

TT No.140: *Rob Champion* - Sat 1st January 2011; **King's Lynn Town** v Raunds Town; United Counties League Prem Division; Result: 10-1; Venue: The Walks; Admission: £8; Programme: £1; Attendance: 721 (official); Match rating: 2/5.

Despite being a bank holiday weekend for a lot of people in this country, for me though it is a normal working weekend as like always I finished work on Friday morning and return on Sunday night. This gave me limited options for football as the majority of non-league games are playing on the Monday. I had arranged with Gary Spooner to pick me up from my dad's house in the morning and gave him what I thought was the correct address, but while waiting for him the phone rang and he asked why I was not answering the door - it turned out that I had given him the wrong house number!!!! Blonde moment over and we made our way eastwards cross country on the A47 - a road that is hard going at times due to (despite being the main artery between Leicester and Peterborough) a lot of it being single carriageway and journeys take longer than they should. It takes around 1 hour 50 minutes to make the 75-mile trek between Leicester and King's Lynn and despite stopping for refreshments on the outskirts of Peterborough we arrived with around 2 hours before kick-off.

King's Lynn Town were formed in the summer of 2010 after their predecessors King's Lynn FC were wound up by the High Court's due to debts owed to HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenues & Customs). Subsequently the club had to accept a drop of two levels and were accepted into the premier division of the United Counties League (UCL). This so called "punishment" from the football authorities is in my opinion very lenient and should be a lot harsher. This is not a new or rare case with a good local example to Leicester of this being Nuneaton Borough / Town. You would think that the club would be grateful to the UCL for accepting them into their league but comments made were very disparaging and critical of them. Right from the outset when arriving there was an arrogance and unfriendliness about the club. Firstly, we had to wait half an hour for the ticket office to open before being allowed through the turnstile and into the ground - this is level 9 of English football for Christ sake. Added to the fact was that we were charged £8 admission which is way over the top for this level. An example of this being Boston Town who play in the same division charge £5. The club also wanted a further £1 to sit in the stand - don't think so! The programme, despite being a slimmed down effort was another £1 which was very poor. It was A4 in size and did not even contain a league table. Next up was a visit to the club shop, well more an area of the bar and was another poor effort, but all they had was primarily clothing and unsurprisingly nothing was purchased. I had a brief chat with the chairman who also owns the King's Lynn Stars speedway team and got the impression from him that he was not really interested in the football side of things and had no idea what non-league football in this country was all about.

The ground - well it is a cracker and one of the best that I have been to in a long while. A large main stand straddles the half way line on the near side with a covered terrace running along the length of the far side. Behind both goals are uncovered standing areas. The game itself was one of the most boring and one sided I have seen in a while. It was obvious right from the kick-off that Lynn were a class above their Northamptonshire opponents and would win this hand's down. It took them just twelve minutes for them to open the scoring when Kieran Docherty slotted home first time after being put through. Raunds best (and only) chance of the half came a minute later when a free kick was well saved by keeper Alex Street. Two more goals for the home side followed in quick succession, the first being a header from captain Jack Defty and secondly Robbie Harris getting the first of a three-goal haul. His second and Lynn's fourth came on 23 minutes when he converted a cross at the near post. Two more chances were put away before the end of the half - Jamie Thurbourne with a low strike from outside the box before Harris completed his hat-trick. The second saw Lynn take their foot off the gas but still added four more goals. Defty got a second header three minutes after the re-start while an own goal from Darren Halfyard made it 8-0 on 72 minutes. To be fair to the visitors they never gave up and were rewarded with a consolation goal on 74 minutes. Street's miss kick presented Sam Dodson with a simple tap-in. The last five minutes saw Lynn hit double figures with a brace from substitute Chris Bacon. He still had time to complete his hat-trick but instead of keeping his composure had a rush of blood and blasted the ball over from twelve yards or so.

Overall, it was a record equalling number of goals seen for myself in a game with (I believe) it only the third time this has happened. I have only once though seen a score line like this before and that came at the end of the 1998/99 season when Leicester City beat Oadby Town 10-1 in the Leicestershire "Westerby" Challenge Cup Final.

A final note goes out to the club - humility and friendliness goes a long way.

07/20