

TT No.139: *Phil Hiscox* - Tuesday 6th Feb 2007; **Brook House V Burnham**; Southern League South & West Division; Result: 2-3; Attendance: 54.

As those that know me will be aware, I don't do much hopping these days, the running of the Devon League at the same time as setting up the Peninsula League makes life rather hectic!

However, I wanted to relay my experience from last night, I travelled by car to Brook House from Exeter a journey of about 3 and a half hours, for their midweek game V Burnham. My friend is a serious ticker of grounds and he needed this towards completing the division and I had a spare night.

Having arrived in plenty of time we toured the ground and tried to pay to get in - no chance ! no gateman or programmes appeared until 7.25pm for a 7.45pm kick off, I then tried to get a cup of tea and something to eat - err "sorry but the tea hut ain't opening tonight" came the word from 1 of the few home officials.

The match was ok, 2-3 to Burnham, watched by 54 paltry spectators including several non-regulars and a handful from Burnham, the pitch was frosty but no great danger of a postponement.

What amazed and saddened me though was that this is supposed to be a level 4 game between 2 top half sides and yet the ground was poor, the parking down a path away from the ground, clubhouse even further, the dressing rooms were prefab, the stands were Arena standard type and the toilets an old portacabin.

The programme was limp and low quality, the lack of gatemen and home officials worrying and the drive of 350 miles round trip done without even a cup of tea let alone something to eat!

I am turning clubs away from the new Peninsula League with comparable facilities at Step 6 & 7, yet we are supposed to accept that this re-structure of the higher end of the pyramid has improved standards?