

TT No.36: Keith Aslan - Saturday 25th February 2017; Balti Sports v Holt United; Dorset Premier League; Kick-Off: 14.01; Result: 0-1; Admission: £3.50p; Programme: 50p; Attendance: 63 (46 home, 14 away & 3 neutral)

It's the time of the season when the discerning groundhopper looks for a game with 'something on it'. While my name and 'discernment' won't be appearing in the same sentence any time soon, the chance to refinish the Dorset Premier League with a top v second clash was too good to miss. It's tight at the top with Balti 7 points clear but Holt having 4 games in hand. High speed line to London was shut, as was the bit between Southampton and Bournemouth, and while I won't dwell on my journey, let's just say that any political party will get my vote that promises to bring back the death penalty for the evil slime that shut the railway network down every weekend.

Weymouth has always been one of my favourite seaside towns and I spent a carefree couple of hours wandering around. Anyone who laid out a few quid on me appearing on live CCTV in Greggs eating a pre-match pie should collect their winnings. The famous sand sculptures need a bit of renovation after Thursdays visit from 'Doris' with the view along the 'Jurassic Coast' never failing to inspire. Like me I expect you always wondered why nearly all of England's dinosaurs used to hang out in Dorset. Maybe they liked Weymouth as well.

The ground is a 20- minute walk to the north of the town at Weymouth College/leisure centre. Weymouth Sports used to play here, but not when I saw them play. Fully enclosed with a small stand which did its job when the predicted rain arrived. The pay hut doubles as a refreshment kiosk with hot dogs on the menu. Inside the leisure centre there is a hot drinks machine and a room where you can sit and watch the football previews on Sky Sports. This is next to the changing rooms which are a fair distance from the pitch so the teams don't go off at half time enabling a prompt finish. Even Stevens in the first half, Holt had the better of the second when they deservedly scored the only goal of an entertaining match to make them favourites for the title. A fellow hopper remarked that more supporters appeared to have travelled to this one than were at the Holt home game he attended a few years back. Glory hunters eh?

I have a great idea for a new TV series. Fronted by Chris Tarrant or Michael Palin it would be called "Great Rail Replacement Bus Journeys of the U.K." The ride from Bournemouth to Southampton must be included with the splendour of the A31 coupled with the haunting beauty of the M27 by moonlight, the experience enhanced by sharing it with a bus full of passengers not knowing if they were ever going to see their families again this weekend. Strangely, when we get thrown out of the train and onto a bus, we undergo a transformation from 'customers' to 'passengers'. This is the magic of 21st century rail travel in the world's 5th. largest economy!

