

TT No.235: Mark Farnell - Sat 9th April 2011; **Radford** v Thurnby Nirvana; East Midlands Counties League; Result: 2-4; Admission: £4; Programme: £1, 36pp.

It was very much back to normal on Saturday as we made our way to Nottingham to watch bottom club Radford face Thurnby Nirvana in the East Midlands Counties League. Following directions off the internet we made our way to Radford the long way as there is no right turn onto Wilkinson Street as directed. In the April sunshine we travelled the taking a scenic route and after getting directions from two local lads made our way to the Selhurst Street home of Radford FC.

The ground itself is tucked away behind the local shops with very limited parking inside the ground but currently residing at the foot of the table this doesn't prove to be an issue. Having parked up we visit one of the local shops for an ice cream before making our way into the ground. We pay our admission fee £4 (£2) and £1 for the programme from a really welcoming chap who tells us where the club shop is situated so we can get our pin badges (hopefully).

We make our way to the stand where we finish off our ice creams. The chairman comes over and has a chat as I glance through Redford's programme. I have to say I am impressed. Although the glossy cover is holding ordinary paper it is crammed full of facts on both sides with plenty of colour pics and enough to keep you interested for some time. Eventually the club shop opens and we get our pin badges plus a missing Quorn and Beckenham Town badge and await the arrival of the teams.

With the clubs wearing 'claret and blue' against 'green with a red piping', the kit resembles Aston Villa against a Mars XI. The game begins at a canter with both sides needing the points for different reasons. Contrary to expectations Radford are awarded an early penalty following a foul in the box and Gordon calmly steps up to blast it past the home keeper. Thurnby who appear to wear two badges on their shirt following the amalgamation of Thurnby Rangers and Leicester Nirvana soon level the scores through Miller. In an end to end game Radford score again after Martin-Wyatt's free kick goes in off the post leaving keeper Carter left with no chance. But Thurnby, missing a number of players including the league's highest scorer (so I am told by the half dozen travelling fans) soon pull level again, this time through Potter. Half time - Pheasants 2 Nirvana 2.

After four goals in the first half we were hoping for more in the second but both sides tried hard in vain with the visitors coming closest through Melbourne whose header cannoned off the post from a tight angle. Both sides then made changes and this paid off for Thurnby when, following a neat move on the left, the ball was turned into his own net by Caulton as he tried to blast it over his own crossbar (being about eighteen inches too low). This gives the hosts the lead. After another penalty was awarded for the visitors, Potter scores his second of the afternoon and make it a final score of Radford 2 Thurnby Nirvana 4.

Thurnby now seemed destined to relegation, which is a shame as it as a small but friendly club who I thought deserved better. One final comment was well done to all the officials (both sexes) who had a tremendous game (apart from when the referee incorrectly thought the ball had gone out when it had never completely crossed the line), they didn't put a foot wrong all afternoon. If you are ever in Nottingham and looking for a new ground try Radford.

07/20