

**TT No.122: Rob Champion** - Sat 13th November 2010; Aylestone Lounge 2-6 Kingsway Celtic; Leicester & District League Division 2; Venue: Braunstone Park, Leicester (Pitch 2); Att: a handful; Match rating: 3/5.

Like the headline states I had to change my plans at very short notice with this encounter not even on my radar as a potential game this afternoon. The original plan was GNG v Burbage Old Boys in round 2 of the Leicester & District League Cup, but on arriving at Belvoir Drive, home of former Leicestershire Senior League side Leicester YMCA I found the place deserted. I then found out that the game had been switched to Burbage and it did not give me enough time to get to Houghton for their match in the same competition. In the end I went home and walked down to Braunstone Park with no idea if any of the three sides (Birstall Social, Aylestone Lounge and Braders) that use the pitches were at home, let alone who they would be playing. In the end there were two games on - Birstall Social v Kibworth Town and the one I watched. There are four full size pitches on Braunstone Park that are fully railed and they are all adjacent to Cort Crescent which runs along one side of it.

Both sides are new to the Leicester & District League this season with Aylestone transferring from the Leicester City League in the summer. Looking at the tables before they get updated this evening Aylestone occupied ninth place recording three wins and four defeats in their seven league games played, while Kingsway sit in second place recording six victories from their seven league games and are only behind division leaders Allextion & New Parks on goal difference.

This was my first game ever in division two of the District League though I have watched a game at a lower level in the North Leicestershire League this season. The game was not a bad one and was a fairly even encounter. The visitors started the brightest with Tom Mansfield coming close on a couple of occasions in the opening ten minutes. The home side took time to get going and gave the divisional high flyers something to think about, though it was Kingsway who took the lead on the twenty- minute mark when Ben Bayliss scrambled the ball home from a couple of yards out. The lead did not last long as Aylestone were level within three minutes - Jimmy South heading home from a right-wing cross. Ten minutes before the end of the half and Kingsway made it 1-2 when Bayliss hit an unstoppable shot from a narrow angle into the back of the net. Captain Alex "Bongo" Mackness made it 1-3 a seven minutes later when he headed home a corner to give the visitors some breathing space. Despite not kicking off at the start of the second period Aylestone were almost back in the game straight away but the ball went just wide of the Kingsway goal. This was to prove costly as on 54 minutes Bayliss got his third of the afternoon when he hit a powerful shot past the motionless Aylestone keeper. Four minutes later and Bayliss got his fourth and Kingsway's fifth when he went on a run, beat of couple of defenders and gave the keeper no chance again with an excellent finish. Aylestone did not let their heads drop and got a goal back

just after the hour mark when a well worked move resulted in Jim Baker putting the ball underneath the Kingsway keeper. A minute later he was so close to getting his second but a rasping free kick smashed the bar and bounced away to safety. The final goal of the afternoon came with seventy-two minutes on the clock when Tom Mansfield scored with a shot from the edge of the area. The final fifteen minutes or so saw both sides have further chances but neither could find the back of the net.

Overall, not a bad afternoon on a sunny November afternoon which was also spent talking to the players and management of Kingsway. It was also the first time I had tried out my new camera and I am pleased with the results - now I just need a lens with a better zoom. Click on the link at the top of the report for around 50 photos.

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