

**TT No.31: Keith Aslan** - Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2019; **DUCKLINGTON** v Wootton Sports; Witney & District League Division 2; Kick-Off: 16.31; Result: 2-3; Admission: £4; Programme: £1; Attendance: 178 (24 home, 4 away & 150 neutral)

We're in the middle of the 'hop season' and on a joyfully warm day there can't be any better way of spending a Saturday than riding round the Cotswolds watching football matches. Three cracking games and the football didn't appear to be of a lower standard than a lot of the stuff I watch each week. The first two games were at the deliciously named Milton-under-Wychwood and Minster Lovell with the final stop being Ducklington which as everybody knows is a village just south of Witney. I was travelling around in the back seat of a well-known Stockport hopper's car cuddling up to Lucy who spent much of the journey licking my face. Not as erotic as it sounds (well I suppose it depends on which websites you look at!) as Lucy is a canine who is actually older than me in dog years so she's the median age for groundhopping.

A nice clubhouse here but while normal people were trying to watch the football scores one dick kept changing the channel to the tedious sport of cricket, although any game that lasts five days would find favour with today's referee. I bet you can guess what's coming up shortly. As with these events plenty of food and drink was available and it's nice to spend a sociable afternoon with my friends. Perhaps the word friends is putting it a bit strongly, let's say acquaintances. Perhaps acquaintances is also putting it a bit strongly as well, let's just say these are people who don't run away when they see me, at least not all of them do. Obviously if you attended Ducklington for a normal match you won't pay to get in, won't get a programme, won't have a variety of face filling options and you certainly won't be surrounded by 177 like-minded souls.

Let's talk about Alan Stanley, the referee. Now this is a job I would never do, I can't understand why anybody would want to, but there are a couple of bits of it I reckon I could handle without any problem. Starting a match punctually is one of them and timing two periods of 45 minutes is another, the latter being totally beyond today's man in black. First half, 50 minutes, nobody knew why, but he excelled himself in the second, playing 16 (sixteen) added minutes for no apparent reason. The Wotton bench were going as berserk as was I. What was he doing? He kept looking at his watch so he hadn't forgotten the time, there was no possible reason he could have thought there were 16 minutes of stoppages that needed to be added on. The rules need changing, the line about 'time may be added on at the referee's discretion' needs to be changed as they don't seem to have any. I missed a train I should have easily caught and thanks to this man I spent 55 minutes wandering aimlessly around Kings Cross. How am I supposed to fill the time? I could have availed myself of a woman of easy virtue but that would only have taken up 30 seconds so I opted to spend the time in *McDonalds*, a dismal place on a Saturday night. The referee was probably sitting at home with a cup of tea and a

cigarette watching TV or phoning up his mates telling them how he messed everybody about by taking 1 hour 51 minutes to play 90 minutes football.

Notwithstanding Mr. Stanley this was a wonderful day out in a lovely part of the country, superbly organised as all these things are, by *Groundhop UK*. And I like to think Lucy's day was enhanced by my presence as well.

04/20