the heating system on my super swish Pendolino train was not working. Great!

A relatively easy journey up to Glasgow Central Station allowed me plenty of time to have a look around before catching a train to Croy. This is the closest station to Clyde's Broadwood stadium. Directions, train times etc for the ground can be found on the excellent dedicated website - it even has pictures of a walking route if you wish to do so.

As you come into the outskirts of Cumbernauld you can see the Broadwood Stadium on your right-hand side. I decided to follow the "Ice Stations" instructions on getting a bus which stopped near the ground. I had to catch the bus outside Croy Station and get off at a place called the Craiglain Interchange. As we travelled along, we came up to a large sign saying "Broadwood Stadium". I decided to stick to my instructions and sit tight till I saw a big bus station where I would get off. The bus started to go round the roundabout then suddenly made a very sharp exit and pulled up in a lay-by. Outside was a vandalised bus shelter. The driver looked up the bus and started doing a lot of shouting. Nobody moved except everyone started staring at me. I hadn't a clue what he was shouting but anyhow I thought I had better go and see. He was actually shouting at me. "This is Craiglain. You need to get off".

Suitably red faced off I got, walked under the "Hoodie" filled underpass and there in front of me was the Broadwood Stadium. A very quiet Broadwood Stadium with 30 minutes till kick off. It then hit me. Why was the website named, the Ice Station? Why was there someone at the railway station throwing salt along the paths? Why is there hardly anyone here?

Luckily the game was ON. First of all, on the agenda was the purchase of a programme. I handed over my £2.50 only to be told that the programmes were only £1.00 today. Oh dear. Clyde had issued, what they called, an emergency

programme for the game. Nicely printed, laminate cover but only 12 pages compared to the normal 76!

There are not many facilities for the spectator at the ground. It is a three-sided with a gymnastics club at one end and a sports centre at the other. There is a good club shop outside the ground with a varied range of stock.

Clyde only open one stand for their games unless the away side bring a large travelling support. So, it was St Johnstone supporters one end, Clyde the other. Entry is pay on the turnstile and basically sit where you want. Under the stand is a very bland concourse with a small refreshment shop selling drinks etc. Although they did have something here that I haven't seen for a while - the boiled Hot Dog stall and they were doing a roaring trade. I decided not to partake.

The view from the stand is very good. Opposite is a similar sized stand and to your left is a smaller seated stand. There are no facilities behind the opposite goal just a fence. It does though give a nice view of the countryside.

I sat next to a "Bully Wee" supporter who decided to slag off the team and the referee for the whole 90 minutes. His use of swearing was incredible. Think of a swear word and he could incorporate it into a sentence. He also performed an unusual trick of eating an orange whole. Skin, pips, flesh the lot. Not a part was wasted. This was then washed down with a steaming Bovril! Nice.

The game itself was good entertainment. Clyde took an early lead but St Johnstone hit back 5 minutes later. It really got entertaining when the team from Perth decided to drop the "St" tag from the name in a terrible display of foul play, diving, pretend injuries and harassing the referee. They were the masters of gamesmanship. They also had a centre forward called Dyron Daal who played with the philosophy of "if it moves, I'll kick it" and he did. He would have lasted no more than 15 minutes in English football.

In the second half they expertly wound the Clyde supporters up and to add insult to injury a Clyde player was sent off. With the game lost a couple of Clyde supporters decided to vent their frustration on their manager Colin Hendry. He then proceeded to "dead eye" one of the individuals concerned. Things went quiet after that.

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