

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE BRAGGING RIGHTS AT STAKE IN THE BIG

No Ard luck story for Frank

Bangor boss Wilson keen on second derby win of season

By Keith Baillie

ARDS and Bangor will clash in one of the biggest derby games in Irish football this weekend.

Saturday's showdown will be the 142nd North Down derby, 84 years after the first league match at Castlereagh Park, a 1-1 in 1927.

The match will take place at Dixon Park in Ballyclare, Ards' rented accommodation. Bangor won the winter festive holiday derby 2-0 and boss Frankie Wilson is keen that his side record a 36th league victory.

"I can't wait for it. There is no love lost between the two sets of fans," says Wilson (pictured).

"It's a big day for the supporters and I tell the players who didn't grow up in the area that they have to buy into it. The supporters are the people that pay our wages and it's important to give them the bragging rights."

Since replacing Colin McCurdy as Bangor boss, Wilson has enjoyed reasonable success as manager. The low point of his tenure was a humiliating 7-0 defeat at the hands of Larne. Wilson believes he has turned that result into a positive.

"I'm pleased with how things have gone since I took the job. We had a wobble in February — that loss to Larne. It was a difficult time for all of us, although I'm sure I lost more sleep than the players

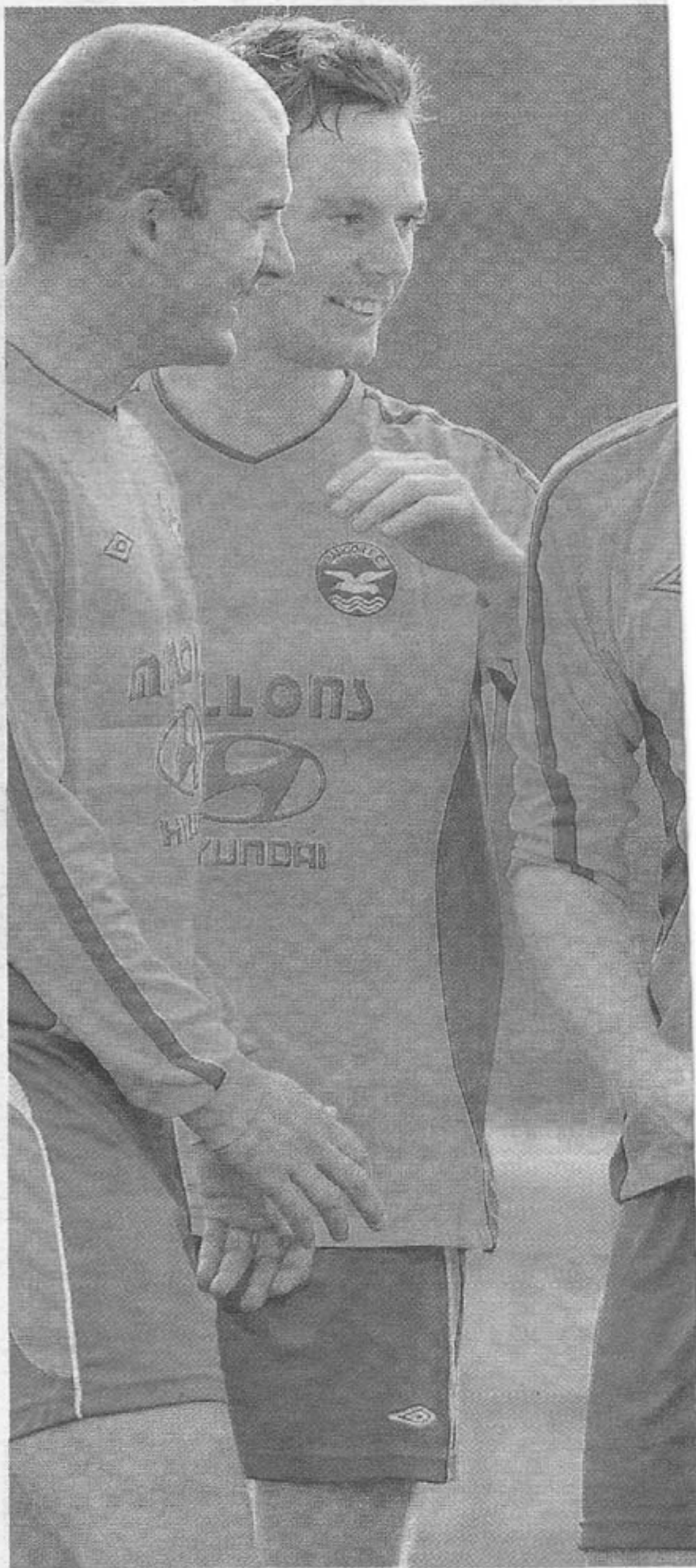


did. Gerard Crossley (Wilson's assistant) and I talked about what we had to do differently. We looked at Carrick and what they were doing, and what other teams had done in this league in the past. We changed a few things and it's had a positive effect."

Bangor and Wilson have been breaking new ground this season, with their innovative use of Performance Analysis thanks to LEAR Training. LEAR provides Wilson with statistics about Bangor players, such as pass completion rate and possession percentages.

Wilson hopes his extra information will give the Seasiders the edge on Saturday.

Ards will be without captain Darren Nixon (suspended) and top league goalscorer Stephen Doyle (holiday).



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