

TT No.65: *Justin Holmes* - Sat 8th October - **Jarvis Brook** v Willingdon Athletic; Sussex Intermediate Cup Round 2; Venue: Limekiln Playing Field, Jarvis Brook; Score: 0-1; Admn and Prog: N/A; Attendance: 19 (h/c); Match Rating: 2.

After many consecutive weeks of travelling far and wide for my football games, today I decided to stay relatively local for a grassroots game. Several games in the second round of the Sussex Intermediate Cup appealed, eventually the ability to combine a game at Jarvis Brook, with its 1.30pm kick-off, with the second half of the game at Crowborough Athletic in the Sussex County League made my mind up for a visit to the Limekiln, a venue that has been on my radar for some time.

The Limekiln Playing Field is about half a mile away from Jarvis Brook village and Crowborough railway station, and enjoys a completely rural and remote location, located down a hardly used country lane and surrounded by trees and fields. As one enters the car park, there is a modern, not particularly attractive clubhouse. Typically for a club in the Mid Sussex League, there are no spectator facilities and the pitch, which is bobbly, has a pronounced slope and undulates considerably, is not roped or railed off. With its rural location, the ground is pleasant although there are far more attractive locations in this part of the world. As is almost always the case with clubs in the Mid Sussex League, no programmes were produced.

Today's cup fixture would be between two clubs from the same league and division, the Mid Sussex League Premier Division. They have made similar starts to the season, Jarvis Brook winning two and losing the other of their three games played so far, whilst Willingdon Athletic have an identical record apart from playing and losing one game more. Last season, they finished at opposite ends of the table, Jarvis Brook finishing third, whilst Willingdon finished third bottom and just one point clear of a relegation place. Both games between the two clubs in the league ended in a draw last season.

On an afternoon that started off sunny but sooner clouded over, the first half started off evenly, the visitors probably slightly having the edge, and they took the lead with 25 minutes on the clock, when the ball was laid off well just outside the penalty area, allowing Joe Horton to run unchallenged towards goal, and he showed good composure in firing into the top corner of the net across the keeper. Within a couple of minutes, Jarvis Brook thought they had equalised when a low cross evaded the keeper who was being challenged by a forward, allowing an easy tap in at the far post. The goal was ruled out for offside, a hugely controversial decision as the ball appeared to have been played backwards.

The visitors held on to their narrow 0-1 lead at the break, which they probably just about deserved, all the more so considering they were playing up the considerable slope in the first half. The second half was quite a dull affair, with a reasonable amount of endeavour from both sides but very little quality (even considering the

level of football), and the home side did not look like getting back on level terms until about twenty minutes from time. Then they did manage to mount more frequent attacks without carving out any clear chances, and in the end, Willingdon saw out a victory as comfortable as a 0-1 away win can be.

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