

TT No. 128: *Keith Aslan* - Wednesday 25th April 2018; **TORRIDGESIDE** v Appledore; South West Peninsula League Division 1 East; Kick-Off: 18.29; Result: 2-1; Admission & Programme: £2; Attendance: 64 (50 home, 7 away & 7 neutral)

There is an irregular bus service direct from Exeter St. David to Torrington but it doesn't fit in with a Saturday game coming back. Otherwise plenty of buses from Barnstable which was my chosen route. Different county, different bus fares. At least 4 times the distance of last night's journey but 60p cheaper. Torrington is a pleasant small town deep in the Devon countryside. The old ground in the Centre is still used by former Western League side Torrington FC. Although it was all locked up, some hoppers not deterred by fences took a look inside and said it was pretty run down (or full of character as I call it). The floodlights are still working with the occasional match played under them.

Torridgeside's ground is right on the eastern outskirts of the town with tonight's programme, possibly not the most up to date I've had this season, was for the original fixture postponed on Boxing Day. An old-shed-doubles as a tea bar with crisps the only food on offer, and a brick-built stand which wasn't needed on a dry night (*Atcost* doesn't appear to have broken into the Cornish market). The reserves were playing Braunton on the adjacent pitch, which also has a small stand, and as you could (just about) see that game from the main ground some hoppers were counting it as another 'tick'. Very unprofessional.

With both teams mid-table and in the middle of some major fixture congestion they still produced an entertaining encounter although Appledore did fade towards the end. I'm grateful to Slough's finest (not that there's an awful lot of competition for that accolade) for a lift back to Umberleigh station where I had to wave at the train driver to get him to stop, with an evening spent sampling the Exeter nightlife (surely an oxymoron) before catching the overnight train back to my Kentish dacha.

A smashing break in wonderful scenery with some good company, it's what this hobby is all about. And both games kicked off on time as you would expect from a well-run league (and definitely not the Isthmian). Take a bow Mr. Hiscox.