

**TT No.20: Keith Aslan** - Sat 14 August 2010; **Barnham** v Ifield Edwards; Sussex County League Division 3; Kick-Off: 15.04; Result: 2-1; Admission: free; Programme: £2; Attendance: 47 (Home- 35; Away- 6 and Neutral- 6).

Most trips to the South Coast start with a tedious wait at Victoria to buy a ticket (21 minutes today, which compared to some waits I've had on a Saturday morning was a bit of a result, not a view those around me seemed to share). No complaints about the service with two fast trains an hour to Barnham, but I chose to break my journey at Horsham to visit its famous waiting room which uniquely contains three luxurious sofas.

Arriving at Barnham Station, the patisserie opposite is a "must visit" for the most glorious chocolate eclairs you will ever get your taste buds around. This will give you sustenance for the journey ahead as Barnham don't actually play in Barnham, but the village of Slindon which is a couple of miles away. It is a scenic walk, across the national trust area of Slindon Common, and took me about one hour, but this included frequent stops for Blackberry picking. A non-stop the walk should take 45 minutes max. Not to be attempted in the dark though!

The ground is in a rustic setting with the changing rooms and clubhouse about 100 yards from the pitch. The tea bar was in full swing when I arrived, and it was from here that programmes could be purchased, although no attempt was made to sell them to anybody who didn't ask for one. The game attracted a number of paper chasing hoppers, attracted by "Issue One" on the front cover.

This was Barnhams (or Barnham Trojans, as is says on the club badge and nowhere else) first ever game in the Sussex County League and the match certainly lived up to the occasion. The home club took an early lead with the away side equalizing around the half hour mark with a hotly disputed penalty. The Ifield Edwards' number 9 deserves some kind of award for managing to get himself sent off between the penalty being awarded and taken. It takes a special kind of talent to get sent off when the penalty has been given to your team. He seemed pretty annoyed about it, but not as annoyed as his team-mates I would imagine.

With a man advantage for the second half Barnham ran out 2-1 winners, although only quality saves from both of the keeper's kept the score down. With the game played mostly in ark building weather, thanks go to the kind hopper who gave me a lift back to the station otherwise I would have ended up somewhat damp. Do not worry about visiting in wet weather, there are numerous trees to shield you from the worst of the precipitation.

Barnham have been given a somewhat robust start to their fixtures, with five games in the first 15 days. Of particular interest to travellers is that two of them are midweek homes. But don't forget the bit about not walking back in the dark.

