

TT No.78: *Keith Aslan* - Saturday 13th May 2017; **FLEETDOWN** v Greenways; Kent County Premier; Kick-Off: 14.48; Result 1-0; Admission: Free; Programme: £1.50p; Attendance: 62 (47 home, 4 away & 9 neutral).

Dartford is a dispiriting outer London suburb famous as the birthplace of Mick Jagger. Young Michael used to sing in the local church choir, now that would have been worth listening to. The ground is a 27-minute walk from the station, turn right opposite Kent Football United, up the hill and Fleetdown is at the top (no buses). A rope is the last word in spectator comfort here but there is a clubhouse that was showing the lunchtime football. When I enquired earlier in the season, I was told paper production was temporarily suspended due to a run of consecutive home games having used up the 'programme budget' I'm not surprised, today's issue must have cost a fortune, 40 pages glossy in full colour. Makes it all the stranger that with plenty printed they were kept in a box behind the closed bar and you had to ask for one. Why wasn't someone going around the ground flogging this beauty?

There were some big hitters of the groundhopping fraternity at this one who like myself were enticed by the programme which was somewhat better than the game that accompanied it. The match lived down to its end of season billing with the home side getting the only goal near the end thus alleviating the 0-0 that some hoppers so dread (not me though). Never have found out why Kent County games kick off at 2.45 (ish!). Back in the day a lot of leagues used to have this start time so the results would get into the evening classified sports papers but this is the only one I can think of that hasn't changed back to 3 o' clock.

Today did have a downside. There was a barbecue but when the poor malnourished travellers went for their half time rations, we were told 'players only' Clearly untrue as a few chosen ones were happily chomping away while the game was going on. Now you don't expect food at this level but it ain't right torturing hungry hoppers with a barbecue and then telling them not to get stuffed. I can smell those burgers even now.

Starvation aside another good day out in pleasant company and close enough to the Kentish Riviera to get home in plenty of time for the Eurovision Song Contest. How much excitement can a man take in one day?