

TT No.4: Keith Aslan - Sat 17th August 2013; **Bude** v Vospers Oak Villa; South West Peninsula Div. 1 West; Kick-Off: 14.58; Result 5-6; Admission and programme: £3; Attendance: 48 (40 home, 5 away & 3 neutral).

They'll be dancing in the streets of Vospers Oak after this one, a match that falls firmly into the category of "a funny old game".

The town of Bude was somewhat disappointing. Having been to quite a few Cornish holiday towns this wasn't one of the more picturesque although the continuous rain probably didn't show it in the best light. Given its remote location, it's surprisingly easy to get to and makes for an easy day trip from London thanks to the X9 bus service from outside Exeter St. David's train station. Double-deckers and a return fare of only £7.50 for a journey of over 100 miles - this is the bus that caters for many of your South West peninsula requirements. Okehampton, Launceston, and Holsworthy are easily-doable on this service and you will be home in plenty of time for Match of the Day.

The ground is on a hill about 15 minutes-walk from the town centre. The changing rooms, bar and tea room are found along the near touchline, which also has cover. In one corner is a dinky little wooden stand with seats and is much favoured by the locals. As well as tea and coffee you can get the ubiquitous Cornish pasty which would appear to be the staple diet in these parts. Bude FC issued their first programme for a number of years, nothing fancy, but a 4 pager that had everything in it that a programme should have. It was good to get an up to date league table with Bude sitting proudly at the top, but as nobody had actually played any games their situation was likely to change quite quickly.

Bude were 2-0 up after 4 minutes; 3-0 up at half time and 4-0 up soon afterwards thanks to a penalty that incensed the Vospers' players. "He dived, that's cheating" screamed the opposing captain. I was as close to the incident as the referee and I can assure the away team that the laws of physics dictate that if you are running along and someone grabs your legs you will fall over. This is not diving and the only cheating was committed by their goalkeeper who was rightly booked. Vospers then scored what was assumed to be a consolation goal, before Bude scored again to take an unassailable 5-1 lead which the opposition then went and assailed. The next 25 minutes were quite bizarre with Bude snatching defeat from the jaws of victory, conceded 5 goals to lose 6-5. I don't know how they managed it, they didn't appear to noticeably tire, they just let in lots of goals for no apparent reason. All credit to Vospers for keeping going when at 5-1 down most teams would have thrown in the towel, but I don't know what the home manager will say to his players after this one. If he knows how they lost it he's one up on me!

The match was made even more surreal by the referee who blew the final whistle at 4.44pm on the dot. Younger readers may be surprised to know that in bygone years this was a typical finish time, but these days congratulations go to Mike

Curtis, one of the few referees around who knows how to time a football match correctly. Don't keep it to yourself Mike, spread the word among your refereeing chums how you do it. Explain to them to them how easy it is to kick off a match on time and how half time only needs to be about 12 minutes and most importantly tell them about the rule, that most referees just don't get, that a game is made up of two halves of 45 minutes!

All in all, a great day out and a fine start to Bude's South West Peninsula League career. Apart from the result!

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