

TT No.6: Keith Aslan - Sat 5th September 2015; **Eaton Socon** v Foxton; Cambs County League Premier Division; Kick-Off: 14.02; Result: 1-3; Admission: Free; Programme: £1; Attendance: 29 (27 home, 1 away & 1 neutral).

A train to St. Neots and a 40-minute stroll is what is required for a visit to Eaton Socon. Never been to the town itself before, with the Saints last two grounds being in the vicinity of the station. It doesn't seem that long ago I attended the first ever match at St. Neots "new" ground, but how time flies. This is now a housing estate and an even newer ground is now in operation and situated gloriously adjacent to the station.

The town itself is very pleasant made more so with a visit to Poppy's Tea Rooms (just off the High Street) where a pot of this month's "guest tea" went down a treat. It took a titanic effort of will not to get stuck into the cakes and cheese and cucumber sandwiches, but I couldn't fill myself up as I had a Greggs to tick off (conveniently situated in the Market Square next to the bus stop). Whilst there is so much wrong with this country nowhere in the world can touch England for Olde Worlde tea shops.

Cross the River Ouse then walk through the car park on the left and follow the footpath for about 100 yards and you arrive at the Eaton Socon's neat ground. Fully railed it backs on to the edge of a country park. Adding to the surprisingly rural setting, behind the near goal is a field of very friendly cows although I suspect their affection for humans might dissipate somewhat when the lorry pulls into the abattoir!

There is a large clubhouse which is shared with the adjacent bowling club and Peterborough's latest defeat to Southend was showing on a big screen, a result that didn't go down too well with the locals. When visiting the clubhouse check out the huge clock on the wall celebrating England's World Cup win (1966 in case you'd forgotten). It must be around 5 foot by 3 foot and has the names of both teams painted on it. It really is magnificent and I would be interested to know how they came by it and if there are any others around.

There is a small wooden tea hut selling hot and cold food and drinks and programmes, manned throughout the game by the helpful secretary who I had spoken to on the phone earlier in the week. His catering duties meant he missed most of the game. Now that's what I call dedication. This is matched by their new manager who was out preparing the pitch during the morning before attending to his managerial tasks for the game. As if this wasn't enough, he is also responsible for the excellent 24-page programme. When he arrived, he decided the club should do a programme, although to my knowledge they have never issued regularly before. Long may his enthusiasm last.

While everything off the field is quite superb, things aren't quite so chipper on it. The start of the season has been disappointing results wise, and after Foxton went

2-0 up in the first eight minutes Eaton Socon never really looked like getting anything from the game. 3-0 down at half time they pulled one back on the hour with a penalty but it was always going to be a consolation. I wish them well for the rest of the season. Strangely their goalkeeper played wearing glasses which I would have thought would have raised a number of health and safety issues, but the referee seemed quite happy with the situation.

The game kicked off at 2 o'clock so the players could watch the England San Marino game afterwards (I wonder who will win that one?). The early kick-off seemed to catch a few of the locals out with the second half attendance somewhat larger than the first half. Another wonderful day out at a wonderful little club. This is why I do what I do.

04/20