

**TT No. 169: Ian Hill** - Saturday 28th February 2009: **K. Lierse SK** v KAS Eupen: Belgian Division 2: Res: 4 -1: Attendance: 6500 approx.; Admission: 12.5 euros; Programme: (40pp B5), 1.5 euro; Match Rating: 2\*.

K. Lierse SK are located in the Belgian town of Lier in the Antwerp province. This was my second visit to the town as last season I visited the fourth division side TSV Lyra who are based not too far from the railway station. A visit to Lyra comes highly recommended as they have a great old ground and produce a programme.

The team is one of the most traditional Belgian teams with a more than 100 years history. Lierse S.K had a series of first division championship wins, with the last one in 1997. The club is plays in the Herman Vanderpoortenstadion, which is sometimes also called 'Het Lisp', because of the neighbourhood it is located in.

The ground is about a 20-minute walk from the railway station. On the way there you pass a couple of supporter's club bars and as you turn a corner a large tucked away ground comes into view. A fairly new stand behind one of the goals dominates the ground. Underneath are the club offices, club shop and a couple of bars. The shop was quite good and my impressions of the club are that they are on their way back to the First Division Jupiler League. The club has been recently bought by an Egyptian business man named Maged Samy, who also owns Wadi Degla Sporting Club in Egypt which has a sporting contract with Arsenal FC. He bought the club by paying all of its debts.

I chose to stand for the game on a traditional terraced paddock below one of the seated stands that runs along the side of the pitch. Tickets were a very reasonable 12.5 euros. Programmes are sold inside the ground with the sellers very vocal. The programme, for Belgian standards, is excellent. It is very much a British style programme consisting of 40 colour glossy pages for 1.5 euros. Copies of old matchday programmes are available in the shop along with three different guides to the season which were given away free.

The game was an easy one for Lierse as they scored a goal in the first five minutes and raced away to a 3-0 half time lead. They have quite a cosmopolitan squad with ex Everton & Fulham player Thomas Radzinski being one of their star players.

The rest of the Het Lisp ground is made up of a seated stand along one side of the pitch and the obligatory clubhouse/hospitality building behind the other goal. This ground has a bit of old and a bit of new but changes are in place to build two new stands so if you like old grounds you should visit soon.