

### 26/09/05 TT No.56: *Barry Neighbour* - The Dorset Hop

On Saturday 24th September I ventured down to Dorset/Somerset to attend the latest Hop. Picking up my travelling companions Gerry and Alan on route at Salisbury, we were in Yeovil in time for breakfast at the local Wetherspoons before heading for our first game, **Westland Sports** v Stourpaine. This was a fairly new ground with work still being carried out to the dressing room complex, there were no bar facilities though a number of 'hoppers headed for a nearby pub for their early fix. The ground is railed off but has no other facilities to boast off. The game ended up an easy stroll for the home team as they ran out comfortable 6-0 winners. The 16-page programme priced at £1 was adequate but only listed the home team squad and no mention of the opposition line up. Match Rating 3\* A word of warning for any hoppers heading to Westland in future to check Yeovil Town's fixture as this is on the same road and could lead to traffic congestion.

After the game we travelled back into Dorset to **Sturminster Newton** for United's game against Bournemouth Sports. Sturminster moved to their ground in 1996 and now boast a comfortable clubhouse and an enclosed ground with a small covered area on the near side. The other three sides are open. Unfortunately, the game was awful as neither team could string two passes together and the skill level was nil. When a goal did come it was an OG off the Sturminster defender's head. Bournemouth did actually manage a second to win 2-0 but this was poor. Match Rating 1\* 28 Page Informative programme Cost £1.

The third game of the day saw the short trip to **Gillingham Town** against high flying Poole Borough. Gillingham have a covered stand on the far side which is being renovated and now boast a set of floodlights (I believe this was the inaugural match under the new lights). They also have a thriving clubhouse and are looking to progress into the Wessex League. High-flying Poole arrived in third place and looked a decent team playing some good football. However, it was the home side who came out on top with quick counter attacks to run out 6-0 winners that shocked their visitors. Match Rating 4\* The 68-page programme was full of news items (I am still ploughing through it) and was well worth the £1 asking price. All in all, a good day out 3 new grounds, 3 new badges and 14 goals.

The following day I took the wife to **Henley** for the day which just happened to clash with the home side playing Chelsea Old Boys in a Charity match in aid of Cancer. A 16-page programme was included in the £5 admission price. I recognised some of the Chelsea names who starred: Kerry Dixon, Clive Walker, Gary Stanley, Peter Rhodes Brown, Trevor Aylott but not sure who the rest were as they did not announce the team line-ups (other than to say the Chelsea players needed no introduction). Sorry they did; I don't remember Chelsea having a coloured striker called Stefan. He scored a hat-trick as Chelsea ran out 6-2 winners. Match Rating 3\* but an enjoyable afternoon anyway in the sunshine.

