

**TT No. 11: Keith Aslan** - Sat 26th September 2015; **Montpelier Villa** v Alfold; Southern Combination Division 2; Kick-Off: 15.02; Result: 1-3; Admission & Programme: £2; Attendance: 10 (3 home, 4 away & 3 neutral).

What a week it's been what with the high-octane thrills of the Liberal Democrat Party Conference then the news the whole country has been waiting for, the Bay City Rollers are reforming. We live in exciting times. Could Montpelier Villa live up to the drama?

Falmer is the station for this one. Leave the station on the opposite side to the Amex Stadium, under the A27 and you are on the Sussex University Campus. Plenty of maps around that will direct you to the Falmer Sport Complex on the northern fringes of the University, about a 15-minute walk from the station. Recently I seem to have spent more time in educational establishments than I did when I was actually supposed to be learning something. While most people will approach Falmer from civilization, or as it is usually called, London, I had a very pleasant ride round the Sussex coast from my Broadstairs dacha. But quite why on the very well used line between Ashford and Brighton there is only one train an hour with just two carriages is beyond me. I've been on emptier trains on the Victoria line in the rush hour.

The club are named after Montpelier Villas, a row of Georgian terraced houses in Brighton, and one of their founders in 1991, Gary Pleece, is the current chairman, and more importantly, programme editor. Today they were playing fellow Sussex County League newcomers Alfold. I refuse to call it the Southern Combination, a ludicrous name change. Whatever next, calling guards train managers. Where will it end? There can be few more delightful settings to watch football on a beautiful sunny day (which this was), or in the rain come to that, with more than enough cover to protect Villas paltry crowds. A raised balcony with seats provides a perfect place to watch the game with a backdrop of the Brighton Downs. The pitch itself is only roped off on the nearside, but from the elevated viewpoint, ropes, barriers etc. are superfluous. There is a hatch that is usually open selling hot food, apparently today was not usual. There is however a hot drinks dispenser selling the best coffee I've ever had from one of these machines.

For the second time in a fortnight my pre match entertainment was a girl's hockey match. I'm really getting into it, but noted somewhat sadly that the hockey attendance was four times that of the football. Alfold can count themselves a tad lucky to come away with a 3-1 victory (not 3-0 as in the *Non-League Paper*) with two quick goals late on sealing what had been a very even contest. It's a pity Villa can't attract bigger crowds, but this is the problem with playing in a university. Last word must go to the referee who dragged the second half out for 52 minutes for no apparent reason. The more I see of this nonsense the more I can't help feeling that Clive Thomas had the right idea!

