

TT No. 157: *Andy Molden* - Sat 27th April 2013; **Oakley Sports M&DH** v Lidlington United Sports; Bedfordshire County League Premier Division; Result: 7-0; Attendance: 10.

The club may have issued programmes in the past but not today. With crowds of only 10 when you are going for the league title it would be a labour of love as opposed to a profit-making venture. Today's game was a 1.45pm kick-off as the 2nd XI were at home to Sundon Park Rangers in the Division Two game at 4.15pm (1-0 to Oakley Res). Well done to whoever does the Beds Fulltime pages as the results of both games were on line by early Saturday evening! In fact, on that front well done to the Beds League who seem to be on the ball when it comes to info via the web.

Oakley is a few miles outside Bedford and the club play at the Oakley Sports & Social Club. It has very nice modern off the field facilities. The dressing room block and the main part of the clubhouse look quite new. There is plenty of parking by the pitch and in the village hall which is next to the ground. The social club which is in one corner of the ground is very welcoming; very large rolls were available from behind the bar for £1.50 and drinks were keenly priced. Everything was neat and tidy including the Gents. Can't see it ever getting the facilities to graduate to step 6 but it is a very nice spot to watch football. The pitch was roped down two sides. The set-up is shared with cricket but the ground has a nice enclosed feel to it.

The game was rather one sided with the visitors in lower midtable. Indeed, the homesters were much better than them. In fact, the home side had a number of good young players in the side. The home side could have won by more but Lidlington were not that bad just the home team were good. The homesters are after this game 6 points behind the league leaders Caldecote and both have 4 games left to play with Caldecote having the slightly better goal difference. Incidentally the game was well refereed by Mr Neal of Luton.

I quite like the Bedfordshire League though it is not one of the stronger step 7 leagues (or former step 7 leagues) and as good as they were Oakley would struggle against the top sides in the North Berks League as they would against some of the sides I saw the previous weekend in the Notts Senior and Midland Regional Alliance. I only quote those leagues as that is what I have watched in the last few weeks. Though on the other hand I would not say they were two steps lower than some of the poorer Hellenic Premier sides I have seen of late.