

**FIVE UP FRONT**



**Gareth Hughes**  
Bessbrook United  
Nickname?

'Hughesy'

Worst dress sense at your club?

Brian Ferguson. You just don't know what he's going to wear next. One day, tracksuit bottoms and dress shoes, the next something completely different.

Who eats all the pies?

We're a pretty healthy lot, so I'll say Ben Treanor ... because he can probably take a joke better than anyone else.

Pre-match meal?

A bit of chicken and pasta.

Post-match pints?

Coors at Dan's Bar, Cam-lough Road, Bessbrook.

**SIX OF THE BOSS**



**Graham McConnell**  
Drumahess Mills

Nickname?

I don't have one.

Biggest triumph?

Most definitely becoming manager of Larne, and winning the Manager of the Month award for my first month at senior level. I still harbour hopes of going back there some day.

Worst beating?

Our 6-2 defeat to Kilroot in the Clarence Cup this season. They are two leagues below us, and with all respect to them, we should be beating them.

Best junior player ever?

Alan Reid. I brought him to Larne and he's still there today. I take a bit of satisfaction for that.

Best one-liner heard at a match?

There are plenty, but the only problem is that they are all un-printable! The best one I've heard anywhere is an old manager one about their side being lucky to get nil in a match.

Take on life?

Follow your dream. I'm a dreamer, but that means I have ambitions.

**THE BIG ISSUE CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM BOSS TRACKS HIS PLAYERS' MOVEMENTS**

# Figures add up to bring Bangor success

## Video analysis is way forward for progressive Championship club

By Keith Bailie

SAM Allardyce might not be everyone's favourite football manager, but he did bring performance analysis to the forefront of top level football in Britain.

The former Bolton Wanderers boss was regularly seen on the touchlines at the Reebok Stadium with a headset on. In his ear was the team from ProZone, who were relaying to him various statistical breakdowns that could help his team improve their game.

Allardyce once famously debunked Rafa Benitez's assertion that Liverpool dominated his Blackburn side by showing pass completion and possession statistics.

Now Bangor boss Frankie Wilson has started employing a similar method by working with Lear Training, a Belfast business that specialises in sports analysis.

It may seem unlikely that such information could be useful to a Championship club, but company owner Jason Lear believes that sports analysis, using video technology, can be implemented at all levels of sport.

"Players and coaches can be sceptical at first but, once we get them into a room and show them the benefits, the penny always drops. We can show teams and players where they are losing possession with our stats and pinpoint why that is with our video analysis."

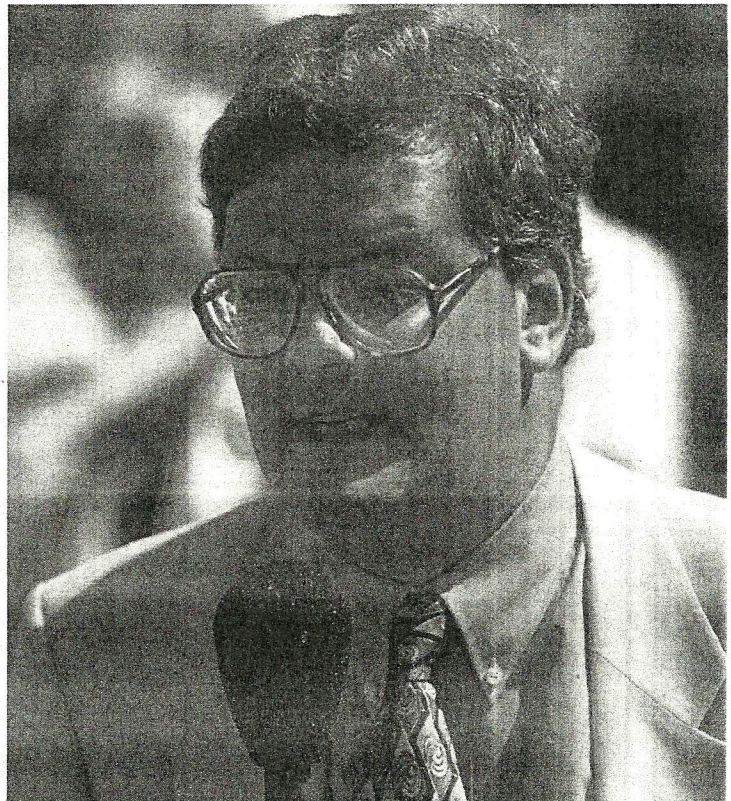
Over the last number of months Lear has been filming Bangor games and applying a programme

