EASTLEIGH FC SECTION

An Introduction to Season 1978/79

The website host had an association with Eastleigh FC for almost ten years. Notes were made of matches seen and there were no social media outlets back in those days to make comments.

My association with the club mainly commenced during the 1978/79 season (when it was known as Swaythling FC). I was still watching Southampton back then, at least their home games and a few away matches too.

The first item of note was my usual under East Stand position at The Dell had become allocated to season ticket holders which, being a humble clerk back in the day, was something I could not afford to spend out on in one lump. So, I had to settle for standing on the open Archers Road terracing instead.

Now comes the real frustrating part. The Archers Road end also had fencing up, so if you stood not too far down the terracing from the entrance you had no alternative but to view the match through bars. I understood why it was done at the time as most grounds had fans 'penned in' and it was therefore not a unique situation, but it made the viewing experience less palatable.

This was a big season for the Saints as they returned to Division 1 (the top level back then) after four years playing in Division 2. Away Saturdays saw me continue with watching reserve team football at The Dell and, although those matches were entertaining, it was generally a soulless experience.

I did go to Ten Acres a few times in the mid-seventies but, again with no social media, there were times I turned up to a scheduled fixture and nothing was going on. That, coupled with Saints winning the FA Cup at that time, probably put back my Swaythling watching by a year or two. (For the record, my first ever visit to Ten Acres was a Hampshire Senior Cup Round 3 replay with Sholing Sports in March 1975 that Swaythling won by 4-2, thanks to a brace of goals from two of my all-time club heroes – Roger Sherwood and Ray Deane – both sadly no longer with us).

So, on to 1978/79 season when I watched a few matches, but by no means all. Enjoy the look back and if anyone involved from that season, playing or watching, then please do get in touch and join in with the conversation.