

TT No. 156: Mike Latham - Saturday 4 February 2012; **Bangor City** 2-1 Prestatyn Town; Welsh Premier League; Attendance: 709; Admission: £8; Programme: £2; FGIF Match Rating: 3*.

It's always difficult for spectators to adjust to their club moving grounds, especially when the contrast between old and new is so stark. That's the challenge facing the supporters of Bangor City, easily the best supported club in the Welsh Premier League as they get to know their new ground at Nantporth.

Nantporth, on the Holyhead Road close to the Menai Bridge is everything that Bangor's much-loved old ground at Farrar Road was not; it's in a relatively inaccessible area for those without their own transport and everything is bright, shiny and new. As new grounds go, and this remains a work-in-progress it shows great promise even though a day of driving icy rain tested the resolve of all concerned.

Whereas Farrar Road was close to the city centre the new stadium is located around a mile-and-a-half from the centre in an area of woodland that slopes down to the Menai Straits. Next door is a caravan park set in a tree-lined area and further along the road are some of the halls of residence for Bangor University. The Holyhead Road is a busy single carriageway road and with no street parking close-by, it's a challenge to park if you arrive late and the main car park is full.

There is one entrance to the ground, from a roundabout and the road then slopes downhill with the two-tiered car park above the stadium below. The stadium has been nicely landscaped though the main entrance is rather stark and utilitarian in design. The main stand, club offices and social club are by the main entrance; the main stand nicely tiered with a good view of play despite one or two roof supports. There are plans to extend the main stand along the whole side, so a friendly steward informed me and also to build a cover behind the goal at the Bridge end. On the far side of the ground are two small kit stands with four rows of seating and a huge television gantry, similar in design to those at Bala, Aberystwyth and TNS.

Apart from the seated areas there is no other cover at the moment; even the extreme blocks of the main stand are currently in the open. Despite the driving rain many of Bangor's stalwart fans stood out braving the elements on the shallow terrace with a hardy and cheerful band of Prestatyn fans doing likewise. Once inside spectators can enter the stand for no extra charge. There's a tea bar and programmes are sold by the entrance but, especially considering the size of their following, no club shop at the moment inside the ground.

The excellent pitch stood up well to the deluge and should suit Bangor's passing style; they had to work hard to overcome the visitors, also the last team to play at Farrar Road. Though Neil Gibson, Prestatyn's player-manager gave his side the lead goals by Kyle Wilson and Les Davies ensured Bangor marked their first home league

game at Nantporth with a win. The match was televised live on Sgorio with a 3-45pm kick-off.

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