

TT No.88: *Mike Latham* - Sat 15 Nov 2008: West Lancs League Prem Division: **Fulwood Amateurs** v Poulton Tn; Result: 2-2; Admission (including 16pp programme): £1.50; Attendance: 40 (h/c); FGIF Match Rating: 3*.

Fulwood Amateur AFC, to give the club its proper title, have been established in the West Lancashire League for the last 15 years, and for the last decade as a Premier Division club.

On a dry and mild mid-November afternoon a long overdue visit to this friendly club proved very worthwhile.

Fulwood Amateurs, the name given to the club on the front of the professionally produced 16-page programme that comes with the modest admission, play at Lightfoot Green off Lightfoot Lane to the north of Preston. The ground is just a few minutes' drive from the motorway junction of the M6, M55 and A6 and is located by following the Ingol road.

Fulwood Amateurs play on a ground adjoining Preston Grasshoppers RUFC, whose impressive set-up encompasses a nice club house, a seated stand and excellent terracing as well as several other pitches for junior teams.

Though the clubs share car park facilities the football ground is located by a separate entrance on the far side of the rugby club ground in a pleasant semi-rural location. A cheery club official welcomes faces old and new and dispenses an excellent programme.

The facilities, certainly by West Lancashire League standards, are impressive to say the least. It's also highly unusual as the football ground doubles as a golf driving range during the week and at weekends when no football is taking place. So, behind the nearside goal adjoining Lightfoot Lane is a green and white building that has nearly 20 bays for golfers to practice their swings.

The advantage for the football club is that the building doubles up as a highly effective, if highly unusual covered stand that must be a godsend to spectators on inclement weather days. There's also a small tea bar dispensing hot drinks and pies with a couple of television screens to keep up to date with the sporting action elsewhere.

The playing area was in immaculate condition, flat, well grassed and well drained and this clash between two mid table sides produced a decent enough game, shaded by the home side who came from behind to end a losing run of four games.

As well as the 'Golf' stand there are other facilities- a cover in front of the dressing rooms along one side that backs onto the rugby club stand and a small cover along the far side.

The home manager was not pulling any punches in his programme notes, talking of the need for the players to acknowledge the responsibility they have "to the

people who work so hard to provide the excellent facilities that we have here.” He added: “This a well-run club playing in a brilliantly organised league.”

A visit to Fulwood Amateurs comes highly recommended for a stress-free afternoon in pleasant and welcoming surroundings. And, due to 2pm kick-offs in mid-winter and the proximity to the M55 you can with careful planning get in the second half of another game. Within 20 minutes of this game ending I was enjoying FA Vase action as defending cup holders AFC Fylde saw off Newcastle Benfield with a late penalty.

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