

TT No. 14: *Keith Aslan* - Sat 26th November 2016; **Ashford** v Snodland Reserves; Kent County League Division 2 Central & East; Kick-Off: 14.05; Result: 2-3; Admission: Free; Programme: £1; Attendance: 6 (3 home (including 1 WAG), 0 away & 3 neutral)

Appledore is a picture postcard village on the edge of Romney Marsh. Its main industries are quaint antique shops and new age cafes with the local pub serving the best pint of larger I've tasted in a long time (or maybe I was just very thirsty). This is Ashford's third game here since the move from their ground share with Ashford United and it is here, that they are intending to stay for the foreseeable future. Understandable given that they were paying £200 a match to hire 'Homelands' while Appledore are only charging £30 (which seems very cheap to me). Appledore themselves were in the Kent County League a while back, but now only run a Sunday side leaving their ground available for Saturday football. A big Ashford F.C. banner is set up along the half way line prior to kick off and hot drinks and pies are available from the tea bar. Surprisingly they have issued for all their games here, 16 pages, glossy and packed with colour photographs. If, like me, you have a paper fetish, I would get this one done sooner rather than later while the enthusiasm lasts. A great set up, all they need now are some supporters.

Appledore is accessible by train, which is just as well because it sure ain't got any buses, although if I was being picky, they could have built the village a bit closer to the station, and the one and a half mile yomp across Romney Marsh wasn't the highlight of my day. Being pickier still, it would have been nice if our old friends Southern Railways actually ran a service bearing some semblance to the timetable. Half the trains were cancelled and an hourly service mutated into a two-hourly service. The politicians must allow Southern to keep their franchise just to make Virgin look good. Oh yes, and Railtrack had shut the line between Canterbury and Ashford just because they could. I might have mentioned this before but Privatization of the railways really wasn't a very good idea.

Ashford were bottom of the league a few weeks back but results have picked up since their move and they are now mid table. Today's match was much as you would expect from this level with Ashford getting their second goal too late to avert defeat. The ground has a public toilet with a box inside for donations to keep it open. I've never seen that before. A glorious rustic setting to watch football, and one of my more memorable days out, even though it took 3 hours and 50 minutes to do the 40 miles back to my Broadstairs dacha!