

TT No.154: Paul Roth - Sat January 28th 2012; **Enfield Town** v Great Wakering Rovers; Ryman League Division One North; Res: 2-1; Att: 341; Entry: £8; Programme: 36pp, £2; Altitude and global location: The Queen Elizabeth Stadium, Donkey Lane, Enfield is 28m (91.863 ft) above sea level: at latitude 51 degrees, 39.6 mins N; 0 degrees, 3.8 mins W (position derived from centre circle); SATNAV: EN1 3PL; Weather: Sunny; Club shop: Online only; Local MP: Nick de Bois (Cons); My day's carbon footprint legacy: 13.7.

Oh dear! As soon as I drew our bedroom curtains yesterday morning, and saw the staring eyes of an enormous smelly peering up at me from behind the birdbath, at the bottom of our back garden, I instantaneously knew what sort of day I was in for.

Some hours later, en-arrival in north London, proceedings began to take their inevitable dip. Exactly how the Cock & Dragon and The George have managed to find themselves represented on page 286 of this year's Blessed Book is beyond my comprehension. The two hostelries are overwhelmingly repugnant.

By 13.47hrs I was alongside Enfield FC's Queen Elizabeth Stadium. To be fair It's pretty much as I'd expected, so ultimately, I suppose I shouldn't have been disappointed. But I was. It's the three - there's one positioned behind each goal, and another that's furnished with tip-up seat, located on the furthest side - seemingly nowadays de rigueur Atcost stands that bugged me most. These abominations, the panacea of the low-budget stadia designer, increasingly rear their ugly heads whenever a new lower-league football facility reaches the design stage. Isn't there a chance those well-paid architects could come up with some structure more aesthetically pleasing to the human eye? Also, anathema to myself is the presence of an abhorrent six-lane running track.

The QES's focal point, the magnificently refurbished Grade II listed Art Deco cafe, does however pass muster - just; the foodstuffs proffered from the nearby Bushel Box Cafe, unsurprisingly do not. The only crumb of comfort I'm able to report is that the club has at least returned to its spiritual EN1 Post-Code home, only half a mile to the north of once-legendary Southbury Road. As far as I'm concerned though, the arena is yet another bland addition to the non-league circuit that at best can only be described as adequate. Readers who have already visited aptly named Donkey Lane might disagree.

And the game itself? 2nd-placed Enfield maintained their play-off position, overcoming 20th-placed Essex Senior League-bound Great Wakering Rovers 2-1, in a narcolepsy-inducing game that had me wishing I'd headed somewhere more salubrious. GWRFC scored after just 41.385 seconds, then squandered a decent chance to double their lead a few minutes later. They held this advantage relatively comfortably, until just after teatime, when Walid Matata equalised. That it took a late own-goal to secure all three points for the blue and whites,

grimly demonstrates what an endurance this match was for all those present, your despondent correspondent included.

To round off what had been a thoroughly miserable day, my return to the Blochhaus was greeted by the galling news that the book I've desperately been trying to order from our library apparently contravenes the Obscene Publications Act. As a consequence, they are unable to obtain a copy for me.

Thankfully, today's another day.

FGIF Star Rating: 5*.

07/20