

**TT No.28: *Rob Champion*** - Sat 21st August 2010; **Thorne Colliery v AFC Hucknall**; Central Midlands League Prem Division; Result: 2-7; Admission: £2; Programme: £1; Attendance: don't know; Match rating: 4\*.

The only reason I chose today's game is that it kicked off at 1pm which, with Mrs Rambler working in the morning, allowed me to be home by 4.15pm. I have watched at least one "new" club play a home game each season in the Central Midlands League (CML) since 1998 when I saw Long Eaton United play an FA Vase tie. For the record Thorne are the 44th team on this list.

Thorne itself is an historic market town in South Yorkshire, 11 miles north east of Doncaster with a population of around 16,000. The town became a permanent settlement around AD700 and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. The football club don't actually play in Thorne itself but in the neighbouring village of Moorends which lies to the north of the town. The ground is the Moorends Colliery Welfare Ground which is also home to the local cricket club. The two pitches do not overlap with a service road running between them. The football ground is fully enclosed with metal fencing separating it from the rest of the complex, a large stand runs along the near side of the pitch with is the only form of cover at the ground, but on a day like today with glorious weather in South Yorkshire it was more of a case of sheltering from the sun and heat.

Thorne Colliery were formed in 1929 and joined the now defunct Yorkshire League in 1932. The competition was split into two sections with Thorne finishing in 8th and 7th place respectively. The two years immediately after the Second World War saw the club at its peak, with a Runners-up finish in 1946, followed by their only Yorkshire League title in 1947. Thorne remained in the Yorkshire League until the merger with the Midland Counties League in 1982 when they became founder members of the Northern Counties East League (NCEL). Just four years were spent in the NCEL before they finished bottom of division 2 in 1986 and they joined the more local Doncaster & District Senior League. Seven years were spent in the Doncaster League before joining the Central Midlands League in 1993 which is where they continued to play their football to this day. Last season they finished in 12th place in the sixteen team Premier Division. Opponents today are Central Midlands League new boys AFC Hucknall. The following information on them is taken from the Nottinghamshire football site.

"When is a football club not a football club? When it's the controversial local football newcomers, AFC Hucknall.

AFC were formed in 2004 under their original name of Seven Stars Football Club. They started out in the Mansfield & District Sunday League, before a change of name to AFC Hucknall and moving onto the Nottingham Combination in 2006. As well as a new name, the club expanded and also appeared to have found some stability at this point with what looked like a permanent move to the Goosedale

Sports Ground in Bestwood Village. However, in the summer of 2010, some strange things began to happen.

A club known as AFC Hucknall were entered in the Central Midlands League Premier Division. This club were to play at the home ground of Hucknall Town Football Club, wear the same colours as Hucknall Town Football Club and have been quoted in the local press and unofficially by Hucknall Town Football Club as being their reserve team. CML rules do not permit reserve sides entering their league, and there have been widespread claims that Hucknall Town Football Club have simply pulled the wool over the CML's eyes by adding the prefix of 'AFC', issuing a new badge (which plagiarises a quarter of Hucknall Town's badge) and claiming a similar named clubs entire history. However, with AFC having a separate committee and the rightful claim that they do have a history as the offspring of Seven Stars FC, it appears that this rather unusual club are here to stay.”

My own opinion is that they are the reserve side of Hucknall Town but I don't believe it is my place to go into the politics of this one.

The game...well it all started so well for the home side who took the lead on five minutes when Aiden Marshall beat the visitors' offside trap and hit a powerful shot past the keeper. The next fifteen minutes saw the game develop into a midfield battle though to be fair both sides kept the ball on the ground and it was fairly entertaining. Hucknall turned the game on its head with two goals in two minutes. The first came on 21 when Danny Chaplin latched onto a pass and drilled a superb shot past the home keeper into the bottom corner of the goal, and then just two minutes later Thorne were caught napping as Chaplin found Cashell Walters unmarked in the area who turned a defender and coolly finished. The remainder of the half saw no further addition to the scoring but both sides created chances with Thorne coming close on a couple of occasions with long range efforts.

The second half was a different matter altogether as Hucknall ran rampant from the start and it a nutshell did a demolition job on their hosts. They made it 1-3 on the hour mark through substitute Danwell Francis and just two minutes later he made it 1-4, when he hit Thorne on the counter attack and rounded the keeper for a simple finish. Cashell Walters got his second on 70 minutes to make it 1-5 when following a cross field pass from Francis, held off a couple of challenges to lob the ball back over the keeper's head. The visitors had to wait just a further four minutes for their sixth from Tom Hannigan before Thorne got a consolation goal with seven minutes remaining. The scoring was completed on 85 minutes when Felix Hogg rounded the keeper and finished from a narrow angle.

To sum up I feel that AFC Hucknall will take some stopping this season as they looked a very good side playing football the right way and had an excellent level of fitness. Thorne themselves were not a bad side but in the second half it was like trying to stop a runaway train with a bale of hay. I found them to be a very friendly club and I wish them all the best for the remainder of the season.

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