

TT No.73: Mike Latham - Sat 25 Oct 2008: Aspire Midland Alliance: **Boldmere St Michaels** 5-0 Biddulph Victoria; Attendance: 80(h/c); Admission: £5; Programme: £1; FGIF Match Rating: 4*.

Boldmere St Michaels are one of the oldest clubs in the Birmingham area and celebrated their 125th anniversary with a lavish 'black tie' dinner at Aston Villa FC the evening before this Midland Alliance game against Biddulph Victoria.

There were precious few signs of hangovers as Boldmere, known as 'The Mikes' demolished their opponents with a thumping 5-0 victory that continued their fine run of recent form.

The Trevor Brown Memorial Ground is situated on Church Road just off the Chester Road and serves as a splendid example of just how to keep your facilities spic and span. Everything is well maintained, the hoardings immaculate and well painted, the grass and surrounds neatly mown and tidy, the playing area well-kept. The ground was re-named from Church Road in 2004 as a memorial to former club chairman Trevor Brown.

Mick Talbot has written a fine 125-year history of the club, formed originally in 1883 as a youth football club attached to the local church. Books are available behind the bar in the well-appointed club house or from the publisher, Tony Brown.

Just five minutes' drive from J6 of the M6 motorway, the Mikes' ground is located in a pleasant residential area and there are plenty of good parking places. The welcome at the gate is something else- several club officials had gathered and offered warm greetings to someone who was obviously a stranger. 'We love groundhoppers here,' said the club secretary.

The ground has two main features - a covered standing area behind the near-side goal attached to the club house that gives a fine, slightly elevated view of play and a covered stand with three rows of neat plastic seats along the far side. The rest of the ground is open standing. Helpfully, a blackboard by the players' entrance lists the two line-ups and the tannoy system is clear and concise.

With a well-stocked tea bar serving a variety of hot drinks and food on a chilly afternoon, and an informative programme selling at only £1 there is much to commend a visit to this friendly, civilised and historic club.