

TT No.79: Keith Aslan - Saturday 28th December 2019; **WORCESTER RAIDERS** v Black Country Rangers; West Midlands Premier Division; Kick-Off: 14.05; Result: 2-4; Admission: £3 for old people; Programme: £1 (get there early); Attendance: 46 (41 home, 2 away & 3 neutral)

There's only one team in Worcester, with City exiled to Bromsgrove it's left to the Raiders to keep football going in the town. Not at their home ground though which is currently undergoing improvement works and they are currently playing at the Nunnery Wood Sports Complex in the south of the city for a period of time that might be a few weeks or might be for the rest of the season. This temporary venue has not been without its problems with the league giving them special dispensation to play here. An early kick off (not as early as it should have been) as the floodlights aren't up to standard, although I recall previous tenants Athletico Worcester, playing midweek games under them. And the dressing rooms are in a different postcode. Two Bedouin tents by the half way line acted as temporary dug outs while two stands were provided for spectators. The pitch is surrounded by an unobtrusive running track. Hot drinks and sweets were available as they were from a machine in the adjacent leisure centre.

Magic engineering works on the high-speed line from Thanet that stopped all my trains from running but somehow didn't affect the *Eurostar* services so it was a slow drag into London stopping everywhere along the North Kent Coast. For the second week running the railway was in disarray but my trains ran almost faultlessly, perhaps God is trying to make it up to me for screwing up my knee. The 45 bus takes you from the bus station to the ground, a ten-minute journey that cost a ridiculous £2.90p. Last week I travelled halfway across Suffolk for £2.50p, but 40p more today for a journey I could have comfortably walked in three quarters of an hour had I been fully fit. My infirmities meant a taxi after the game with the company of a fellow hopper defraying the cost it was 10p more than the bus!

This was a really good game and an excellent advert for the West Midlands League. Lots of action (not all of it legal), 2-2 at half time with Black Country Rangers deservedly pulling away in the second half. Summed up well on the Raiders *twitter* feed '*We were beaten by a very good team*' Downside, as is so often the case these days, was the timekeeping. Five minute-late start for no reason whatsoever, come half time the home side inexplicably traipsed all the way back to the dressing rooms keeping the away team and the spectators waiting as the interval was protracted to twenty minutes. What on earth was the point? O.k. if it's raining or freezing cold but today was dry and as warm as it's ever going to get in December. Second half didn't start until 3.16pm and they could still be playing now for all I know. Myself and Mr. Dodd left before the end so we could get home the same night. It might not be groundhopping at its most professional, but dragging games out for well over two hours strikes me as a bit amateurish as well.

