

**TT No.209: *Richard Panter*** - Wednesday 15th April 2009; **Stewarts & Lloyds Corby v Long Buckby**; United Counties Premier Division; Score: 2-1; Entry: £5; Attendance: tba; Prog:20pp £1; Match rating: 2\*.

The ex-steelworks outfit, Stewarts & Lloyds Corby, have been at the top of my 'to do' list for two years. They were the closest level five club I had yet to visit. A brief conversation with a friend and my twelve-year-old nephew, John concluded that a spot of bird watching at Rutland Water and Stoke Dry plus some fish & chips somewhere would be ideal preparation for the trip to Occupation Road.

With the help of my friend, who is a professional bird watching guide and writer, both John and myself 'ticked off' four birds on our life list. We had some truly wonderful fish and chips back at Uppingham then made our way to S & L's humble home. We passed the Rockingham Triangle sports complex, home of promotion chasing Southern Premier leaguers Corby Town, and a large Glasgow Rangers supporters club building before pulling up in the club's car park.

We paid our entry money and enquired about programmes and were told that 'the editor had not arrived with them yet, but we should look out for him later'. My cynical mate doubted their appearance; in this he was not alone! However, once we had made it to the shiny and well-appointed social club and had a coke, he turned up, so we handed over a further £1 to secure a copy of this modest but concise monochrome 20-pager.

Spectator-wise there is very little to stimulate the fan. It is a three-sided ground as the far side is bounded by a floodlight rugby pitch, which was played on this evening very noisily and with great enthusiasm. A small breeze block stand offers seating and shelter...and spectacular views of the back of the dug outs which stand directly in front of it. The best view was from the balcony outside the social club. Having said this, the ground is well up to the task required given the clubs frustratingly low support. Sadly, the lack of such creature comforts mean the Foundrymen will be unable to capitalise on their league title, if they secure it, as they can't satisfy the required ground grading regulations. The trees on the perimeter looked good in their spring greenery which was highlighted by the floodlights.

S & L clad in maroon and orange quartered shirts, maroon shorts and socks and the Bucks sporting an all-orange strip, bar one arm in white took to the field and the ball spent much of the opening ten minutes in the air. Paul Caswell put the home side in front early on then saw his team denied two certain penalties. He also saw the visitors create and waste the lion's share of scoring opportunities in the first half. Ben Foster levelled from twelve yards after 68 minutes and from then on it was looking like a draw. The Bucks keen on time wasting and Corby specialised in giving the ball away! However, late on Paul Malone nodded home from a corner to earn the home side all three points. This full haul saw the Foundrymen return to

the top of the UCL Premier Division for the first time since the autumn, and they have a game in hand of their nearest rivals, so they are in the driving seat.

As a stand-alone event the match was less than fulfilling, however added to the fish feast and excellent birding it concluded a really good half day in the life of three thrill seeking East Midlanders.

06/20