

TT No.9: Keith Aslan - Sat 15th October 2016; Deal Community Sports v East Kent College; Kent County League Division 1 Central & East; Kick-Off: 14.47; Result: 1-5; Admission: Free: Programme: £1. Attendance: 28 (22 home, 0 away & 6 neutral)

A stress-free day out for me with a half hour train ride along the coast to Walmer station and a 20-minute walk to Betteshanger Colliery Welfare, the latest domicile of Deal Community Sports, nee Town Rangers. They have led a nomadic existence in their short history, this being their third ground, and is only a temporary staging post as they are looking for a permanent home, they can call their own. Deal C.S. have issued from the off and the excellent programme edited by president Bob Chivington is proudly numbered Volume 6 number 3. The facilities here are top notch with a large clubhouse, a café serving a wide variety of hot food, an indoor and outdoor bowling green and six football pitches of which only one was in use today. You can see the remains of the fabulous wooden stand, a remnant of Betteshanger Colliery's Kent League days, and the professional ground hopper might like to know that they played on a different pitch to the one Deal now use. The most noteworthy aspect of the place is that it's still there at all given that the coal mine must have closed down the best part of 40 years ago and you could build a lot of houses on the large playing fields!

There is a veranda outside the café with a good view of the pitch which would supply shelter if the weather turned naughty and chairs are available which the unexpectedly high quotient of groundhoppers made full use of. After a couple of seasons playing at the Bay Point Club in Sandwich the visitors have moved back into East Kent College, which given they call themselves East Kent College is a suitable venue. Deal C.S. have had a difficult start to the season with only one win and they were never going to add to it today, the score would have been even greater if the College forwards weren't such rubbish at shooting. The first half was enlivened with a bundle, the referee showing extreme leniency in only booking two players when at least one sending off was called for. In truth, it was the proverbial handbags at six paces and footballers really should take some lessons in fighting from UKIP MEP's who don't mess about when fisticuffs are called for.

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit here, helped by arriving back in time to see the second half of T.N.S. v Llandudno on S4C. The commentary was in Welsh but still made more sense than Garth Crooks. Oh yes and on the way home I passed a poster for the local Women's Institute advertising a talk being given on schizophrenia. I've half a mind to go to it.