

10/08/05 TT No.15: *Stephen Harris* - Hertford Town (Isthmian League)

Tuesday 9 August 2005; Hertford Town 1-4 Cheshunt; Herts Charity Cup;
Attendance: 106, team-sheet issued, admission £5.

Unable to get to Gigg Lane to see Orient go top of League 2, I sniffed out a competitive fixture at Hertford Town instead. Listed in amongst the friendlies in the Non-League Paper, this was actually a first-round game in this season's Herts Charity Cup and a Lea Valley derby too.

It's about five years since I last went to a game at Hertingfordbury Park and I had forgotten what a pleasant little ground it is. It has a classic Isthmian League format. One side has a little seated stand constructed of brick, glass and asbestos of a type which was once standard issue but is now becoming really rather rare. This example contains a hotch potch of hand-me-down seats in red, blue and white. One end has six steps of terrace, with a low and old cover, known as the Stable End. The rest is gentle grass banking with a few weedgrown terrace steps here and there. All a little shabby and in need of a coat of paint, but comfortable and lived in. A tea bar was preparing burgers and chips to order and a chap was clearing the cobwebs out of a little wooden hut which serves as the Club Shop - although I did not notice him make any sales as such. Club officials seemed quietly pleased that over 100 had shown up for the fixture, although one suspects that the unspecified charities who benefit from this competition might have to wait for another day to receive much of a windfall.

Cheshunt, from two levels higher in the pyramid, were clearly the better side but trailed one-nil at half time from a penalty of mysterious origin, the only on-target shot of the first half. 'A push', the referee advised us during the interval. Cheshunt attacked relentlessly in the second half but could only pull one back; and so, we entered extra time. The floodgates now opened and three more were conceded by Hertford in quick succession in the first period to give Cheshunt a comfortable win.

A photocopied team-sheet, folded to give four sides, was issued for 20p. I'd give the game 2*.