

**TT No.134: Paul Roth** - Saturday 1st December 2007; AFA CUP Round 3;  
Winchmore Hill vs. Old Carthusians; Res: 1-2; Att: 30; Programme: 8 pages for a  
donation; Weather: mainly sunny, breezy and chilly.

Now and again you fancy something a little different, and afterwards you feel better for your 'change', your 'breath-of-fresh-air', so to speak. Today's AFA cup game at the Paulin Ground, home of Southern Amateur League Winchmore Hill FC, was my particular tonic this weekend, away from league football.

The lovely Paulin ground is home to a plethora of different sports and this vast verdant space has a wonderful, olde-worlde clubhouse right bang in the middle of these various sports fields. And it is inside this structure that two of my many passions collided head-on today.....yes, the club is listed in this year's GBG! Hot food, tea, coffee and chocolate is also available therein.

If visiting the Paulin, take a while to wander around inside, as it is full of old photos; a real history lesson in itself, not only football-wise either. Founded in 1920, their excellent website (now enhanced with some of my own photos of today's match!) lists a comprehensive history of achievements made by Winchmore Hill FC. Located off Ford Grove, enter through a narrow gate to access the (half flooded today) car park and their main pitch is to the left, next to the aforementioned clubhouse building.

I've never seen a game in the AFA (Amateur Football Alliance) Cup before, so didn't really know what to expect, but for certain I anticipated a warm welcome, as all the people I had contacted at the club throughout the week leading up to today's match, had gone out of their way to assist me with my visit. Special thanks go to Chris Langford for e-mailing me twice and for producing an excellent, informative, 8-page programme (the information below is taken from this production). I've come across a lot worse matchday publications at semi-pro games. Today's programme also includes a brief history of visitors Old Carthusians, and what a colourful one it is too. Winners of the first FA Cup, back in 1881 by virtue of a 3-0 win over Eton, the club had much success in that competition in its early years. Founded in 1876 by former pupils of Charterhouse School, which was then situated near the Barbican, off Carthusian Street, in Charterhouse Square, London, the club has come a long way since those heady days of the late nineteenth century and now find themselves playing in the Arthurian League. Currently top of that competition, having conceded only 2 goals in 7 matches played, dropping points only to Lancing Old Boys FC (Lancing College is, coincidentally, my Alma Mater).

Winchmore Hill, winners of this competition back in 2003, started the match much the better side, and quickly took the lead with a well taken goal from No.8 Liam Patrick. The Old Charterhouse Boys had a lot of possession but little penetrative threat. That looked like being the only goal of the game, until ten minutes from time, when the visitors equalised and that dreaded extra time beckoned.

Amazingly, a couple of minutes later, they struck again and withheld late 'Hill pressure to progress to the 4th round. The home side must be kicking themselves, as they should have had this tie sewn up by half time, but that's football, as they say!

This club is a delight, run by dedicated and charming people and most worthy of a visit by all Groundhopper's.

(REAL ALE as well!).

FGIF Rating: 5\*. (1 whole star for the superb range of BEER!).

06/20