

TT No.61: Keith Aslan - Saturday 2nd November 2019; **AFC WAKEFIELD** v Wombwell Main; Sheffield Senior League Cup; Kick-Off: 13.32; Result: 1-4; Admission & programme: £3 for the elderly, includes, free tea and cakes before the game and more free tea and cakes at half-time; Attendance: 38 (29 home, 7 away & 2 neutral).

Football in Wakefield hasn't exactly been a raging success, there was the short lived Wakefield College who played at the rugby union ground and Emley's brief sojourn at Wakefield Trinity's massive stadium, the latest attempt to galvanise the local populace is new kids on the block AFC Wakefield currently playing in the village of Cudworth which isn't really very near to Wakefield. They are negotiating to groundshare with the Rugby League club back in town club but I fear it will all end in tears.

The Dorothy Hyman Stadium is named after Cudworth's most famous daughter who people of my vintage will remember as a sprinter who won medals at the 1960 and '64 Olympic Games. Dot was also BBC Sports Personality of the year in 1963. Back in those days most female athletes were sprinters as women weren't allowed to run further than 800 metres. Believe it or not it was a widely held belief that if women ran any longer distances, they wouldn't be able to have babies! An idea that is inconceivable today. The stadium is an excellent place to watch your football with an elevated 510 seat stand a great vantage point and today providing shelter from the incessant rain. Wakefield have been playing their recent games on the adjacent plastic pitch to protect the grass which was destroyed by a Sunday League game played on it. Probably not the day they would have chosen to return to the real stuff but the reserves having a home game as well left them no option. The going was soft at the start of the match and a ploughed field by the end.

A frequent 15minute bus service from Barnsley takes you door to door from the station, just as well in view of the deluge. The trains were doing weird and wonderful things, the third 60 mph speed limit in a year (always on a Saturday!) on *Southern Trains* because it was a bit windy, a raft of cancellations on Northern Trains due to crew shortages, spurious engineering work meant no trains Sheffield to London or Doncaster to London, and to avoid any misery on my return journey home I had to travel via Stockport which is a bit silly. Stockport at night looked a lot better than Stockport in daylight.

Wakefield got a lot of stick for charging admission from the other teams in the league which are free. So one is greeted with a sign saying 'Voluntary Donation £5/£3' As with my 'voluntary donation' I got a free programme, free tea and cake before the game and at half-time I would have thought it would have been more of a money spinner not to charge in the first place. There's nowhere else in the country you'd get that little lot for just three quid. A very friendly club with seemingly plenty of helpers they are giving it a real go and good luck to them. The team wear 1970's Crystal Palace shirts although by the end it was difficult to tell

after splashing around in the mud for an hour and 36 minutes. The home team were reduced to ten men in the first half after a bit of injudicious off the ball activity which passed nearly everybody by except the linesman and although they still gave it a good go the numerical disadvantage proved to be too much.

I kept dry throughout the storms, I was presented with my paper copy of last week's Needham market programme which was really good and totally wasted languishing on a computer. I stuffed my face in Barnsley's cheapo café as well as at the game and in spite of doing a tour of the north of England on the way back all the trains I used were spot on so I got back in time for *Match of the Day*. And I met some very nice people. Good day.

04/20