

TT No.41: *Keith Aslan* - Saturday 6th October 2018; **CLEETHORPES TOWN** v Guiseley; FA Cup 3rd Qualifying Round; Kick-Off: 15.01; Result: 2-2; Admission: £4 for old people; Programme: £2; Attendance: 285 (225 home, 56 away & 4 neutral)

'New Linden' hosts the biggest match in its history' blazed the Cleethorpes website. Undoubtedly true, but not a particularly impressive accolade given the ground has only been open for just over two months. A new build with not one, not two but three *Atcost* structures with the stand-out feature as far as I was concerned, a large digital clock, the first one I've come across that actually keeps going until the end of the match and doesn't automatically stop on 45 minutes. A spacious and well filled clubhouse contained all the food and drink you could wish for all enjoyed while watching Brentford v Leeds on a large screen. The teams came out to the magnificent football anthem - Liquidator by Harry James and the All Stars. Took me back to my days on the terraces at Stamford Bridge and I believe Chelsea still enter the field today to this piece of music. The matchday experience is certainly top of the range here and I wonder how big the crowd would have been if Grimsby Town hadn't been playing a mile up the road.

A 25-minute walk from the station you alight from the train to be greeted by a large sign boasting "Cleethorpes - welcoming visitors since 1863". Presumably before then they just told people to push off. If like me you're into maps the framed pre-Beeching Ordinance Survey map in the booking hall is a must see. Cleethorpes wasn't at its best today with the continuous drizzle curtailing my walk along the prom. but not before I'd found a café with a glorious view of where the sea would be when the tide came in.

Cleethorpes league form is pants, they're bottom of the table, but they're virtually unbeatable in knockout football. By Tuesday they will have played 7 games in the FA Cup, probably more than the team that actually wins it. Also, through to the next round of the 'Trophy' and for good measure they've beaten Grimsby and Scunthorpe in the Lincolnshire Senior Cup, although I suspect the league teams might have used what is euphemistically called the squad rotation system for these games. This was corker of a match, with the home side matching their higher-grade opponents shot for shot. When Guiseley got their second midway through the second half word on the terraces was that would be that, but with 10 minutes remaining Cleethorpes scored two quick goals for a replay. Even I got quite excited about the equalizer, but obviously not as excited as the home fans. In the last round they drew the home game with Bamber Bridge but won the replay (and what a fun journey that must have been midweek) 5-0, so don't write them off just yet. The coach fare for Guiseley is a remarkably cheap £5. I wish them well.