

TT No.52: *Mike Latham* - Sat 6 February 2016: West Lancs. Football League Div. One: **Haslingden St Mary's** 1-1 Turton; Venue: At Broadoak Campus, Accrington; Attendance: 30 (h/c); No admission or programme.

Another desperately wet Saturday and another 3G pitch to visit in the West Lancashire League, my third such game since Christmas. Fair play to the St Mary's club in following the recent lead of Burscough Richmond and Turton in transferring their home game to a local 3G pitch to get a game played.

With St Mary's not having been able to stage a home game for three months it made sense to use the fantastic facilities at the Broadoak Centre, just a mile or so outside Accrington town centre on the Haslingden road.

Accrington & Rossendale College's campus is hugely impressive and in addition to the academic and training facilities there is a multi-purpose 3G football pitch, sports pavilion and the brand-new Sports Fitness Centre on site.

It was easy to forget you were so close to the town centre as the area is surrounded by woodland and the 3G pitch played excellently and coped easily with the deluge. Most of the spectators sheltered under a small cover outside the 'cage' but I opted to stand in the far corner, shielded by my new umbrella inside the cage and watched a highly competitive and free-flowing game that again reflected well on this excellent league.

I was surprised more groundhoppers had not availed themselves of the opportunity of a 3G 'tick' with the weather causing mass postponements around the country. The switch of venue had been well advertised on the league website and the Tony Kempster forum.

The 'home' side took the lead early in the second half and promotion chasing Turton equalised midway through the half and in the end a draw was a fair result. As well as the game I was very impressed by the facilities on offer at the college campus and what a fantastic facility it is for the local people.