

TT No. 12: *Dean McClean* - East of Scotland League Cup: **Vale of Leithen** v Hawick Royal Albert; Res: 6-0; Admission: £2; no programme; Attendance: 65 (est.); FGIF Rating: 3*.

A half-time 'phone call to Vale of Leithen, during the Peebles game (see TT No.11), confirmed this game was kicking off at the advertised 2:30pm and hadn't been changed in total secret. The ground is virtually a straight road from Peebles, apart from a "left turn at the 'phone box", according to Vale's secretary. With the 6 miles between grounds easily negotiated we arrived in good time at around 2pm.

In similarity to Peebles, Vale of Leithen's Victoria Park ground is very much made by the natural beauty of the surrounding countryside. A rather peculiar looking concrete covered terrace provides the home faithful with their necessary shelter, whilst the remainder of the ground is very much open to the elements. A wire fence encloses the playing area on three sides, with the right-hand end behind the goal completely open. For the brave few, open terracing is provided either side of the grandstand, whilst the teams' dugouts are positioned in front of the stand. Behind, is the changing block for the players and officials, which also provides refreshments, virtue of a small hole. Not surprisingly, the fare was Scotch pie and Bovril, though thankfully tea and coffee were available for the English section of the crowd and reasonably priced too.

Unfortunately, a programme wasn't available for this game, but the club do issue programmes, though not for today's game??

Last season's whipping boys, Hawick, accumulated only a meagre four points in last season's league campaign and were on the end of an 11-0 thrashing, in this precise fixture last season. On today's performance, Hawick can only view the league cup as a further extension of the league agony week in week out - if only, we had one game to play in this cup...they must be wishing! Saying that though, the first half was even and the sides were only separated by one goal, scored late in the first half. Perhaps if Hawick had' taken their early chances, this game could have been very different. As it was though, they eventually succumbed easily in the second half and quite honestly, it was getting farcical towards the end of the match, much to the chagrin and increasing anger of the visiting goal-keeper. I certainly would not want to be sitting next to him on the bus back to Hawick, that's for sure!