

TT No.110: *Paul Roth* - Saturday 6th January 2007; Ryman Div. 1 North (1.30ko); **Harlow Town v Flackwell Heath**. Res: 7-0; Entry: £7; Programme: 40 pages, £1.50; Att: 192.

HARLOW. I had never actually been to the town centre proper in the New Town of Harlow until today and really, truth be told, I hope it is another 50 years until I do so again. Ghastly is an inappropriate word to describe the place. The old ground I had visited back on a Bank Holiday in 1981, next to the Gilbey's Gin factory I recall...are they still going? Gilbey's, that is!

Meeting Geoff Seers in the Wetherspoons pub (the William Aylmer) a couple of hours before kick-off was just the fillip I needed to get my day rolling and his inspirational idea of taxiing it out to the GBG listed Rising Sun at High Wych was nigh on life- changing, how good that hostelry is, with beers direct from the wood!!

All good things come to an end though and another taxi ride back into the New Town found us at the Barrows Farm stadium on the edge of town. Harlow's new ground of course. How hard it had been raining during the morning, we were both surprised to find that the game was in no doubt. A 1.30 kick off, due to inappropriate positioning of the new floodlighting...some areas have 'cold spots' apparently, suited us and after a drink in the modern but functional clubhouse, the match was soon under way.

Two stands, one seated (picked out with red and white flip-up seats); one not and for standing only, but with terracing for 700, face each other. Both ends behind the goals are uncovered provide a more than adequate stadium for the usual crowd of 250 hardy souls...less today, but not unsurprisingly so due to the awful weather and the calibre of the opposition. A tea and catering pavilion is situated next to the clubhouse and is pretty good value, offering the usual artery-clogging fare! Tea, coffee and herbal tea can be found here too, along with chocolates and crisps.

The programme, made up of 40 pages, is a very good and informative production. The small print therein somehow enhances the read. Okay, there are a lot of adverts but overall, it is a worthy effort for this division and contains quality reading. I have seen much, much, much, worse!

6 nil to the good by half time, Harlow were swamping their visitors from Buckinghamshire more so than the torrential rain.....but, as is so often the case in games like this, they didn't really capitalise on their superiority in the second half and could only muster one more goal (a fantastic one at that) during the next 45 minutes. 7-0 though, was more than a fair reflection of the game as whole. Flackwell Heath were woeful!!

A good drink in a superb pub (not in Harlow I should add)...not what I had anticipated at all when setting out from home at 8.30am and an entertaining game of football and great company in the shape of Geoff, had added up to a superb day out in ... HARLOW.

FGIF Rating: 4*. Train = 5255 steps.

06/20