

TT No.156: *Stuart J Pykett* - Sat 15th January 2011; **Farleigh Rovers** v Worcester Park; Combined Cos League Div. 1; Venue: The Parsonage Field; Result: 1-4; Admission: £3 (not charged!); Programme: 16pp, £1.

This is a ground I had wanted to visit for some time, being my penultimate in the current Combined Counties League. They currently play in Division One. The ground is situated in the countryside between the villages of Warlingham and Farleigh, although the ground address is given as Warlingham.

To my disappointment I found earlier in the season that they have switched their home games to the Croydon Arena home of Croydon FC. However, on this occasion I noticed that Croydon FC had a home game on the same day so I enquired if the game was being played at their quaintly named ground of their own, The Parsonage Field. Thankfully it was, so off I set.

This was only their third game of the season to be played there (although the reserves still play here). Unfortunately, it looked as if this once pleasant looking ground had been left to decay. There were piles of rubbish lying around with a general appearance of untidiness. The whole place could have done with a spruce up. This is no criticism of the club however as clubs at this level find it hard to survive at all these days with dwindling committees and matchday helpers. Judging by the paltry attendance today (no gate taken - it should have been £3.00!) I can't believe they get more people to watch them at Croydon, although it is not far away.

Nevertheless, a perfectly adequate newsy 14-page programme with card cover was sold for £1.00 from the excellent tea bar just inside the entrance. I have a spare if anyone wants it (contact me at: stuartj.pykett@virgin.net). Hot and cold food and beverages were available from here.

Today they were entertaining Worcester Park who tend to be one of the stronger sides in the division and this proved so, winning 4-1 in the end, despite going behind to the hosts who battled gamely throughout but were eventually well beaten. The pitch held up remarkably well despite the recent wet weather in this part of the world.

The clubhouse is still in good homely condition and was a useful respite at half time from the stiff breeze blowing around the ground. There is a lengthy run of corrugated cover attached to the clubhouse and the dug outs are in the clubs' colours of red and black. There is a pub at the bottom of the driveway leading up to the ground called the 'Harrow' I believe, I only got a glimpse of it but it looked okay for a lunch time meal and a pint.

One note of caution for anyone planning a visit is the driveway leading up to the ground. It is severely pot holed and large deep lake-like puddles adorn it, so drive

up slowly or you could have a hefty suspension bill! The car park is also a mud bath so don't go in your best attire!

A few clubs in this division have chosen, for whatever reason, to move from their village roots and ground share, Staines Lammas and Warlingham to name two. This is a shame for people like us who enjoy visiting these often, unusual venues.

All in all, a pleasant day out and a decent game.

Club website: <http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/farleighrovers/>

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