

TT No.35: Keith Aslan - Saturday 21st September 2019; **CROMFORD & WIRKSWORTH TOWN** v Thorne Colliery; Central Midlands League Cup; Kick-Off: 15.00; Result: 3-2aet (2-2 after 93 minutes); Admission: Free; Programme: £1; Attendance: 29 (18 home, 5 away & 6 neutral)

Always been a top-quality league for paper the Central Midlands has gone programme crazy this season. Issuing is not compulsory in the lower divisions but a load of clubs seem to be bucking the current trend with Cromford & Wirksworth offering an 8-page full colour programme at the moment. The two villages amalgamated at the beginning of the season to produce one super team. Ok perhaps 'super' is putting it a bit strongly but they are doing very well in the league.

Cromford was full today, a touristy village with a mill and boat trips along the canal being two of the many attractions on offer surrounded by the magnificence of the Peak District, the hot September sunshine bought the day trippers out in force. Cromford station is on the Derby to Matlock line and is apparently famous for being on the sleeve of '*Some might say*', a record by Oasis. Whilst I am unfamiliar with the tune, I have actually heard of Oasis proving that in spite of what people may say, my knowledge of pop music didn't end when the sixties did.

The ground is about a 10-minute stroll from the station and is adjacent to the railway line with a terrific backdrop of the Peak District. Hot drinks sweeties and crisps were on offer from a dinky changing room block which unusually only had the one toilet with 'ladies' on it but men were allowed to use it as well, no problem for me as I spend much of my time in women's toilets even when there is a male alternative. Technically there is seated cover with a Perspex construction and a bench inside it. I think this was a large dug out in a former life and could comfortably hold 8 or 9 people if the weather turns dodgy. No such problems today with sunshine all the way.

The Thorne secretary immediately had me down as a groundhopper. Is it that obvious? Alas yes. She must have been at Thorne for some time and asked me if I was one of those on the coach when it got stuck in the ground on a hop, this must have been 15-20 years ago. I think she is a bit of a hopper herself. As the programme said this will be a good test for the home side with Thorne being from a higher division which is where Cromford aspire to be next season. They weren't found wanting and twice came back from a goal down to send the game into extra time. This is an anachronism as far as I'm concerned. Back in the day extra-time was useful to try and sort things out and save a replay, but with replays now consigned to history if you're going to end up with a penalty competition you might as well have it after 90 minutes as 2 hours. However due to a long wait for a train, on this day the added 32 minutes was most welcome. Eight minutes from the end the Thorne full back received a second yellow for a dodgy tackle and as he was trudging round the pitch (top marks to the referee who made him go off at the

nearest point) he got a good view of the ball going into the net for a well-deserved winner from the resultant free kick. Couldn't make out why both teams hiked back to the distant changing rooms at half time. It was only 14 minutes most of which was taken up with the walk there and back.

The car park was also the starting point of the Cromford Park and Ride bus which went into Matlock for the famous 'Matlock illuminations'. Must admit they've passed me by but are obviously pretty big potatoes round these parts.

04/20