

TT No.273: Mark Farnell - Thurs 28th April 2011; **Arsenal Ladies** v Birmingham City Ladies; Women's Super League; Result: 1-2; Attendance: 789; Programme: 32pp, £1.50.

After a really busy day at work I managed to get home for just after 3pm to collect Lucy, still on school holiday and a mate, Tony from Gravelly Hill station before making the trip down the M6 and M1 to Boreham Wood.

With their new squad for the new Super League I strongly fancied Blues to get a result against the Gunners which they have only ever managed once before and that was at home. So, the journey was a must with both fingers crossed for at least a point and also that the motorway wouldn't be full of traffic heading down to London for the Royal Wedding the following day.

This was our third trip to see Arsenal face Blues at Boreham Wood which last season was switched to the Arsenal training ground. No problems at all finding it and no problems parking in a nearby side street when we arrived. Anyone making the journey on a Saturday is advised to use a car park the other side of the ground towards the town.

On arrival Tony headed for the local chip shop for some rock salmon whilst I ate the remaining sarnies prepared by the missus as Lucy had been sneaking hers out of the bag on the way down. It was at this point she told me that she had not brought a coat or jumper so I lent her mine forcing me to watch the whole game in my Blues Ladies polo shirt and shorts. After chatting to some of the travelling staff and supporters, mainly parents we found a space on the far side of the pitch as 7.45pm arrived and the game began.

Both teams started positively and Blues created a couple of early openings through Karen Carney and Rachel Williams. But Arsenal too had good chances and eventually broke Blues defence down with a superb lob by Ellen White over the advancing Blues keeper to make it 1-0 at half time which sent most of the 789 crowd into half time happy.

We made the journey to queue for a cup of coffee to brace ourselves against the increasingly cold conditions. But with only one person trying to sort out burgers, chips and hot and cold drinks we were still queueing as the sides restarted the game and were in a great position to see Jade Moore's cross headed in at the far post by Rachel Williams to make it 1-1. Fortunately, I hadn't received my cuppa and could jump up and down and celebrate a cracking goal. Ten minutes later we were eventually served and went back to our seats as Arsenal hit the woodwork through Rachel Yankey. But it was Blues who carved an opening when Carney latched on to a poor back pass and rounded Emma Byrne in the Arsenal goal to give Blues the lead. The celebrations both on and off the pitch were huge and despite some nervy moments and poor finishing by the Gunners it was Blues who came away with the points and remain unbeaten after four games.

After applauding the girls off the pitch and a quick chat with one or two of the players it was back to the car and homeward-bound via Cotteridge to drop Tony off. Blues now have two tough games away at Everton and Chelsea before the mid-season break after the home tie with Liverpool at Stratford. Come on you Blues.

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