

**TT No.247: Andy Molden - Four Crosses (2) 3 U.W.A. (0) 3;** Spar Mid Wales League; 20 pp full colour proggie £2 incl. admission; crowd: 54 h/c (one third travellers, one third female, incl. one female traveller); FGIF Rating: 5/5 (6 if you could give it).

My job for the day was picking up a car load of "Ace Doyens" at an unearthly hour from Oxford station due to an early kick-off (owing to the Cup Final) for a drive to Mid Wales. The two Mick's in the party had already had breakfast at Mick's cafe next to the station, the owner Mick was still in mourning from the previous weeks demise of the yellows! One of our number (guess who?) was worried that a severe, weather warning had been given for the area, but a call to the club told us only a shower or two had so far fallen on the ground.

The journey only took two hours, not a hold up at the M5/M6 Junction meant we arrived at the ground two hours prior to kick-off. The ground "Foxen Manor" is hidden away in a new housing estate, though as this is the only housing of note in the village it is quite easy to find. Also, the ground is signed on the B4393!

The ground itself is pleasantly enclosed, railed off, with a changing room block 15 yards back from the pitch, a small amount of cover is available on the halfway line, although the club hope to build a 100-seater stand in the near future.

A tour around the village to the local Spar (so pleasing the League sponsor) and a quick trip to the two pubs. The Four Crosses which was bedecked in Liverpool favours and the Golden Lion which is the club's HQ. The latter had a number of old team photos plus lots of local photos of interest, including one of the long-gone railway-station which was on the Cambrian Line and closed in 1965! The only real beer the pub had was Old Speckled Hen (which is no longer brewed in Abingdon as the Morlands site is now housing, and one property is actually a brothel, honest!).

Back to the ground, £2 got us a 20-page full colour newsy proggie; the club also do badges for collectors of that ilk, produced by Andy Sneddon.

The game had brought our brethren out in force, with travellers making up a third of the crowd, one was Len Spirenborg who had been in Westmorland on Wednesday, Swansea on Friday, Mid Wales on Saturday and was planning a trip to Peterhead the next day.

U.W.A had a fair share of support, a good number who appeared to be female students of the University, which was a bonus for one or two of the traveller's present, who should really know better at their advanced age. "Want a look at my GBG me Duck!"

In the first half the homesters, took a two-goal lead against the run of play. Half-time saw the club operating a tea bar, which was most welcome by this time as the heavens were beginning to unload their contents on us!

The second half saw the homesters take a 3-0 lead, though the students were still having the better of the play! Finally, the students got back on course and started to reduce the score, two of the goals were out of the Steve Gerrard University of Finishing.

A draw, was it a fair result? On the balance of play the students had more of the ball, but the homesters were better at taking their chances.

As the Cup Final was just starting the drive home was easy, except the rain got heavier as we went along; when we reached the Oxfordshire border Banbury was bathed in sunlight. The Doyens were well pleased with their day out and plans for extending the season even further were taking place as we all went our separate ways at Oxford station.

The only blot on an otherwise perfect day was the news of the demise of the Birmingham Sports Argus which was to be issued for the last time that evening.

04/20