

**TT No.47: Mike Latham** - Sat 20 December 2014- North West Counties League Division 1: **Barnton** v Northwich Flixton Villa; Result: 2-2; Attendance: 48; Admission: £5; Programme: £2; FGIF Match Rating: 3\*.

A dank and miserable Saturday dawned and I decided to stay fairly local, visiting one of the newcomers to the NWCL this season.

The League runs an absolutely fantastic website, with the estimable Ian Templeman surely worth his weight in gold and information on fixtures is easy to glean. Ian also updates the Twitter feed and so though a number of league games had fallen foul of the weather Barnton had passed an early morning pitch inspection.

Barnton is a small village close to Northwich situated in close proximity to some beautiful Cheshire countryside. It has good transport links and by road is close to the M56 and A49. The village has an interesting history and was once the scene of a battle during the English Civil War.

Barnton FC was founded in 1946 and became a founder member of the Mid-Cheshire League two years later. Their ground is on Townfield Lane in a pleasant residential location and adjoins a newly-built village hall which looks to be a great local amenity and was being used for a well-attended Christmas party while the football was taking place outside.

The club has made numerous ground improvements in order to make the ambitious step-up from the Cheshire League. Their departure from that league after a 66-year membership means that Knutsford FC are now the only club to have unbroken membership.

The major improvement to Townfield Lane was the installation of floodlights which flickered into life at half-time on a dark afternoon. The club has also installed neat hard standing paving flags around three sides of the ground, the far side behind the goal being out of bounds to spectators. The ground has two neat covered standing areas on either side and a small club house from where hot drinks and snacks were cheerfully dispensed.

They also issue an excellent 28-page programme and team sheets are available from the club house before the game.

Barnton are making a good impression in their first season as a level six club and are on target for a top-six finish. They showed fighting spirit here to come from 2-0 down and rescue a point with a stirring second half comeback.