

TT No.94: Keith Aslan - Sat 19th April 2014; **Ludgershall Sports** v Vale of Pewsey; Wiltshire League Premier; Kick-Off: 15.00; Result: 5-1; Admission & Programme: Free; Attendance: 19 (18 home; 0 away & 1 neutral).

Many moons ago when there was only one World Darts Championship, the camera panned onto a group of darts fans waving a flag that said "Ludgershall on tour" to which the late, great, Sid Waddell commentated, without a hint of irony, "People come from all over the world to watch the darts, here's a group from Germany". Fortunately, my geography is a bit better than Sid's and I knew that rather than get myself a passport, all I needed for this game was a day return to Andover (although a passport would have been cheaper). The number 8 bus goes from outside the station and at four an hour you won't have to wait very long, they also run well into the night making a midweek trip very easy. The more pretentious bus companies name some of their routes, these buses have "Activ" plastered all over them and the bus stops. Activ8 get it, a play on words, as witty as it is pointless.

Ludgershall is a charming little town, (big village?) to which the adjective "sleepy" just about sums it up, although the massive overflow army barracks on the outskirts are empty at the moment. Possibly not quite so sleepy when they are full up!

The ground, on the edge of town, just over the railway bridge, is a little gem. Fully enclosed, they could charge a gate if they wished. Neat and tidy, semi-railed on the far side with capacious dug outs, roped on the nearside, with the rope and posts all painted white which is very effective. It has a large clubhouse, which wasn't open before the match, but hot drinks are available from a wooden shack near the entrance.

Ludgershall's opponents used to be called Pewsey Vale but a couple of years ago they innovatively changed their name to Vale of Pewsey, and the person who thought that one up should get out more. The home side had many of their team missing as they were all away on a Stag weekend (when did stag nights turn into weekends?). They had raided the youth team to make up the numbers with half the starting line up under 18, not that it made any difference with Ludgershall running out comfortable 5-1 winners and the future looking bright.

Programmes in the Wiltshire League are a rarity, but Ludgershall have been issuing for a couple of seasons. It is a labour of love for someone, 28 pages packed with information, photos and reading material. As with many such games, I appeared to be the only person to have one, indeed I doubt most of the crowd even knew one existed. Why go to all that trouble to do such a fantastic programme and then keep it hidden away? It contained match reports from all of their teams, and my eye was drawn to a report on their Women's match against Lavington. This is a team that sets the bar very high. The whole article was on how bad they had played and finished with: "Second half was not much better, with stray passes and

lack of goals, Ludgershall found it difficult to up their game, it was a bad day at the office. Final score, 6-0 to Ludgershall". Crikey, I'd love to read a report of a game they actually lost.

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