

TT No.95: Steve Hardy - Saturday 18th January 2020; **Denmead** v **Michelmersh & Timsbury**; Hampshire League Division One; Kick-Off: 3.00pm; Result: 7-0; Admission: Free; Programme: No; Attendance 19 h/c

Denmead are newcomers to the Hampshire league this season, having been a Sunday club for many years previously. They don't actually play in Denmead any more, as the village pitch was not up to scratch, so they have decamped to Havant and are now playing a 4G pitch in a cage built by the Hants FA on the site of the old Havant Leigh Park ground I was told. HLP went through a number of mergers etc and are now Havant & Waterlooville of course.

Spectators have an area set aside along one side of the pitch but I noticed that a local photographer had just strolled on to the pitch and was snapping away from all angles. Good enough for me, I thought, so I did the same. No spectator facilities inside the cage at all but the ground does have floodlights, which duly came on just after half time. There is also a café inside the changing room block, which didn't seem to be doing much business to me, so I did my bit by buying a cup of coffee to warm me up as the sun started to sink and the temperature plummeted.

I had no idea what to expect here, as I haven't seen a Hampshire league game for over 30 years. Turned out to be quite a high standard from what I saw. Despite the score-line, the first half was pretty close with Denmead taking their chances to lead 2-0, whereas M&T missed theirs. After the break it was completely different with Denmead running away with it for a 7-0 win, which took them up to 3rd in the table.

There were a good, few hoppers in attendance in the crowd of just 19 today, most having decided to play it safe with a 4G pitch, as I had.

Sadly, that was the end of my brief break in Southampton, and it is now back to the foggy Midlands for me.

04/20