that analyses the match so that certain information can be related back to the manager, both during a game and in a post-match session.

Lear added: "Bangor lost a goal to Banbridge and most people blamed the left-back for diving in. With our video analysis we were able to demonstrate that there was more to the goal than that."

"It started when a midfielder attempted an ambitious crossfield ball which was intercepted. Then the defence panicked and got too tight, opening up a space for Banbridge to get into. The left back was isolated and dived in. We were able demonstrate to the players the mistakes they'd made in slow motion and hopefully they will learn something from that."

"Working with Frank has been a pleasure. In my opinion he is a very progressive coach who is



Angus Loughran, better known as 'Statto' to football fans, would be impressed with Bangor's plans put into place by manager Frankie Wilson (below)



open to new ideas about training and analysis."

The relationship between Lear and Bangor has been something of a trial for both outfits. Many would assume that this is not a system that could be implemented by clubs due to the costs involved. Lear believes otherwise.

"The perception is that the

equipment and the software is simply too expensive.

"Also, realistically clubs can't afford to bring me down to every game, so at Lear we are working on a project that will make sports analysis affordable."

"We are running a 12-week course in Belfast starting in September, which is Ofqual-accredited. The course will teach you how to use the free software that we have sourced and inform you how to analyse this data so it is useful to your team."

"There are plenty of people who volunteer to help do things like look after the kits, so I'm sure there will be people with an interest in technology and statistics that could volunteer for their club to record each game and analyse the game to help their manager."

"Participants will learn effective manual and video capturing techniques across a range of sports

and explore the appropriate methods for collating this data.

"We show participants how to use freely available video analysis applications to code and save analysis, along with tutoring on supporting technologies relating to performance analysis and sport analysis. The programme provides participants with a fundamental insight into a rapidly growing area of sport science."

"We will be running a free workshop in August, before the course begins so people can have a look at what we are trying to achieve."

There will be many people in football who believe that performance analysis is nonsense, or perhaps something that only belongs amongst the elite of world sports. Jason understands why people might think sports analysis is bunkum, but strongly disagrees.

"Some people in football have very traditional approaches to football coaching. I believe that tradition certainly has its place, but sports analysis allows you to find out so much more."

"If you collected the correct data and it is analysed in the proper way, you will see things that you missed during the match. It's easy to quickly identify and rectify problems and change your training accordingly."

If Lear Training's ideas prove popular, we could see something of a grassroots performance analysis revolution. Certainly Bangor's credible fourth place finish would suggest it has already had an impact at Clondeboye Park.

**SPOTLIGHT FRANKIE WILSON'S SECRET WEAPON**

**BANGOR** boss Frankie Wilson has guided his side to a fourth place finish in Championship One this season.

The former Omagh Town player has had a secret weapon at his disposal.

He has been using Lear Training's sports analysis programme to review his team's performances, both during and after a match.

Wilson said: "Lear have been very important to us. You can't hide from the bene-

fits. I get feedback during the game and it allows me to see problems that otherwise might go unnoticed.

"I also get a full statistical breakdown after every game.

"I've learnt a lot about it while studying to get my A Licence, it's the way forward for football, with all the top European clubs already using similar systems.

"This week we had a half-hour video analysis session with them. They're independ-

ent, so I get to hear a few home truths that I might not see otherwise.

"The unbiased element of the information is very important."

Bangor have regularly posted the statistics from their league matches on their website, along with video footage of their games.

Statistics included such things as possession percentages, shots on goal and foul counts.