

TT No.11: Keith Aslan - Sat September 7th 2013; **TANSLEY** v Buntingford; Herts Senior County League Division 1; K-O: 15.03; Result: 1-0; Admission: Free; Programme: 50p; Attendance: 21 (17 home, 1 away and 3 neutral).

With some grounds it's love at first sight, so it is with Tansley. Woods on two sides, a field on the third, this is a rural idyll. Railed off on two sides the ground is neat and tidy and looks just like a village ground should look. It also boasts the strangest spectator accommodation I have yet to come across. On the halfway line is what can be best described as a dome cut in half with seats along the back. Although it can only have been built to watch the football the sides have been filled in meaning you can't see most of the pitch no matter which seat you are sitting in. It does however have cover and you can get a perfectly good view standing at the front and see the game protected from any precipitation. There is also a seat behind the far goal shaded from the sun and is an ideal place to watch the game for the elderly, infirm or in my case, lazy.

Although newcomers to the Herts County League, Tansley have been around since 1887, but don't try looking the place up on a map as the club is named after one of its founders. They play in Welham Green, a fifteen-minute stroll from the station which is on the slow (very slow) line out of Kings Cross. You walk through the town centre, or to put it more accurately, small parade of shops, on the way to the ground. Here it is quality not quantity with both a chippie and cafe, I can recommend the pork chop in the latter. This was also a pit stop for the Tansley secretary, although I didn't know who he was at the time otherwise I'd have been first in to the programmes.

With my early arrival I went for a walk in the adjacent woods and indulged in some heavy-duty blackberry picking. The best food is always free I find. I was somewhat surprised not to meet another soul on such a sunny day. On my return I was informed very few people venture into the wood as apparently there is a dangerous wild animal roaming around. Glad I heard that one after I came out.

Buntingford are bottom of the league and without a win but all their defeats have been narrow ones and this was no exception with a goal midway through the second half losing it for them in a match that on another day they might have won. I can't see them staying bottom for much longer.

No refreshments available at the moment but tea and coffee will be on sale in early October when the bowls season ends! All very nice.