

TT No.9: Keith Aslan - Saturday August 18th 2018; **CROWLE COLTS** v Welbeck Lions Reserves; Abacus Lighting Central Midlands League Macron Store Stoke Division 1 North; Result: 5-1; Kick-Off: 15.03; Admission: Free; Programme: £1; Attendance: 68 (67 home, 0 away & 1 neutral)

The death of football programmes has been somewhat exaggerated. Having won the Scunthorpe & District League last season Crowle have started to issue in the Central Midlands even though it isn't, or ever has been, compulsory in this division. A superb effort, 16 pages in colour and a worthy addition to any collection. Welbeck Reserves, also new to the league, took a different path to promotion which didn't involve the tiresome aggravation of actually having to win games of football. They finished last season 12th of 15 in the Notts League Division 2 but they do have a good ground which in the FA's exciting vision for non-league football is far more important than sporting excellence.

The station for this one, and no shocks here, is Crowle, but there is a surprise element to the journey in that alighting at the station, a 2-mile walk is then required to actually get to Crowle. A pleasant town/village with most of the population wealthy enough to be able to afford not to live in Scunthorpe. I was very taken with the fish and chip shop which somebody had set up in their front room. I trust their house has good ventilation. Standing at the ground is all down the near side, with new portable dugouts opposite. There was a good vibe to this Central Midlands opener with, I suspect, a far larger crowd than they were getting in the Scunthorpe League. Didn't see any refreshments, but a couple of people had cups of tea in their hands suggesting I didn't look hard enough. The game was almost identical to the match I saw last week, 1-1 at half-time with one side running away with it in the second period. The 4 goals Crowle (pronounced *Crole*) scored in the second half barely did justice to their total domination in the last 52 minutes. The Colts must be hoping for a bad winter with plenty of postponements, if all their games take place on the allotted dates their final match will be on February 9th which will make for a very long summer break.

Once again, I was indebted to the kindness of strangers with the programme editor giving me a lift back to the station enabling me to get home one and a half hours earlier. Made the 5 o'clock train in spite of the best efforts of the referee. The obligatory late start was compounded when he added 7 minutes onto the second half. What do refs. get out of this non-sense? The rule book clearly states a half of football is to be of 45 minutes duration. Time MAY be added at 'the referee's discretion' Clearly for Paul Vallis, in company with most of his compatriots, discretion is in very short supply. What did he think was going to happen by dragging the game on for another 7 minutes with the score at 5-1? When the trainer was called on to tend to an injured player in the 93rd minute he even added on injury time to injury time.

Crowle is a smashing club with an infectious enthusiasm about the place. Note to the FA: This is what grassroots football should be all about, not floodlights and *Atcost* stands.

04/20