

02/01/06 TT No.152: *Paul Roth* - AFC Aldermaston (Wessex League Division 3)

AFC Aldermaston vs. Tadley Calleva; Wessex League 3; 02/01/06; Res: 0-2; Entry: £3 including 16-page programme.

The Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston was the venue for my first football fix of the New Year. Their ground at the AWE is on the A304 Reading-Basingstoke Road. Entry is via the main gates and then by following the signs to the recreation area and the enormous car park. Walk through the fencing and enter through the gap in the hedge to the pitch proper which has railing all around and floodlighting. There is no hard standing of any kind and it was pretty muddy today. The only building on the ground is a large changing room complex with an upstairs tea servery.

Arriving early, I read the 16-page programme...not a bad effort for this level, let down only by the final 8 pages being all adverts.

The game had been long awaited in the town as the two clubs had not met at senior level for over 10 years and from the start you could sense no quarter was going to be given by either team. Throughout, Tadley had the better of things and deservedly took the lead with a great header on 20 minutes and added a second 10 minutes later with a well taken shot. The score remained so until half time, when I took the opportunity to visit the fantastic clubhouse which sells some rare real ales.

Aldermaston came out all guns blazing in the vain attempt to get a goal back but it was all to no avail as the visitors slowly took control and ran out easy enough winners by virtue of their two first half strikes.

Despite Police cars patrolling the perimeter fencing, barbed wire and security cameras watching your every move, this is a pleasant venue to watch football and I thoroughly enjoyed the game.

For those interested the "Calleva" in Tadley Calleva FC relates to the Iron Age and Roman settlements found a couple of miles away in Silchester, where fine examples of Romanesque walls and an amphitheatre are situated.

FGIF Rating: 4*.

04/20