

TT No.086: 17/04/05 Travellers' Tales: *Dennis Woods* - Slovakian Travels.

On Friday 8th April, Eddie Cook and Roland Reeve joined me on a trip to Bratislava, Slovakia. Once we landed, we took a taxi to our hotel and after checking in and dropping our bags off, we took another taxi to the main train station. We then bought our train tickets to Untersiebenbrunn, in Austria.

SC Untersiebenbrunn changed their name at the start of the season to interwetten.com and halfway through decided to change it again to Seidi-Software. Damn sponsors. I've decided to stick with their original name otherwise things are going to get pretty confussing after a few years.

Untersiebenbrunn is 40 minites by train from Bratislava. Before arriving at the station, we saw the floodlights on the right-hand side and it was just as well as we were the only ones to get off the train and there wouldn't have been anyone to ask, in fact the whole town/village seemed to be deserted.

SC Untersiebenbrunn lost 3-0 to SV Stadterke Kapfenberg in front of a crowd of 686. Admission to the game was 10 euros (£7). As you can see from the pictures the stadium consists of one main stand and an uncovered temporary stand. A 4-page colour programme was given away free.

Our next game was on Saturday morning at 10.30 am and was a Slovakian Division 2 game between **Rapid Ruzinov Bratislava** v Sala. Admission was 40 Korun (78p) and a 4 page, black and white, programme was issued for free. The stadium consisted of one main stand running the full length of the pitch, with concrete terracing opposite and no floodlights. Sala won the game 2-1 in front of a crowd of 240.

Our second game on the Saturday was **Inter Bratislava** v Ruzomberok in the Slovakian first Division. It is a shame that such a huge stadium only had 508 spectators for this 3.30 pm match.

Admission was 75 Korun (£1.47) and a 12-page programme with a colour glossy cover sold for 10 Korun (20p). Inter won the game 2-1 thanks to excellent stoppage time rocket shot straight into the top corner of the net. Since the winter break Inter have won 3 out of the 4 games that they have played and this has meant that they have now moved off the bottom of the table.

We had planned to see a second division game at Slovan Bratislava which is a 10-minute walk from Inter's ground, but their game had been brought forward to the Thursday as Slovan had a Ice Hockey play-off match on the Saturday night. It appears that Ice Hockey is a bigger sport than football in Slovakia.

The final match on our tour took place on Sunday at 3.30 pm at OFSK Dunajska Luzna who were playing SFK Jablonec in the Bratislavian Regional League (Division 3). Admission to this game was 20 Korun (39p) and a 4 page black and white programme was issued for free. Luzna won the game 3-1 in front of 150 fans.

The stadium only has a small stand with no floodlights. An excellent clubhouse served beer and to the locals lots of vodka. A BBQ was also available.

03/20