

**TT No.21: *Paul Roth*** - Sat August 27th 2011; **Wymondham Town** vs. Norwich St Johns; Anglian Combination Prem Division; Res: 2-4; Att: 50; Programme (incl. admission): £1, 20pp; Altitude and global positioning: Kings Head Meadow, Back Lane, Wymondham, 39m (127.952ft) above sea level, located at latitude 52 degrees, 34.3 mins W; 1 degree, 6.9 mins E (position derived from centre circle); Sat Nav: NR18 0QB; Weather: Sunshine/heavy showers; Club Shop: No; Local MP: Richard Bacon (Con); My day's carbon footprint legacy: 13.7.

The last time I chanced inside the confines of the attractive market town of Wymondham (pronounced 'Windem') was on the 12th of July 1995, 5890 days ago to be precise. Thank goodness for diaries!

My wife and I had stayed just one night at the Sherbourne House Hotel, en-route to my godmother's funeral at Horsham Saint Faith and subsequent reading of her will the following day. My return to the settlement now serves a much happier purpose.....to watch a game of Association Football.

It is of course the bank holiday weekend, and the Mid-Wales Groundhop, was originally to be my port of call.

I don't have much luck when it comes to choosing accommodation within the principality; the spectre of those three gas-tight suited, mask-wearing SOCOs spraying our room in Llanidloes with 'Luminol' last August still doesn't sit well with my entourage; but this disturbing occurrence is not the main reason for my non-appearance. More pertinent to my absence is that I'm currently only able to utilise the first and third gears of my Ford Focus. A somewhere less undulant, altogether less hilly destination had to be found a la pronto: a trip to the historic Norfolk township fitted the bill to a tee and after all these years, quite how much detail about the encampment I could elicit from the dark recesses of my wool-gathering brain somewhat surprised me.

Located 8.22 miles southwest of the county town of Norwich, just off the now-alacritous A11, the antediluvian Market Cross is its focal point, and it's from there that a hugger-mugger of small streets splay-out in all directions.

The most infamous happening to have befallen the good townsfolk hereabouts was the Great Fire of 1615, an occurrence so apocryphal that I'd never even heard about it before!

Geoff, along with Raksha who was filming in the area at the time, visited the ground last season for an Anglian Combination Division 1 game, when 'The Rooks' were vying for promotion (an achievement they successfully accomplished, finishing as runners-up to eventual league champions Wells Town FC), and had recommended the club to me, stating at the time that the venue was .....  
"Somewhere you'd possibly enjoy watching a rubber."

He's right - although I'm at pains to point out that Kings Meadow sadly does not possess either the beauty or frisson-upon-entry of The Score Community Centre; that said, few places outside of the fabulous Middlesex County League do.

Located just off the town centre, a thriving social scene along with a newly-built and well patronised clubhouse, a partially railed-off pitch, smart red and black (the club's colours) dugouts and a manicured playing surface that has elevated grassed banking on two sides that enhances spectating enormously, concurred succinctly with my friend's previous blandishments.

An excellent, newsy 20-page Barnes Print programme retailed for £1, which incredibly also included the price of my admittance. The 1.30pm kick-off also greatly attracted me (the Ressies played a league match afterwards), given I was already in the vicinity, having attended the North Walsham-Loddon United (0-4) ACPD fixture the night before. The early commencement of hostilities meant I'd be back on the Riviera in plenty of time to watch 'All Star Family Fortunes' on ITV1 (or ITV+1 at the latest).

For the record, my pre-match tincture was taken at the town's three GBG-listed 'Clinics'. Two, alas, were re-visits, but nonetheless most enjoyable.

The Green Dragon, which I hadn't previously acquainted myself with, was fortuitously hosting its annual bank holiday beer festival. It is especially worth seeking out, having as it does a cacography pertaining to the local Sewell twins' - Jayne and Rachel - heroics in saving their father's life during the erstwhile inferno.

The votive offering scrawled on one of the hithermost timbers atop its south-facing wall reads- "To the glory of thy daughtren. Thou didst deliver your beloved father from the devil's fire."

Wymondham Town and Norwich St Johns had both kicked-off their Premier Division campaigns last week with encouraging draws, 2-2 at home to last season's champions Cromer Town, and 1-1 away at Mattishall respectively.

Disappointingly, the initial period of play was poor. I'm lying: It was 'king putrid. However, it did contain one inspirational moment; referee Callum Walchester's whistle blast for half-time!

A feat of derring-do, by any player, was urgently required post-teatime. Luckily the miracle arrived within five minutes of the restart, when the homesters stole in front with a well-worked move, finished off with aplomb by their pacey No. 8, Ricky Browne. From thereon, the match flowed from end-to-end, and given what had occurred earlier it was amazing to witness such a transformation in play. St John's had effectively secured all three points by the 75th minute, by which time they were leading 3-1. Wymondham did however score a second to set up a grandstand finale: this came, but in the auspices of a fourth Norwich goal in the very last minute.

No, for certain the Anglian Combination is not the Middlesex County League, but if you haven't been to Kings Meadow before, then I think you too might rather enjoy watching a 'Rubber' here.

FGIF Rating: 5\* (for the second-half only)!

07/20