

TT No.55: Keith Aslan - Sat 4th January 2014; **Great Sharstead** v Kennington Reserves; Kent County Div. 3 East; Kick-Off: 14.00; Result: 4-1; Admission and Programme: Free; Attendance: 17 (6 home, 0 away & 11 neutral).

Having spent a few days at my country dacha in Broadstairs (the perfect holiday location for all the family), I decided to break my return to London to take in Great Sharstead's match. Here is a team with no weather problems as when the rain reigns they simply transfer their games to Sittingbourne Community College's artificial pitch which is a half hour walk from the station towards the east along the A2. With hoppers who specialize in the area informing me that their home ground is currently able to hold regattas, unless there is a sudden drought, I expect the college to be hosting Kent County League football for some months to come.

No point in describing the ground, it's like every other artificial pitch with a cage round it. But, unlike some, you can stand anywhere you want inside the cage, although on this afternoon, wherever you stood you got drenched, although the excellent company of fellow groundhoppers helped take my mind off the onset of pneumonia.

A highly entertaining match played in very difficult conditions, both sides gave it a real go. Apart from the first 20 minutes of the second half, Sharstead were in comfortable control. The club is currently issuing for all games but there was an interesting quirk in today's programme. In the middle of the print run, the editor got a call to say there was a change of referee, and he altered the name for the remaining copies. You would have to be really sad to try and get two programmes with the different referee's names in, but I managed it ok.

To end, some puzzling questions the day threw up. (1) My train was delayed by 28 minutes because it was stuck behind a broken-down de-icing train. Why are South Eastern trains running de-icing trains when the temperature is in double figures? (2) In spite of rain all week, the pitch was fairly dry at kick off. After two hours of torrential rain it was still dry at the final whistle. Where does all the water go? (3) When I got home "Splash" was on TV. Why has this rubbish been bought back for a second series? The mysteries of life!