

TT No.88: Ian Hill - Sun 15th August 2010; **Berliner Athletik Klub 07** v 1.FSV Mainz; DFB Pokal Rd 1; Score:1-2; Attendance: 1120; Admission: 12 Euros; Programme: 1 euro, 28 pages.

German DFB Cup provided a number of interesting games one of which was the Berliner AK 07 v Mainz tie. The bonus about this fixture was that it was to be played at the old Poststadion ground near the main railway station in Berlin.

The Poststadion is a historic venue. It was opened in 1929 the ground was previously used as the German Championship final and also the venue for a Germany v England game in 1930. Several football matches during the 1936 Summer Olympics were held at the Poststadion, where on 7th August outsider Norway in front of 55,000 spectators kicked Germany out of the tournament by a 2-0 win in the quarter finals. The Nazi leadership including Adolf Hitler witnessed the defeat, where-after team manager Otto Nerz was dismissed and replaced by Sepp Herberger. Major football events afterwards were held at the Olympiastadion.

After World War II the stadium went into decline. I first visited the stadium in 1998 when the terraces were overgrown by trees and bushes with the main stand in a derelict state. Luckily a preservation order was placed on the stadium in 1990. Refurbishment work has taken place which has resulted with the main stand being fully operational apart from the back of the main stand. It is still used though as four rows of seating has been installed. The Paddock at the front of the stand has been refurbished along with the low-level terracing on two sides of the ground. The final terrace behind one goal has been left to the trees and bushes but you can still walk through the vegetation to the top of the old terracing.

The stadium now holds 15,005 but I'm sure this would be a tight squeeze. It is also designated all seater but some of the seating is very basic. Berliner AK 07 uses the stadium along with SC Minerva 93 and SC Union 06 Berlin. This was the second time I had been to a BAK 07 game. The previous occasion was when they played at the Friedrich Ludwig Jahn Sportpark in East Berlin. On that occasion a crowd of around 200 turned up and the game was programme less.

Berlin Ankaraspor Kulübü 07 is a German football club based in Berlin. The club was founded as Berlin Athletik Klub in 1907 and has since evolved into a multi-cultural German-Turkish association with ties to professional football in Turkey.

The association was established on December 15, 1907 in the Wedding district of Berlin as an athletics club interested primarily in running. A football department was formed in 1908 which has since remained a largely anonymous side playing in lower tier city competition. In the early 90s AK 07 played in the Landesliga Berlin and advanced to the Verbandsliga Berlin on the strength of a 1995 championship there. A 1999 Verbandsliga title saw the club further promoted to the Oberliga

Nordost-Nord (5th level) where they play today. In 2006-07 matched its best ever result at this level with a fourth-place finish.

AK 07 merged with BSV Mitte in 2004: Mitte had earlier been formed out of the merger of the ethnically Turkish sides BFC Güneyspor and Fenerbahce Berlin. The re-structured association formed a co-operative relationship with Turkish first division club Ankaraspor in June 2006 which focused on player development in Germany.

On July 6, 2006 the club adopted the name Berlin Ankaraspor Kulübü 07 and selected Ahmet Gökcek, son of the mayor of Ankara, as Chairman. With the name change the club also abandoned its traditional colours of red and white to don the blue and white kit of Ankaraspor. Since then the association ended with the club name reverting back to Berliner AK 07 and the club colours changed back to red and white.

Admission to the stadium was very chaotic with only two turnstiles open for the home supporters. The bonus was that programmes were available. A 28 pages full colour issue was on sale for 1 euro along with a large thick card match ticket. A small table inside the ground sold BAK 07 souvenirs with the traditional German food and beverages on offer at the back of the stand.

As it was the first game of the season for Mainz the fixture was played more at a pre-season fixture pace but Mainz certainly did not outclass the Berlin opponents. A goal 6 minutes before half time by Lewis Holtby, the dual nationality English-German opened the scoring for Mainz before BAK 07 bit back in the second only for Holtby to score a second to secure the win.

A thoroughly enjoyable day and it was great to see an above average crowd at the Poststadion.

07/20