

**10/10/05 TT No.63: Stephen Harris - Hucknall Town (Nationwide Conference North)**

Saturday 8 October 2005; Hucknall Town 2-2 Cammell Laird; FA Cup; att. 292, programme issued, admission £8.

I too was at the Shirebrook Town vs Mickleover Sports game in the morning and enjoyed it every bit as much as did Mike Latham. Arriving early, we were told the programmes were “selling like hot cakes” and almost all gone, so we limited ourselves to one between two and are therefore ‘not guilty’ on the greed front. But I do confess to buying the last two pies from the tea hut shortly after the kick-off.

Lacking any transport in the time available to Arnold Town, for the most obvious double-header, we opted for a quick train ride down to Hucknall for the afternoon FA Cup game against Cammell Laird. Fifty-five minutes and a good rain-soaking later we were through the turnstiles for what promised to be an intriguing game between two very upwardly mobile sides.

Hucknall’s Watnall Road ground is a strange mix, reflecting their rapid rise through the leagues in recent years. One side has a simple concrete pathway and rail and one end is similar with the addition of a little gravel banking. These sides attracted no more than ten spectators on a very wet afternoon. The remaining two sides are fully covered and sheltered almost the entire crowd. The end has two patches of covered terracing, the covered side contains both terracing and seats and all looks pretty new, although the low roof restricts viewing from the back row. There is a well-stocked club shop, an equally well-stocked snack bar and a modern-looking club house.

The rather damp crowd was well packed in where we stood, wore their colours with pride and gave the home side good vocal support. There appeared to be rather more present than the official attendance of 292, despite the foul weather and the rival attraction on the TV.

Laird were slow starting and conceded in the second minute, prompting us to think the game might be a bit of a mis-match. In fact, Laird pushed the home team hard throughout, equalised, took a lead against the run of play and ended up fully worth their draw. It was an entertaining cup tie and I would think that if Cammell Laird can play such enterprising football in their league games they will soon be pushing at the top of their league.

The match programme was perfectly adequate, but overpriced for its content at £2. FGIF match rating: 3\*.