

TT No. 120: Justin Holmes - Saturday 12th December 2009; **Lancing United** v East Dean; Sussex Intermediate Cup 3rd Rd; Venue: Croshaw Recreation Ground, Lancing; Score 3-1(aet); Admission & prog: N/A; Attendance: 40 (h-c); Match Rating: 3*.

Today I took advantage again of the winter early kick-offs for those clubs without floodlights to take in this Sussex Intermediate Cup game between Lancing United and East Dean, both clubs from the West Sussex Football League.

The ground is located about a 10-minute walk from Lancing rail station, through the thoroughly uninspiring town of Lancing. As for the ground, being a recreation ground, there are no facilities to speak of except for a small portacabin type building housing the changing rooms. Refreshments could be sought from the convenience store located next to the ground. However, the Croshaw is a reasonably attractive ground, surrounded by housing but with a stone wall enclosing two sides of the ground and the Sussex Downs visible in the distance.

Although the recent prolonged heavy rain had taken its toll on the pitch, making it very tacky, it was perfectly playable, but the uneven surface threatened to make this a game where passing football was at a premium, and so it proved. On a cold but dry, sunny day, the start of the game was dominated by East Dean, who bombarded the goal in the opening quarter with a succession of corners and shots on goals, but Lancing United defended well to weather the early storm and as the first half wore on, it was their turn to camp themselves in East Dean's half with frequent corners and attacks on goals.

At half time, there was little indication of who would progress from this evenly contested game, but on 60 minutes, Lancing United took a lead they just about deserved with an excellent finish from just inside the penalty area, beating the goalkeeper at his near post. Ten minutes later and East Dean were back on level terms, thanks to a coolly taken penalty. A few minutes after the equaliser, I had to leave this game to make the 10 minute walk to Culver Road to watch the Sussex League Division 2 game between Lancing and Westfield, however this game unsurprisingly went to extra time with the score 1-1 after 90 minutes and Lancing United eventually scored twice in extra time to win the tie 3-1 to progress to the fourth round.