

TT No.52: *Rob Champion* - Sat 24th September 2011; **Oadby Town** v Huntingdon Town; FA Vase 2nd Qualifying Rd; Venue: Greene King Park; Result: 3-2; Admission: £5; Programme: £1; Attendance: NK; Match rating: 3 ½/5.

A briefer report than normal today as I am back at Greene King for the second time this season to see Oadby Town. This is their first and hopefully not last game in this seasons FA Vase. Opponents Huntingdon make the 49-mile trip across from Cambridgeshire for the first ever meeting between the two sides. This is a competition that holds fond memories for Oadby as they reached the semi-finals in 2003, having beaten holders Whitley Bay in the north-east in a tense 5th round tie before succumbing to eventual winners Brigg Town. To be honest their record since then has been pretty dire!!!! Let's hope today is the catalyst for a long run in the competition.

Despite losing to Quorn in a replayed FA Cup tie they still remain unbeaten in the league with five wins from six games. In fact, they remain the only unbeaten side in the East Midlands Counties League this season. Opponents Huntingdon compete in division 1 of the United Counties League which sits at the same level of the pyramid as the EMCL, and have four points from their three league games.

Pre-match prediction: I have generally been known to be incorrect at this but my head is saying Oadby should have too much firepower and win this either 2-0 or 3-1.

Oadby progressed to the first-round proper of the FA Vase with a well fought and deserved victory in an entertaining game against their Cambridgeshire opponents. Both sides in the first half were evenly matched for the most part with chances missed at either end. For the hosts Jon Stevenson put the ball over when through on goal and hit a superb curling free kick that rattled the cross bar with the Huntingdon keeper well beaten, and skipper Joe Latham who was later to get on the score sheet had an effort cleared off the line. The opening goal of the game came on 39 minutes when Michael Reeves scored at the second attempt to give Oadby the lead. Just three minutes into the second half and it was all square as Oadby failed to clear, and the ball was headed home from a couple of yards out. Inside ten minutes and Oadby were back in front when Stevenson fed Reeves with a lovely through ball, who then rounded the keeper and finished with aplomb. Despite having a reasonable amount of possession Huntingdon failed to test the Oadby keeper. Oadby themselves always looked dangerous on the break with Stevenson in particular being denied by an excellent save. The crucial third goal for Oadby came with just six minutes remaining when Latham headed in a corner. With the game seemingly won Huntingdon got a second goal deep into injury time before the referee finally blew his whistle with some five extra minutes played.

The reward for the victory is a trip to Leicestershire Senior League side Lutterworth Athletic in the 1st round in four weeks' time. