

TT0910-79

TT No.79: Rob Campion - Sat 7th November; **Melbourne Dynamo** v Chellaston; Midlands Regional Alliance Premier Division; Res: 4-0; Attendance: 57 (h/c); Admission / programme: none; Match rating: 2*.

Another dry Saturday afternoon and another game planned without lights and (before setting off) more than likely no cover. The game in question is a local derby in the Midlands Regional Alliance Premier Division between Melbourne Dynamo and Chellaston. Melbourne don't actually play in the village itself but in the neighbouring one of Ticknall at the Grange Park Recreation Ground. According to Google maps it should take around 45 minutes to make the 23-mile journey from my home in Leicester going via Coalville and Ashby.

The Midlands Regional Alliance is a Derbyshire League in all but name and the Premier Division sits at level 9 of the non-league pyramid. I suppose it can be classed as an unofficial feeder league to the Central Midlands League. I have only ever seen one game in this league or division when I took in Castle Donington Town's fixture with Newmount in April of this year.

At the start of play Melbourne sit in fourth place having won ten of their opening twelve games, scoring fifteen goals without reply in their last two league games, while Chellaston occupy eleventh place in the eighteen-team division. Their last league game saw them share ten goals with Newmount.

The ground is the typical village recreation ground affair with facilities shared with the local cricket club. The cricket pavilion was open and did a brisk trade at half time selling tea and coffee for 50p. The pitch was roped off on the cricket side with the village church providing the backdrop to the setting on a chilly November afternoon.

A game that the referee struggled to control in the early stages due to some industrial tackles and fouls that would not have looked out of place in the 60's and 70's. Two Chellaston players were sent off within three minutes of each other, the first for two bookable offences on 15 minutes and the latter a straight red on 17 minutes, both correct decisions in my opinion. It did leave you wondering whether there would be enough players on the pitch for the game to continue at some point.

The home side made their numerical advantage pay three minutes after the second sending off. A few further chances were created in the next ten minutes by the home side but it was the visitors who finished the half the stronger. The second half was a poor affair, though despite it being calmer an undercurrent was still there. Midway through the second period Chellaston were lucky not to have a third player sent off, when standing over a Melbourne player it appeared a punch was about to be thrown, so much so in the fact that the home player went to protect himself. This was right in front of the referee so how no action was taken is beyond belief. Again, it was Chellaston that was most likely to score despite their

disadvantage but Melbourne finally killed off the game with two goals in quick succession on 86 and 87 minutes. A fourth was added from the penalty spot right on the 90th minute to give an unfair gloss on the game.

06/20