



**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2009**  
**Walsall 2-2 Southend United**

**Blues XI: Steve Mildenhall, Simon Francis, Matt Heath, Adam Barrett, John White, Franck Moussa, Alan McCormack, Jean-Francois Christophe, Anthony Grant, James Walker and Lee Barnard.**

**Journey: 8 out of 10:**

Got there with 2 hours to spare, a very good trip.

**Stadium: 7 out of 10:**

Decent League One ground, with a good view for away fans.

**Programme: 7 out of 10:**

A lot better than Cheltenham's programme and included more information about the Blues.

**Food Quality/Service: 6 out of 10:**

Thankfully I got there early otherwise it would have been a long wait, with just 2 people behind the counter. Hotdog was nice though!

**Performance: 7 out of 10:**

A slow start but in the second half we dominated the match and should have got all 3 points.

After a very slow start to the game Southend looked a totally different side from the previous two games of the season. Their passing was laboured but they did spurn the first chance on goal when Christophe hit a half volley into the ground that went wide.

As it seemed we were getting back into the game, the home team scored through former Crewe and Burnley striker Steve Jones, who poked the ball past Steve Mildenhall after the Blues defence failed to attack the ball into the box. I wasn't too pleased and you can tell that from the match photos on the official website!

The referee was winding up Southend fans as he looked like he was playing for Walsall; all he needed was to put a red shirt on! Things did improve before the break as The Shrimpers started to play the ball on the floor.

The half-time whistle blew and Southend fans headed towards the refreshments kiosk, whilst many stayed in their seats to reflect on the first half. As usual you get the moaning individual who understands very little about football, which gets right on your nerves.

The boys came out from the tunnel for the second half and were backed by the Blue Voice as they were cheered on to what we hoped to be 3 points. However halfway through the half not one Southend fan could believe their eyes.

Trinidad and Tobago international goalkeeper Clayton Ince, who had previously joked around with Blues fans, went to throw the ball out and as it slipped out of his hands it went straight into the path of Lee Barnard, who waited until Ince committed himself to slide the ball through his legs. He came running over to the Blues fans and I got on the Football League Review TV show as I rubbed his head and hugged him as we all celebrated!

We then took the lead when Moussa's cross was helped on by Barney and Freedman, who I think oozes class; dived to head a ball past the wrong footed Ince.

We all thought three points where in the bag until Lee Sawyer tripped Parkin, which appeared to be on the edge of the box, and conceded a penalty, which Parkin smashed home in injury time.