

TT1617-41

TT No.41: *Steve Hardy* - Saturday 18th March 2017; **West Hagley** v Old Hill; Birmingham Football League Veterans cup; Kick-Off: 2.30pm; Result: 0-1; Admission: Free; Programme: No; Attendance: 8

This was a rare opportunity to see a game on the Hagley playing fields in West Hagley, south of Stourbridge. The village used to have a team playing in the Birmingham AFA, but no more. These days they just have their Veterans side playing there, and so a chance to watch the Veterans playing in the Birmingham league veterans cup was too good to miss.

You have to be over 35 to play in the Veterans cup and several players in both sides looked to be well past that birthday! Having never seen a veterans' game before I didn't know what to expect really. What I got was a very feisty and tetchy game with much shouting at the Ref, and several very dodgy tackles flying in. Old Hill won it with a goal very early in the game, which they were able to defend fairly comfortably for the rest of the game, although Hagley did hit the bar near the end.

The Hagley Playing Fields are slap bang in the middle of the village. There is a large car park in front of the playing fields, which was packed on my visit, although this could be because the local library is also on the site. The pitch and changing rooms are to the left of the car park and with people walking their dogs around the park, and stopping to take in some of the action before moving on, I averaged the crowd out at just 8 people watching. Those who remained throughout were obviously friends and family of the Hagley players, as they offered vociferous encouragement and advice on how to get back in to the game!

So, another excellent game in one of my favourite leagues, with a long day out ending by 5.30pm as both the M5 and M6 both behaved themselves for a change.

04/20