

TT No.035: 23/02/05 Club/Ground Focus: *Mike Latham* - Burscough (Unibond League)

Unibond League Premier Division; Burscough 1-3 Workington (att- 231) - Tues, 22 Feb 2005

Victoria Park, Burscough is one of the pleasantest of places to watch football. The journey from the M6 motorway takes you through delightful villages like Wrightington and Parbold and the view from the top of Parbold Hill is quite awe-inspiring, though the sneaky speed camera placed at the bottom of the descent can ruin your day.

The ground is located at the bottom of a residential street just over the canal bridge near the centre of the village of Burscough. A sports centre, all-weather pitch and social club lie alongside and the ground is well maintained and full of friendly people. A pleasant steward helps you park your car, the greeting at the turnstile (admission £7 adults) is warm and an excellent 44-page programme sells for a bargain £1.50.

The tea-bar is manned by smiling, happy staff and purveys all the necessary items and the club shop stocks an excellent range of old programmes and other souvenirs with the distinctive green bob woolly hats doing a roaring trade on a night of sub-zero temperatures. A club official explained that they rarely suffer from frozen pitches due to their close proximity to the coast.

Leaders Workington arrived boasting the meanest defence in the league up against the most prolific attack and went back to Cumbria with a hard earned 3-1 win after a terrific game full of interest for the 231 crowd. A good number of Reds fans had made the long midweek journey down and their loyalty was certainly rewarded.

Burscough reached the national stage with their memorable FA Trophy win in 2003 and are clearly a proud and ambitious club with deep roots in the community and a thriving junior set-up that provides a conveyor belt of talented youngsters through to the first team.

There is a small main stand and cover on two other sides with a superbly flat and well grassed playing surface. The tannoy must be the best in Non-League football for its clarity. Even on one of the coldest nights of the winter it was a journey well worthwhile.