

TT No. 164: *Dean McClean* - Sat 24th February 2007. Midland Combination Premier Division: **Alveston v Nuneaton Griff**; Res: 1-4; Admission: £3 (including 12pp programme); Att: 43; FGIF Match Rating: 3*.

Arriving at around 12 noon in Barwell for their fixture with Cradley Town everything seemed well: the pitch looked in good condition; corner flags in place; goal nets up. Even though everything seemed well I asked two ladies who had just arrived if the game was on. To our amazement they confirmed the game had been cancelled at 9:30 that morning! Cue panic. With no alternative ground to visit in the Midland Alliance, the Mid Com was our only chance. Thankfully the first 'phone call was the Alveston who confirmed their game was on. All systems go to Alveston.

The club actually play in the village of Tiddington, at The Home Guard Club, a mile or so South West of Alveston and North West of Stratford-upon-Avon. The ground is easily reached via the B4086 on the main street in Tiddington. Prior to the club moving to its current home it played at grounds in Alveston and Stratford-upon-Avon. In 1975 the addition of a sports ground at The Home Guard Club allowed Alveston to put roots down in Tiddington.

The ground is of a reasonable standard. A typical post and rail fence, surrounds the playing area. While a concrete running track, which may have once been used for speedway, encircles the pitch. The club has floodlights and a green stand on the far side. It is set back from the pitch and has around 20 seats. The ground is rather rudimentary but it is in good condition with no vandalism or graffiti at all. Always a welcome sight. Set in a semi-rural location the ground has a nice countrified feel to it.

Admission to the match was gained by giving the gateman £3, ridiculously cheap. In fact, I only paid £2.60 as that is all the change I had (honest), while my fellow traveller was admitted for £2.99! I can't imagine a gateman at a Premier League club allowing you do that. On a day when Manchester United fans were protesting against being charged £45 to watch their team at Fulham, I felt very satisfied to be a non-league ground-hopper. Being the first paying customers less than ten minutes before kick-off really sums it all up. Included in the admission was a 12-page programme. It was fairly basic but covered just about all you needed to know. A history of both clubs; teams; fixtures and results. It was hot off the press too, so much so that the print began to run in the drizzle.

Rooted to the bottom of the table, the home side needed a good start against free scoring mid table Nuneaton Griff. Unfortunately, they were 4-0 down at half-time. Alveston did improve in the second half, scoring once and playing a lot better. Griff even had the luxury of missing a late penalty, after a home player had handled on line. I would recommend people watch Griff, as they are the league's second top scorers. In their 30 matches they have been involved in 118 goals!

