

TT No.72: Keith Aslan - Saturday 14th March 2015; **Chelmsley Town v Paget Rangers**; Midland League Division 2; Kick-Off: 15.01; Result: 1-0; Admission & Programme; Free; Attendance: 24 (15 home 8 away 1 neutral).

Today was a special birthday for the world's greatest living 'Brummie' so to celebrate I spent the day in Birmingham in deference of the legend. Yes, today Jasper Carrot turned seventy. SEVENTY, how time flies! Marston Green is the station for Chelmsley FC with plenty of trains from either Birmingham New Street or International. The ground is around a 25-minute walk from the station, but for the lazy and infirm there is a regular bus that takes you door to door. Indeed, the buses go right round the ground and you can see them approaching a full minute before they reach the bus stop. I spent much of my afternoon timing the buses because a) there wasn't much to distract me on the pitch and b) I am a very sad person.

The ground is fully railed and enclosed with the clubhouse and changing rooms behind the near goal and another railed off pitch with dugouts behind the far goal. There is a small training pitch with lights along one side with the car park next to the clubhouse extending along the other side. Disappointingly I was expecting to see a large stand but apparently that had come down some twenty years ago (it was still there when Chelmsley first appeared on my to do list). Even on my very early arrival hot and cold food and drinks were on the go in the club house. There were four large TV screens which were blank because "the bloke who switches them on is running late" meaning I missed out on seeing Q.P.R's latest lunchtime debacle, but all four screens were up and running by half time with two showing the Aston Villa game live, one showing the football scores on Sky and one, which I'm pleased to say everyone was ignoring, showing a rugby international.

Paget Rangers played in rather dinky purple socks. They were originally going to play with black ones but the referee ordered a change due to a colour clash. I assume there is some obscure rule about playing in the same colour socks but it's passed me by. Given that Paget's shirts were yellow and black stripes and Chelmsley played in sky blue the ref. can't have had any problem deciding which team was which. Paget had 82 (eighty-two) players listed in the programme but I think they will need a few more to make much of an impact on this league. This wasn't the best game I have seen but in fairness the second half was a big improvement on the first with the only goal coming ten minutes from the end.

I got the bus back to catch an earlier train and be aware if, like me, you are one of the few people who pay bus fares, the buses only take the correct change. The fare was a ludicrous £1.90 for a journey of about one and a half miles. I make no apology for delaying the bus while sorting out 90p in loose change. Giving the driver £2 and getting 10p back seems like a far more sensible option to me.

