

TT No.219: Paul Roth - Wed 29th April 2009; Kent County League Division 2 West; **Eltham Palace** vs. Wickham Park FC; Res: 2-0; Att: 7; Entry & Programme: N/A; Weather: Sunny but cool; French Onion Soup: None!

On a steadily cooling evening, in the idyllic surroundings of the Beaverwood Club, Chislehurst, Eltham Palace FC dealt what may prove yet, a killer blow to Wickham Park FC's promotion chances, with this thoroughly deserved 2 nil victory.

Oddly, the magnificent English Heritage 'Eltham Palace' itself is some five miles distant, whilst Chislehurst FC, who play in the same league, have their home ground within a mile of it! One of football's quirks.

Located on Beaverwood Road, in spitting distance of the busy A20, my favourite 'A' road as it happens, the club has more a country feel to it rather than actually being on the edge of the south east London urban sprawl.

Surrounded by mature trees with stables and a new country dacha bordering their grounds, Eltham Palace are fortunate indeed to have such a lovely home. The striped, manicured and immaculate pitches are conducive to the playing of quality football. The social facilities are also top notch, with perhaps the largest function room, which can be divided into three, in situ, that your correspondent has ever seen. Every comfort is afforded the visitor.

It was just a slight shame that this evening's game was played on the far pitch (there are actually two here), as the one nearest the pavilion offers a finer aspect. No matter.

In their yellow and blue strip, EP tore into their promotion seeking rivals from the off, and were one up on five minutes when Dave Williams jinked through the visitors' defence to tuck home his twentieth goal of the season.

Goal No. twenty one followed ten minutes later when, following an accurate pinpoint pass to the edge of the area, he swivelled and struck a sensational volley past the stunned and flat-footed WP 'keeper. After that, despite Wickham Park having plenty of meaningless possession, Palace had the better chances to augment their advantage; as the visitors pressed vainly for a consolation, they could have scored again, were it not for the heroics of the visiting 'stopper.

A lovely evening out in SE London (an oxymoron, surely!), a most entertaining match and a real gem of a venue.

What more could you want?

FGIF Star Rating: 5*.