

TT No.56: Bob Davies - Sat 4th October 2008; FA Vase 1st Round; **Cogenhoe United** (3) 6 v 0 (0) Codicote; Attendance: 68; Admission: £5 (grandson £2.50); Programme: 28pp, £1.

A windy and rain threatening day in Northamptonshire for this FA Vase first round proper match against Codicote. The village of Cogenhoe (pronounced Cook - no) is situated 10 miles south-east of Northampton. We journeyed up from Bedford along the A428 which passes through some very picturesque villages, but watch out for the speed cameras. When passing through Brafield on the Green turn right nearing the end of the village on to the Billing Road s/p Billing and Cogenhoe. After about half a mile turn right again onto Brafield Road s/p Cogenhoe. The Compton Park ground is situated on the right about half a mile on.

I'd not visited "The Cooks" for more than a decade and the ground has a more modern feel about it than at that time. The ground is fully enclosed by a wooden fence and gone is the old stand replaced by a larger construction. Behind the goal there is covered standing area that has netting for capturing wayward strikes of goal in front of it. Must be like watching through your living room window standing there though. The club also has a full-sized training pitch added in the recent improvements. A welcoming club house with friendly officials who allowed my Grandson Stephen onto the pitch to get some ground pictures prior to the game. With the team sheets located and copied we adjourned to the stand to watch the game.

Codicote, today's visitors were playing their debut season in the F.A. Vase. In the previous round they had overcome Combined Counties League side Bedford with a 3-2 away win. The club are at Level 7 in the Pyramid, playing in the Herts Senior County League Premier Division. This season they have established a ground share agreement at SSML side Hertford Town which should guarantee promotion to the SSML Division 1 should the current League form continue.

The two-step difference in levels proved in the end too much for the Hertfordshire visitors who were missing several key players through injury. The Cooks took an early lead through Scott Cross but couldn't get another breakthrough until the 40th minute when Jack Ashton headed home at the far post following a corner. The home side scored a third three minutes later as Frost and Cross went through on goal despite looking offside. Cross finishing to put Cogenhoe 3-0 up at half time. Into the second half and Darren Frost put "the icing" on the cake for the home side with two opportunist goals. The best goal of the game however came with six minutes remaining as Scott Cross beat a defender and chipped over the advancing keeper from 23 yards to complete his hat trick. More misery for the visitors as Patrick Alcide was dismissed after receiving a second yellow in the 87th minute.

Match Rating: 3*.

