

**TT No.84: Keith Aslan** - Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2020; **ROWSLEY '86** v Mickleover Royal British Legion; Central Midlands South Division; Kick-Off: 14.02; Result 5-1; Admission: Free. Programme: £2; Attendance: 28 (16 home, 0 away & 12 neutral including 10 hoppers)

Great minds think alike as do senile ones judging by the number of hoppers that pitched up at this one. Can't think why it was so popular unless word had got out that I would be there. Rowsley is a 25-minute ride from outside Matlock station, it would be somewhat shorter if the bus didn't deviate through the Matlock hinterland. Like most villages in the Peak District it's very touristy with a surprising number of visitors about today considering the time of year. On arrival I made straight for the ground, programmes available 2 hours before kick-off, a quite staggering 28-page glossy production, wonderful for someone like myself, but a bit over the top for their average crowd. Today's issue was avidly snatched up by my brethren and was a sell-out, not a normal occurrence I would guess. I then made for the adjacent '*Caudwell's Craft Workshop*', not for some tips on local craftsmanship but for its excellent cafe, not cheap but good value, from where I could gaze out lovingly at the ground while contentedly stuffing my face, and due to my penchant for weak tea I wrung out four cups from my pot for one. Result. Washed the meal down with a pint of the amber nectar in the '*Grouse and Claret*', as posh as it sounds but with surprisingly low prices.

I bet you can't guess what year Rowsley '86 were formed. And you'd be wrong, it started up in 1981. They rebranded themselves in 1986 when they moved into their current ground having been the '*Duke of William*' and '*Matlock Horseshoe*' in previous lives. The director, manager and secretary have all been with the club for periods ranging from 27 to 30 years. Impressive. The ground boasts two very ornate wooden dug outs and wooden changing rooms with tea and coffee available from within at inflation busting prices of ten bob a cup. It goes without saying round here that the surrounding hills made a wonderful backdrop. Nobody expected this result at half time with the game goalless and looking like remaining so. Top marks to the man in the middle, Ian Jackson, who used his common sense and played dead on 45 minutes in the second half deciding it would be silly to add any time on with the score at 5-1. If only all your mates down the referee's society were so enlightened.

The Central Midlands chairman was at the match and he kindly gave one of our number a league handbook from which I quote 'The home club shall publish a full match programme, A5 size, consisting of at least 3 double sided A4 pages for all league and cup competition matches. The programme should be available prior to kick off'. Leagues higher up in the pecking order should read that and feel thoroughly ashamed of themselves.

Still proving problematical getting around but the visit to Rowsley '86 was well worth the effort.

