

TT No.90: Ian Hill - Fri 1st October 2010; **Helmond Sports** v Almere City; Netherlands Jupiler League; Score: 2-4; Attendance: 2673; Admission: 10.50 Euros; Programme: Free, 32 pages.

It was strange visit to the Netherlands for this visit to Helmond Sports. Two weeks earlier I had flown to Eindhoven for a game at FC Eindhoven. For this game it was the same flight to Eindhoven with Ryanair, the same hotel, the same room and the same away opponents Almere City.

Against FC Eindhoven Almere were awful but what a turnaround two weeks later. Before the game Helmond were in 5th position in the league table with Almere third from bottom. For this fixture Almere were a completely different side as they played some fantastic counter attacking football to take a 3-0 lead at half time. The second half was great to watch with Helmond hitting back to score 2 goals in a minute and looking like they would over power Almere before City secured the win with a late fourth goal.

Helmond is a short 7-minute journey from Eindhoven by inter-city train. The town itself looked quite boring as I departed the small railway station. Bus 23 takes you to the Lavans Stadion but you have to wait one hour after the game has finished to get a bus back. I decided to walk after the game and the journey took around 20 minutes.

The Levans Stadium (previously known as De Braak) is a typical Dutch second division ground. It's an all seater three-sided stadium with a capacity of 4,100. Outside the ground is small souvenir shop which sold the usual array of goods. Catering inside is very poor with the only hot food available being some dodgy looking and smelling hot dogs.

The programme is quite unique. It's a 32-page full colour A6 size mini programme which has a lot of potential but unfortunately was a bit disappointing inside. I shouldn't complain as it was free of charge but extremely hard to find. Luckily, I sat in the main stand. The programmes are stored in small plastic dispensers at the bottom of the steps which lead to the seated areas. The only ones that contained programmes were at the bottom of the VIP steps. I didn't see any in any of the other dispensers and the one I used, was empty 30 minutes before kick-off.