

TT No.067: 02/04/05 Ground/Club Focus: *Mike Latham* - Eccleshall (NWCL2)

Sat 2 Apr 2005, NWCL Division 2, Eccleshall 2-4 Padiham (att. - 50)

Eccleshall are relative newcomers to the NWCL and their Pershall Park ground must be one of the most idyllically located in the league.

Situated about 10 miles from J15 of the M6, Eccleshall is a delightful village set amid rolling Staffordshire countryside. The football ground is a mile outside the village and reached via High Street. It is located 100 yards after the sign for Pershall.

To enter the NWCL Eccleshall erected a wooden fence to enclose the ground and also floodlights. There is an old pavilion by the entrance which houses the committee room, a small bar and tea bar and dressing rooms. There is an overhang to the pavilion where some bench seating and a dozen plastic seats provide seated accommodation.

The only other cover on the ground is a small building sandwiched between the two dug-outs.

Admission was only £3 with £2 for concessions and a superbly informative 32-page programme was a bargain £1. The statistical section was outstanding while manager Bob Askey's piece was refreshingly honestly written, admitting to sleepless nights after a poor run of recent results and looking back at whether he made the right selections and tactical decisions.

The programme editor, Richard Marsh, also wrote that the Inland Revenue were due to inspect the club's books next Thursday: "Someone at the tax office thinks we might be paying players and we are a limited company. We don't pay players as you all know and if we did, we'd want our money back from the games in March."

The welcome from the club officials was warm and Eccleshall are clearly a friendly and ambitious club who are enjoying their step-up to the NWCL. They are the only club to defeat Cammell Laird in the league this season but they have now taken only two points from seven games.

Eccleshall scored first and last but Padiham, third in the league, played some fine attacking football to claim the spoils from an entertaining game played in good spirit on a bumpy and dry pitch that was shorn of grass in places. The attendance on a head count looked to just below Eccleshall's average home crowd of 60 with a good few making the trip from East Lancashire. A trip to Eccleshall is highly recommended, especially on such a glorious Spring afternoon as this.