

TT No. 15: *Andy Gallon* - Wed 26th August 2009; **Scarborough Town** v Guisborough THC; Wearside League; Res: 6-0; Att: 261; Admission: £2; Programme: £1 (32pp); FGIF Match Rating: ***.

There's simply no stopping Scarborough Town. A club record crowd of 261 on an inclement evening saw them open their new ground at the George Pindar Community Sports College, and all but the wheelbarrow load of visiting fans relished a high-quality display of football as the team routed Guisborough Town HC to celebrate in style their home debut in the Wearside League. The need to resolve various planning issues had delayed the club's bow at the Eastfield venue, but former pro Mitch Cook's table-topping youngsters had already rattled up a 100% record from five away fixtures. Town strolled to the Teesside League Second Division title last season in their inaugural year, and I'll be amazed if they don't add the Wearside League championship trophy to their honours board. Despite stepping up on to the bottom rung of the pyramid, they remain committed to playing high-speed, passing football, based on high fitness levels and with the emphasis firmly on attack. The Guisborough lads couldn't live with their pace, movement and skill - and I doubt whether any other clubs in this league will be able to, either.

Leaving the McCain Sports & Social Club (see TT140, 2008-09) on the edge of Cayton village, where Town were based last season, for nearby George Pindar is definitely a move in the right direction. The pitch used by Town has been re-laid and shifted slightly to the south to allow for the construction of a wooden boundary fence on the Moor Lane (north) side. A concrete post and metal rail pitch barrier is being put in, with the whole of the south touchline and a quarter of the east completed. Once other planning hurdles have been cleared, Town hope to erect floodlights and have permanent cover for spectators.

Get to Eastfield, just south of Scarborough, in good time, and there's plenty of free parking to be had at the college. A flagged path between the two car parks on Moor Lane leads past a skateboard park and the college buildings to the red-brick Pindar Leisure Centre. Upstairs, the bar is open for Town games, while the changing rooms are below. The 'turnstile' - a table by a gap in temporary fencing - is away to the right. A metal container serves as the club shop and programme sales point. The team line-ups, felt-tipped on a whiteboard, are hooked obligingly through the fence's metal mesh, close to where the players emerge for a 30-yard walk across grass to the pitch.

The set-up, as yet, is basic, but much better than what was offered at the McCain Sports & Social Club, whose large factory - complete with steam-belching chimneys - looms darkly over the college to the south. The only cover is provided by a couple of 'stands' on the south side. These, set back slightly from the pitch barrier, are 10 yards long and positioned adjacent to each other. They are simple, lightweight wooden frames over grass, with a couple of rows of free-standing blue plastic

chairs inside. Plastic corrugated sheeting keeps off the worst of the elements, though they don't have screen ends. In the event, this area was rendered unusable because of spectators standing directly in front. The rest of the ground comprises uncovered standing on grass. In the areas where the pitch barrier is not finished, rope is used. Two Perspex dugouts are located either side of the halfway line on the north side, with their backs hard up against the wooden boundary fence. There is plenty of spare turf at each end of the ground, and a line of evergreens obscures Cayton Low Road, which runs along the eastern boundary, with the rise of the Wolds on the horizon. There aren't any floodlights, though the artificial five-a-side courts between Town's pitch and the gloomy McCain plant are well provided for in this respect.

Clearly, decent weather would be the ideal here. Despite our promised 'barbecue summer' being again conspicuous by its absence, in the first half, we escaped a soaking. But the odd spot of rain gave way to a steady drizzle - and then worse - in the second 45 minutes. It got very murky and soggy indeed, but, fortunately, the sky cleared a little towards the end and the contest was able to go the distance before twilight enveloped the scene.

Town have kept the same squad that played in the Teesside League, though their young lads are now a year older, wiser and - more importantly - bigger. Apart from a 20-minute spell at the start of the second half, this was a slaughter. Only careless finishing prevented the hosts reaching double figures. Guisborough were game enough, but found themselves chasing shadows for most of the match. And it told in the end, with Town scoring four times in the last 17 minutes.

Patient passing set up the opener in the 17th minute, Luke Jenkinson scoring the first goal of a hat-trick from the edge of the penalty area with a low, left-foot shot which keeper David Usher got a hand to, but couldn't prevent rolling in. Three minutes later, Guisborough's central defenders failed miserably to cut out a ball from midfield, and the confident Jenkinson raced away to slip a shot past the advancing Usher. Left-back Dean Craig was getting forward, and round the back of the defence, at every opportunity, and Jamie Patterson and Jenkinson were narrowly off target from his accurate, penetrating crosses. Town keeper Rob Clark was finally called into action 10 minutes from half-time when he punched away a Paul Millward drive after neat interplay between the Guisborough man and his fellow striker Richard Walker.

The visitors had their best spell immediately after the break. Russ Spence was just off target from 20 yards, but Usher was becoming increasingly busy as the rain began falling in earnest. The inevitable third goal came in the 73rd minute. Skipper Georgie Rose, a pocket rocket, played a delicious pass inside the right-back, and Wayne Brooksby outpaced his marker to cross low for Jenkinson to complete his treble from close range. Two substitutes combined to create the fourth 11 minutes from time. Matty Brown galloped on to Danny Jenkinson's through ball and crashed a confident finish past Usher. Brown added the goal of the game in the 85th minute, bending a beauty from the left angle of the penalty area across and over Usher, and into the far top corner. Brooksby then rubbed salt

into Guisborough's wounds by making it six of the best with three minutes left. He skipped through a tiring defence and beat the despairing Usher with a well-struck drive. I fancy this masterclass is going to run and run.

I'm pleased also to report Town have maintained the excellent standards set by their programme last season. There won't be many - if any - in the Wearside League better than this issue. Its contents live up to the expectations set by a striking cover, with lots to read in a tidily-designed effort, which includes plenty of photographs and up-to-date stats. In every respect, Scarborough Town are an impressive club. As their opponents will no doubt relate to others in the league, catch them if you can!

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