

TT No. 129: Ian Hill - Saturday 24 November 2007; Coupe de France; Calais RUFC 2-0 Berck Sur Mer; Att: 1200 (h/c); Admission: 5 euros; Programme: none; FGIF Match rating: 2*.

Last season Calais were promoted to the French League - National, the equivalent of the English Division 1. I usually try to get to one Calais game a season so this one fitted in nicely with my travel plans. Despite promotion the ground hasn't changed at all. In fact, it is looking a little rough around the edges as a new ground is being built, although, I have yet to find it.

As usual with Calais there are no programmes or team sheets. I thought they may have taken the plunge with their recent promotion but at least they are consistent! As the woman in the club shop said "We don't do programmes but I can speak English!" There was no answer to that really. One good thing is the admission price - 5 euros - a bargain.

This was quite a strange game as local non-league side Berck came to town. As is with the French FA Cup, the sides wore sponsored kits and it was difficult to work out who was who. One team wearing a red kit and the other a green one. Calais normally play in yellow, black and red shirts. On a cold wet evening the locals didn't seem to be interested either. There was little encouragement except for a terrible band of Calais supporters. I eventually worked out that Calais were in red and even when they scored there was only a small murmur from the ground.

It's a rough old town Calais and so are its locals. A lot of spectators were more interested in buying giant baguette chip butties with lashings of tomato sauce or knocking back the booze in the bar. There are also loads of locals who try to blag their way in for free and it usually works.

The game itself was a bit of a non-event which was quite surprising for a cup tie. Calais took a 1-0 lead at half time and Berck took the game to them most of the time. The Berck cause was not helped when they had a player sent off in the second half and Calais scored again to run out winners.

A bit disappointing this one.