

TT No.35: *Justin Holmes* - Sat 26th September 2009; **Enfield (1893)** v Chelmsford City; FA Cup 2nd Qualifying Rd; Venue: Goffs Lane, Cheshunt; Score: 0-5; Admission: £7.00; Programme: £1.50; Att: 406; Match Rating: 4.

So, on paper, a predictable result. The plucky county league team had done very well to get to this stage of the competition having already won three ties to get this far, but were then outclassed by far superior opposition once "the big boys" came into the competition. Don't you believe it. For the first half, this game was very even and at half time, the outcome was in real doubt with it difficult to see which team was three leagues above the other. However, as can happen all too often in these types of games, once the underdogs fell behind, they imploded and ended up with a very harsh scoreline against them.

On FA Cup 2nd Qualifying Round day, I decided to travel to North London for this game which pitted Enfield, of the Essex Senior League, against Chelmsford City, of the Blue Square South. After several years playing at such distant locations from their home borough as Boreham Wood and Ware, Enfield are now back playing just over a mile from their old Southbury Road ground, sharing the home of Broxbourne Borough at Goffs Lane located between Cheshunt and Enfield and about a half hour walk from Cheshunt rail station.

The ground itself is typically county league standard, the highlight of which is an attractive low wooden stand covering one corner of the ground containing seating and standing areas. Along one side is a seating stand with no cover at all. On a day like this, that was perfect, with the sun blazing down on the backs of the spectators. Whether it would be such a pleasant experience on a wintry January day/evening is very debatable. With Enfield usually struggling to attract 100 spectators these days, this was a big day out for the home team, welcoming a side from the Blue Square South who are always well supported and who duly swelled the crowd to 403. As has been the case whenever I have attended an Enfield game, the programme was excellent and a very interesting read, providing comprehensive information on home and visiting players, interesting articles about the FA Cup, photos from recent Enfield games and full information about all of Enfield's games so far this season.

As for the game itself, the first half was extremely even, probably due more to Chelmsford lowering their standard of play to the County League level of their opponents, with stray pass after stray pass and rash shots at goal. However, Enfield also played some excellent, composed football and had several golden chances to score, including fluffing a one-on-one with the goalkeeper. On the stroke of half time, Chelmsford looked to have taken the lead but a late flag from the linesman ruled the goal out for offside. That would have been harsh on Enfield, who thoroughly deserved to go into half time on level terms and with a huge upset still very much on the cards.

After the break, the game continued to be open with Enfield still threatening. However, nine minutes after the break, Chelmsford took the lead with a tap in from close range, and from this point on the game completely changed. Chelmsford started to play some excellent football befitting their status, keeping the ball on the ground with good passing, movement and pace, and their substitutes certainly had a huge influence on a rejuvenated, Chelmsford performance. Enfield were simply blown away by some clinical finishing, although they were not helped by an often comical goalkeeping display by their keeper, which culminated with Chelmsford's second goal, when he misjudged a ball played forward, let it bounce past him, allowing the Chelmsford forward to run on and score. A final five goal defeat was certainly harsh on Enfield, and one wonders what would have happened had Enfield taken one of their chances to take the lead in this game, as Chelmsford only seemed to really up their game once they had taken the lead.

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