

21/09/05 TT No.51: Paul Roth - Ramsgate (Ryman League 1)

Ramsgate v Hastings United; Ryman League One; Res: 2-1; Entry: £7; Programme: £1

Taking a rare opportunity to watch midweek football, I travelled the short distance to see the Rams in action in their new surroundings of the Ryman League.

Approaching from the sea Ramsgate at first glance must appear like a play boy's paradise with all the expensive yachts moored in the impressive harbour. But a few steps into the town it is apparent it is more "Delboy" than "Playboy" and, in truth, is a little run down.

Southwood, the home of the Rams, is situated about mile out of the main town in a warren of terraced houses and the entrance at the end of Prices avenue is typical of a really old- fashioned club. A few alterations have taken place to facilitate the team's promotion - the turnstiles are now moved back 50 yards into the ground and car parking is provided on the open side of the playing area which has been partially fenced off. The cantilevered main stand running the whole length of the far side of the pitch has a new roof-not before time! One thing which urgently needs attention is the awful floodlighting system but I understand that is in hand. One visiting fan reckoned the game should be called off as the "lux" value was so low. But that wasn't quite how he put it!

A quick read of the not as good as usual programme and it was straight into the action and within 3 minutes the Rams were in front through a well taken header from the first corner of the game. It is hard to judge a team's potential when their opponents are so poor, as Hastings were throughout, but suffice to say Ramsgate went on to complete a comfortable enough 2-1 victory with the visitors scoring in the last minute (only as a consolation) to maintain their second spot in the table.

A first for me at a football match, I think, at half-time, was the cockle and prawn seller vending his wares as he paraded around the ground in the 15 minute break. It is a change from the omnipresent burgers, although they were freely available from the catering pavilion!!

A pleasant evening out on the "Kentish Riviera".