

TT No.9: Keith Aslan - Sat 12th September 2015; **Cardiff Met University** v Garden Village; Welsh League Division 1; Kick-Off: 14.33; Result: 7-0; Admission & Prog (+ free raffle ticket:) £3.50p; Att: 36 (34 home, 1 away & 1 neutral).

With a plastic pitch I was saving this one for a rainy day, but having missed the train at Paddington time was tight for my first choice of Pontadawe and Cardiff University was a useful backup. In spite of what the tourist board will tell you Cardiff is a bit of a tip, think Birmingham with a castle, and the only thing it's got going for it is that it isn't Newport!

The handy bus station is now a big hole in the ground and as they haven't started work yet on the new one the city is likely to be bus station-less for some time to come. It's no big deal as the 52 bus stops just across the road offering a 20-minute service that goes right into the University Campus, and boy has this place changed since my last visit. If you ever wondered where your taxes go, take a walk round here, everything is state of the art with indoor and outdoor athletic tracks, Olympic-sized swimming pool, gymnasiums, and rugby, football and hockey pitches enclosed in proper grounds with spectator facilities and electric scoreboards. There is a café serving full meals and a bar, this would be a wonderful place to misspend your youth.

As a prelude to the big game I watched a women's hockey match, although the female aspect held more of an attraction than the sport itself. It was somewhat spoilt by listening to the 5 Live commentary on Chelsea's lunch time kick off. Don't worry Jose it's not your fault, it never is.

The entrance to the football ground is a strange one, you have to cross an eight-lane indoor running track to reach the turnstiles (yes proper turnstiles). The ground, like everything else around here, is excellent, fully enclosed with a large stand on the far side and the all-important tea portacabin next to the entrance. Hard to believe on my last visit this was just a manky old pitch. It is adjacent to their old ground, which is still there with its small brick stand and is now used for rugby. It's quite a contrast to the facilities at their new home. Well up to the League of Wales standards this is what the club are aiming for, although with the team comprising solely of students the holidays would create a lot of logistical problems in a national league I would have thought.

This was a top v bottom clash with Garden Village yet to gain a point, a record they were always going to maintain on this afternoon. An impossible task was made even impossible on the half hour when the Garden Village number 4 made a bold attempt to get into the Guinness Book of Records. A scything tackle, about as late as my train this morning, brought down a Uni. player and the miscreant was booked. Cardiff took a short free kick and as their player happily trotted towards the goal, steaming in came the aforementioned number 4 and committed an almost identical foul. There was a slight delay showing the second yellow with the

referee looking totally bemused with an expression on his face that said "did he really do that again?" As the 4 trudged back to the dressing room, everybody in the ground, especially his own teammates, looked astonished. By my reckoning, that was two bookings within 5 seconds of actual playing time, and to think some people reckon footballers aren't very bright! To add insult to asininity Cardiff scored their 4th goal direct from the second free kick.

I really enjoyed my second visit to the University. The day was made even better with the news of Jeremy Corbyn's election as the new labour leader. He's promised to re-nationalize the railway when he comes to power which has to be good news for carless groundhoppers. Mind you, Tony Blair promised the same thing when he was in opposition, but I get the feeling "Jezza" might actually be telling the truth.

04/20