

TT No.166: Justin Holmes - Sat 29th January 2011; **Worthing United** v Steyning Town; Sussex County League Division 2; Venue: Lyons Way, Worthing; Score: 3-0; Admission with Programme: £5.00; Attendance: 35; Match Rating: 3*.

A trip to the West Sussex Coast today for some Sussex County League action, and the home of Worthing United, Lyons Way, turned out to be a surprisingly scenic venue. Although it becomes less surprising when one considers that it is located on the northern fringes of the town, about a 20-minute walk from East Worthing Rail Station. On entering the ground, one has to walk up steps to get pitch-side and to the one stand within the ground, which is a small, old fashioned structure containing three rows of seats, but with no incline between the rows. From the stand, rolling hills and a farm provide a pleasantly rural and scenic backdrop to the action, and hard standing is available along two of the remaining three sides of the pitch. The 16-page programme, included with admission, certainly has an attractive, colourful and professional cover and contains all of the basic stats and facts needed to preview the game ahead.

Worthing United feel hard done by to still be plying their trade in Division 2 of the Sussex League, having finished runners up and in the promotion places last season, but were denied promotion due to their ground not being adequate for Division 1 football. A decision which seems all the harsher considering the generally poor quality of grounds to be found in Division 1, and that Rye United were promoted despite their ground not being permanently enclosed. However, they are doing well again this season, having lost just two of their opening 17 games this season, in sixth place but have played less games than all teams above them and a top three placing would probably be theirs if they were not behind with their games. Conversely, today's visitors, Steyning Town, benefitted from more strictly enforced ground grading regulations last season, as they should have been relegated to intermediate football in Division 3, but were reprieved thanks to a team being unable to take their promotion place from Division 3. And they are finding life just as difficult again this season, as they find themselves second bottom in the table with just two wins in their opening 18 games. In the corresponding fixture at Steyning earlier in the season, Worthing United ran out comfortable 0-3 winners.

On a murky but bitterly cold day, although the home side started fairly sluggishly against their very limited opponents, it always seemed a matter of time before they would score the goals needed to win this game, with Worthing United playing some attractive, passing football, whereas Steyning struggled to string two passes together nor find a man with their passes and at times resorted to some rather agricultural defending. Worthing United took the lead on 16 minutes with a wonderfully placed free kick from just outside the penalty area though Mitchell Hand. The keeper seemed to allow a rather large gap between the wall and the other post from the one he was guarding - which Hand exploited perfectly. A one goal lead was all that the home side took into half time, although they dominated

the second half and put the game to bed through a simple tap in by Joe Shiel on 49 minutes from a low slide rule pass across the 6 yard box following an excellent passing move forward, and then a looped header over the keeper by Joe Shelly on 54 minutes which the Steyning defenders furiously claimed was offside. After this, the game somewhat petered out, although Steyning had a couple of glorious chances of claim a consolation goal.

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