

**TT No. 103: 03/05/05 Club/Ground Focus: *Mike Latham* - Flixton (NWCL2)**

Mon 2 May 2005, NWCL2, Flixton 0-6 Cammell Laird (att. - 50)

The phrase “end of season encounter” could have been designed for this game as the writer rued his choice of fixture. With Cammell Laird already assured of the championship and facing a severe fixture pile-up they fielded only two or three regular players and it was a good job they did or else the result could have been really embarrassing for Flixton.

Flixton, who finished second bottom due to having 21 points deducted by the league for breach of rules, had extreme problems in raising a side and the kick-off was delayed until 3-15 while they assembled eleven players. They eventually started with ten men with their manager in goal and were soon up to their full complement when a straggler arrived.

In the circumstances it was a poor game with the visitors looking capable of winning by as many as they liked. Eventually they scored three goals in each half, striker James McCoy finishing with four to his name as the home side barely troubled the visiting ‘keeper.

In the Unibond League only a few years ago Flixton are plainly struggling and it is to be hoped that they regroup for next season. Their Valley Road ground is neatly appointed and is around five minutes’ drive from J10 of the M60 (the Trafford Centre turn-off) and is reached at the end of a residential area. The Manchester Ship Canal runs parallel to the ground.

A well-appointed club house is the main feature of the ground with a small seated stand alongside. On the far touchline there is a shelter that runs alongside the width of the pitch and the dug-outs and changing rooms are also to be found here. Both ends are open standing. There is also a small snack bar.

A torrential storm just before kick-off made the pitch wet but the weather soon dried up and a low tempo match was mostly played in bright sunshine as both teams did little more than go through the motions. Admission was £3 with a superb 44-page programme selling for £1. This included all the details of Saturday’s games in the NWCL and up-to-date league tables - a quite splendid effort.

On the occasions the writer has seen them CL look a class apart at this level and play some very good passing football and it will be interesting to see how they perform at the higher-level next season. On this evidence they certainly lack nothing in strength in depth. They have scored 136 goals in 34 league games and have a positive goals difference of 104 with games at Silsden and at home to Darwen to come.

