

TT No.139: Keith Aslan - Friday 19th April 2019; **BERE ALSTON** v Plymstock; South West Peninsula Division 1 West; Kick-Off: 10.59; Result: 1-5; Admission & Programme: £2; Attendance: 53 (36 home, 2 away & 15 neutral).

The railway line from Plymouth to Bere Alston goes through some magnificent scenery and one wonders how that nice Doctor Beeching missed out on this one with his popular line closure programme. The station is about a 20-minute walk from the ground through the cutesy village which not only looks pretty but has the added bonus of a 'Premier' supermarket and a chippie, both of which got my patronage on the return journey. The ground is what you would expect around here best summed up by the word 'nice'. The rail was wooden, my favourite material, and covered all four sides of the pitch. The dressing room block in one corner contained a small tea bar which today did a roaring trade as it was inundated by travellers, the match being a veritable who's who of the groundhopping fraternity with totally blind hopper John Stancombe amazingly having made the trip from Norwich although his dog Eric decided to give this one a miss. Guest of Honour was the legendary hopper and league secretary Phil Hiscox who spent most of the match fielding questions about who is coming into the league next season.

The programme was a 12-pager with Luke Edwards being the subject of the player profile. I felt like I knew him. Favourite Sport - football. Favourite hobby - football. Here's a man who doesn't know the meaning of the word 'diversification'. At least his favourite film wasn't *Escape to Victory* (Harry Potter in case you were wondering). As for the match, Plymstock were always the better team but the score didn't start to mount up until the latter stages as Bere Alston's players' thoughts were turning to the post-match drinks. Standing in the hot bank holiday sunshine watching a village football match in the company of like-minded individuals, this is what it's all about.

With time to wait for my train back to Plymouth, I travelled in the opposite direction to complete the line up to Gunnislake. The train was reasonably full, but without exception everybody was just joy riding, I wonder how many people use the service in winter? Bere Alston station has a fully operational payphone on the platform which is unusual these days. My trains to home were all spot-on time, also unusual these days.