

**TT No.260: Richard Panter** - Sat 12th May 2007; Ellistown v Holwell Sports; Leicestershire Senior League Premier; Result: 3-0; Attendance: 26 (est.); Entry: Free; Programme: No; Match rating: \* \* (Paul Eden rating 5\*).

Today saw the belated conclusion of the Leicestershire Senior League some two weeks behind schedule. The sixth placed visitors are based just outside Melton Mowbray to the west of the county; the ninth placed home side are to the south of Coalville, between Ellistown and Bagworth [Bagworth].

On this wet and blustery day, more like March than May, it was a relief to be at 'town rather than most Senior League venues. The reason is that the ground has some cover, two small covered areas in fact. The rural idyll was emphasised by the continual lekking of the local pheasant population, the surrounding verdure broken only by the blooming blossom and some Copper Beeches and two stoppages to remove fox pooh from the playing surface! As to the rest of the ground, unusually it has six single light floodlight pylons on each side of the pitch, hard standing on one side, a compact clubhouse and kitchen and changing rooms, an unused turnstile block and a large car park. A pit winding wheel is half buried in a mound in the car park, evidence of the areas once thriving existence as a mining community. Sadly, the local industry was closed sometime before the Thatcher devastation in the mid-eighties. This venue stands well in comparison to its peers.

The first fifteen minutes were bleak and showed all the traits of a meaningless end of season fixture, save for the desperate search for a shovel. However, in the nineteenth minute Ellistown striker, Paul Eden scored the first of his magnificent hat-trick. Receiving the ball just inside the Sports penalty area he twisted and turned to find enough space to unleash a well guided shot to the right of the 'keeper. Eden was on hand just before the break again. This time he attacked from the other side and had a player waiting in the middle but eschewed the simple option, he calmly placed the ball to the left of the goalie in the smallest of spaces. Out of sorts Sports trooped off two nil down and tails up 'town two to the good.

It was pretty much over as any sort of competition after forty-five minutes but the lively Eden was keen to score his third goal. He looked to have secured this in the seventy-sixth minute when he skilfully turned and shot only for his rival to turn his fierce drive onto the post and out for a corner. Five minutes later 'town were awarded a free kick twenty-five yards out from the Holwell goal. Confidently Eden placed the ball and lashed it into the net to complete his richly deserved triple.

I asked a couple of locals who the lad in the number eight shirt was and they didn't know; they didn't watch the 'Ressies'. Shortly after, I asked an older Town player (inconveniently for him, as he was about to take a throw-in!) what the lad's name was, and he told me, confirming that this was his first team debut. I fully accept that this was a meaningless fixture and both teams were playing many second-string players but none the less the persona of Paul Eden bought some much

needed sunshine to Ellistown Football Club on this afternoon. I have made a mental note of his name for future reference, thereby ensuring I will probably never see him again.

Oh no! this was the last Saturday fixture of the season...paint brushes are looming somewhere in the dark depths of my mind.

06/20