

TT No.212: *Rob Champion* - Monday 20th April 2009; **Castle Donington Town 1-6** Newmount; Midlands Regional Alliance Premier Division; Admission/programme: none; Att: 25 (approx.); Match rating: 3.

Football is not something that you associate with the north-west Leicestershire town of Castle Donington. It is more to do with the Donington Park motor racing circuit and East Midlands Airport. Details of this can be found by logging on here: www.donington-park.co.uk and www.eastmidlandsairport.com/ .

It was decided to take in a first ever fixture in the Midlands Regional Alliance (MRA) due to wanting to meet up with my dad who works at Rolls Royce in nearby Derby, and thus we duly met at the Donington Park services just off junction 23a of the M1. Lunch was had in the Tudor Hotel in Castle Donington itself - no alcohol as I was driving, and we arrived the recreation ground on Moira Dale with around 15 minutes to kick-off. There is limited off-road parking which was made doubly difficult as the reserve team had a fixture on the second pitch at the same time. No admission was charged or programme issued to the ground which is also home to the town's cricket club, the main pitch was only roped off on the left-hand side (the side nearest to the cricket square). Refreshments were on offer with £1.80 getting us a tea and coffee in proper mugs and two chocolate bars.

With having watched six games in the comparable Leicester & District League (LDL) this season I was interested in the standard of football on offer as both leagues sit at the same level of the non-league pyramid. The MRA is I suppose an unofficial feeder league to the Central Midlands League while the LDL is one of three feeder leagues to the Leicestershire Senior League.

At the start of play Castle Donington Town (founded in 1885) sat in mid-table while visitors Newmount, who I later found out are from Derby and play their homes at Mackworth College are in a relegation battle at the bottom of the table. On this basis you would expect a home win - wrong. Play was cagey at the start and it took a while for the game to get going and it was the visitors who went closest on 16 minutes when the woodwork was struck. Newmount struck the first blow when they opened the scoring on 26 minutes with a low drilled shot into the keeper's left-hand corner. As expected, this woke the home side up but 8 minutes later they found themselves 2 down when the number 10 prodded the ball home after an excellent cross from the left-hand side. Just two minutes later and it was 3-0 when the number 10 found himself one on one with the keeper and finished with aplomb. The hosts got themselves back into game just a minute later through an own goal - game on now. Wrong again. Despite having probably more possession and creating the same number of chances it was the visitors who took theirs, scoring three more goals in the second half on 63, 68 and 88 minutes to wrap up a convincing victory.

Overall, I was very impressed with the standard of football on offer and was good as anything I have seen in the LDL this season and in future seasons will be hoping to take in more games in the MRA.

The town does have another Saturday side in the form of Castle Donington F.C. who are currently in the first season as a senior team, plying their trade in the North Leicestershire League. The club play their home games on Spittal Park Playing Fields in the town.

06/20