

TT No.31: Ian Hill - Wednesday August 15th August 2007; Wearside League:
Whitehaven v Cleator Moor Celtic; Res: 0-1; Att: 60 H/C; Admission: Free;
Programme: None; FGIF Match Rating: 2.

Last season's Wearside League runners-up Whitehaven opened their home programme with a game against local West Cumbrian rivals Cleator Moor Celtic. This game offered a "hopper" the opportunity to visit three games in one evening - two being football and the other Rugby League. The Recreation Ground, home of Whitehaven RLFC is the main stadium in the area and a great ground to visit. They had a home fixture against Workington Town (kick off 7.30pm) in the Rugby League Under 21 Academy competition. Immediately adjacent to the left is the ground of Whitehaven Miners of the Cumberland County League - Division 1 who kicked off at 6.30pm against Bransty Rangers and Whitehaven whose ground is immediately adjacent to the right who also kicked off at 6.30pm.

You could in fact stand on the Kells End terrace at the Recreation ground and watch all three games at once!

Whitehaven FC's ground is a former, athletics track that has had a lot of work done to it. Unfortunately, not enough to allow the club to be promoted to the Northern League. A new pitch was laid on the site of the athletics track and this has pitch side railings around it. The club received a large lottery grant to build an artificial turf pitch with floodlights on the site and their next plans are to build a new clubhouse before any spectator's facilities. This is a real shame as it would be nice to see a Cumbrian club progress. Currently there is no hard standing around the pitch, no floodlights or spectator facilities. There is a small clubhouse in the corner of the ground which served drinks before the game and at half time. Vending machines offered the only food available. Programmes are a bit hit and miss with Whitehaven. They did issue on the odd occasion last season (I have yet to see one) but not for this match, which was disappointing with the game being a local derby.

On a sunny evening the game was dominated by a cold wind as both sides strived for a goal. Celtic won the game with a very late strike to take them to the top of the Wearside League.

Whitehaven Miners ground is an open grass area which is fenced off. The ground does have permanent railings down one side of the ground and a brick built covered enclosure. The ground is a bit neglected though. They won their game 4 - 0. No admission is charged, no programme issued and the crowd was 9.

The Rugby League game attracted the largest attendance with nearly 400 spectators present. Admission was £2 with no programme issued.