

TT No.4: Gyles Basey-Fisher - Sat 10th July 2010; **Ledbury Town** v Hereford United; Herefordshire Senior Cup Final; Result: 0- 2; Admission: £5.00; Programme: £1.00; Attendance: 800.

Everyone always starts their pre-season report with a justification of doing pre-season, mine is simple, when you follow a team which takes up quite a few Saturdays throughout the season and a promise to the wife to do as few midweek games as possible, the only way to get in a reasonable amount of new grounds each season is to start early. I do have some rules; (a) only do grounds from Step 4 down; (b) always do 1st teams; (c) try, whenever possible, to do a tournament, which might have some stipulation on the amount of subs; (d) pick two teams, which are quite evenly matched or have an edge and (e) or sometimes just go with something that catches the eye.

My last game in England was in late April so I was eagerly awaiting the 2010/11 season. A two-week holiday would give me the opportunity to take in six games, I get a dispensation off the wife until the end of August to do midweek games. I have a list of grounds, which are under threat and Ledbury Town has been on it since about 1995! Last April they won the County Cup defeating Westfields 3-0 and thus setting up a Senior Cup Final against Hereford United. I waited to see when the fixture would be played, always assuming that it would be midweek, but to my great surprise it was on a Saturday and the first day of our Holiday. We were heading down to Devon for a week but the first week we were heading to Centre Parcs at Longleat so it didn't take long to explain to the lovely wife that Ledbury was on the way from Norwich to Longleat!

We arrived in plenty of time and found out that there is a castle and grounds just outside Ledbury, so we firstly found the ground about 1pm, the gates were open so I purchased a programme and headed to the castle only to find out that Jools Holland was in concert there in the evening and it was shut to the public. After convincing the wife that Ledbury town centre would easily keep her and the two young children amused for 3 hours, I parked up in the car park of the closed down pub next door to the ground and paid my £5 admission. I never see myself as a particularly lucky person, one fellow traveller will not go to matches with me anymore due to my run of back luck last season, but maybe it's changing as the first words I was greeted with in the ground at 2pm was: "Sorry the programmes have sold out!". I was inwardly very pleased, but tried to look disappointed.

This was a big deal to Ledbury Town - a DJ was especially brought in and a Hog Roast was doing brisk business. The ground was looking good, obviously the Summer months weren't wasted. The entrance was in the bottom left corner and immediately to your right, behind the goal, were the changing rooms and clubhouse; in front of this were around 100 blue seats and directly behind the goal a simple cover had been erected. The far side was out of bounds except for the two dugouts and the far end was hard standing with a training area behind. On the

opposite side to the dugouts is a small old wooden stand painted black and orange containing roughly 50 seats in two rows.

Hereford United, with their new manager Simon Davey fielded probably more first team players than if this game had taken place at the end of last season and were never troubled, running out comfortable 2-0 winners.

PS The wife and children loved Ledbury Church and also the Co-op air-conditioning as it was extremely hot.

07/20