

TT No.156: Keith Aslan - Saturday 18th May 2019; HEYFORD ATHLETIC v Garsington; Oxfordshire Senior League Premier Division; Kick Off: 12.30; Result: 8 - 1; Admission: Free; Programme: Donation; Attendance: 91 (44 home, 9 away & 38 neutral)

The station for this one is, no surprises here, Heyford which is a couple of stops north of Oxford. A picture postcard village with thatch being the prime roofing material and a canal choc-full of brightly painted barges running through the middle. Think Midsomer without the serial killing. The ground is a 15-minute stroll from the station, either through the village or along the canal towpath. The changing rooms/clubhouse is obviously a new build made with wood. The ground is in a very rustic setting, not that it could be anything else round these parts, with a 'respect' tape along one side of the pitch being the only spectator luxury.

Let's hear it for the unashamedly ginger Craig Dabbs who for the past three Saturdays has got previously paperless clubs to issue a programme with the simple ploy of contacting them and saying 'How about doing a programme?' I must try that one. The plus for teams like Heyford is a larger than usual attendance and the chance to make a few 'Bob' - although unlike teams higher up the pecking order they weren't in the business of ripping people off. Programmes for a donation, Teas & Coffees £1 and at half-time some scrumptious home-made cakes appeared, at only ten bob a slice it would have been churlish not to go back for thirds. The club was very happy with proceedings as of course were the hoppers, so, well done Craig.

Second from top playing second from bottom was always going to be a bit of a drubbing but the hoppers all agreed Garsington were worthy of praise for turning up, something many clubs can't seem to manage this time of year. The referee, for reasons only he will know, added 4 minutes onto the first half. With the score at 5-1 after the regulation 45 minutes he must have got a warm feeling knowing that Heyford got a sixth in the time he added on. The match could still be going on now for all I know as all the hoppers with a train to catch were already limping towards the station as the second half just went on and on. With the score at 8-1 why did the ref. keep on dragging the game out, was he giving Garsington the chance to score seven quick goals and get a point or was he just being a bit of a dick?

The early kick off meant I was home in time to watch the Eurovision Song Contest, the UK came last of course, no-one likes us, we don't care. With the European Parliamentary elections just around the corner it's an exciting time to be English.