

TT No.54: *Keith Aslan* - Saturday 8th April 2017; **Bishop Lydeard v Westbury;** Western League Division 1; Kick-Off: 15.00; Result: 1-1; Admission & Programme: £5; Attendance: 45 (39 home, 0 away & 6 neutral)

For lovers of scenic grounds, this one is for you with the Quantock Hills providing a wonderful backdrop for an afternoon's sport. Bishops Lydeard is a village 6 miles outside Taunton with a half hourly service from the station. The buses are all full and while it's nice to see a rural route so well used, the number of suitcases belonging to passengers obviously going on holiday in Minehead is testament to the folly of Doctor Beeching. The railway is now a Heritage Line starting at Bishops Lydeard and running all the way to Minehead, but alas it cannot be extended into Taunton. Today the buses had a similar relationship to a timetable as Southern Trains, they were all over the place due to heavy traffic. Big problems in the county with Exeter City's match being put back 45 minutes due to gridlock. So, a normal summer Saturday in Somerset then! I'd already given up hope of my 8-minute connection back in Taunton and after the game I arrived at the bus stop geared up for a long wait. Imagine my happiness and joy when the bus came almost straight away. "It's 3 minutes early" I said to a fellow 'customer' "No it isn't" came the reply "It's 27 minutes late" A good result for me though.

The ground is at the top of a hill on the outskirts of the village, a walk not to be attempted in the dark. Food and drink available with outside covered seats and tables proving a welcome respite from the sun. Work is ongoing in compliance of Western League ground grading with the foundation, but nothing else, of a seated stand. The game was an entertaining romp in the sunshine with the only sour note being the constant whingeing of, primarily, the home side. They obviously hadn't read the bit in the programme about respecting the referee. Another thing that winds me up about modern day football is at every injury break the players all made a dash to the dugouts to drink water. The referee didn't partake and there's no reason why fit and healthy young men can't play 45 minutes football without constantly needing to have a drink. Maybe if they hadn't spent the best part of an hour 'warming' up they wouldn't get so thirsty?

Sitting in the shade, drinking tea, eating burgers, programme to hand watching football with panoramic views in the distance. I'd like to know of a better way of spending a Saturday afternoon.