

**TT No.193: Bob Davies** - Sat 5th March 2011; **Hatfield Town** (4) 4, Stotfold (0) 3; South Midlands League Premier; Venue; Gosling Sports Park, Welwyn GC; Attendance: 67; Admission: £5; Programme: £1; Tea: 50p; Match rating: 4\*.

Hatfield Town began their second spell at the Gosling Stadium this season following ground sharing at Harpenden Town and then Welwyn Garden City.

This is the latest reincarnation of the club that took place in 1997. The club played their football in the Herts Senior County League and this saw a bit of a yo-yo period for the club between Division One and the Premier. With a promotion back to the HSCL Premier Division in 2002-2003 the club established themselves in the higher division and were promoted back into the Spartan South Midlands League after winning the Herts Senior County League Premier Division title at the end of 2007-2008. Promotion back to the Premier Division of the SSML was obtained in 2008-2009. The club still have the intention to push for a move up the non-league pyramid and eventually move back to a suitable ground in Hatfield.

The football pitch at the Gosling Sports centre is in the middle of a 6-lane athletics track and with a cycling track further separating the pitch from the spectators. This unfortunately does lead to a lack of atmosphere at the venue as with most football's clubs with similar surroundings. There is a covered seated stand with around accommodation for about 400 and standing terrace areas at the side and below. The bar which is situated above the main stand gives another view of the pitch which would be favourable in winter conditions. Another refreshment outlet is situated to the right of the stand, selling tea, coffee and the usual fare. The team line ups are also available on a board in the same area. Overall, not a favourite venue of mine I'm afraid but on plus side the officials are friendly and, there is decent free car parking facilities which are shared with the rest of the complex.

Picked a goal feast for my 100th game of the season. Literally a game of two halves as the young Hatfield side made the most of their chances in the first period to take a 4-0 lead. In an exciting second half Stotfold made a determined effort to get back into the game. They succeeded in pulling two goals back by just after the hour and both teams created a lot of chances to push the goal count higher. A Stotfold goal in the 89th minute made stoppage interesting but Hatfield managed to keep the ball mainly in Stotfold's half to snuff out any danger of a full comeback. Stotfold it must be said also had a number of youngsters in the side as well and both teams played the majority of the game in good spirit.

Directions: (from Website) - From A1(M) exit junction 4 onto the A414 towards Hertford and WGC. At the roundabout take the 1st exit onto the A6129 heading to Stanborough & Wheathamstead. At the next roundabout take the 2nd exit onto A6129 Stanborough Road. At the next roundabout take the 3rd exit into the Gosling Sports Park.

