

TT No. 15: *Brian Buck* - Saturday 25th August 2018; **Paulsgrove** v QK Southampton; Hampshire Premier League Senior Division; Result: 3-1; Attendance: 35 approx.

I travelled to this game by trains and for once they behaved themselves, both ways. Eventually I alighted at Cosham and then walked the half hour or so it took me to get to the ground. Based on what others had told me about this place, I wasn't particularly looking forward to coming here, in particular about the lack of spectator facilities. However perhaps no one had told them about the thriving social club they have here. But then again, they may not have spotted it as although it's right next to the ground, it's hidden by some trees.

Anyway, my pre-match needs were satisfied here and then I set about watching the match. Paulsgrove won this league last season but couldn't go up, because their ground isn't suitable for Wessex League football. Although the pitch is fully railed off there is very little space to stand on three sides of the ground, the exception being behind one goal where the players enter the pitch and where there seems to be another shortcut to the clubhouse. There is no cover here either, but there were enough trees to stand under if it had rained, which unfortunately isn't one of the criteria for entry into the Wessex League! I stood on the 'school' side of the pitch, which sloped downwards and so during the match I could watch the trains pass by right next to the pitch. The first half was without goals. Bottom of the table QK (formerly Queens Keep) defended quite well but never looked like scoring. Paulsgrove did though, but only after they grew into the game. It was they who deservedly took the lead on 54 minutes. However, the hosts were stunned when QK equalised ten minutes later, against the run of play. This galvanised Paulsgrove to up their game and further goals on 69 and 84 minutes sewed up the match for them. Then after a slow post-match pint it was time to go home. I was going to walk, but a half hourly bus number 18 was due and so I caught it back to Cosham.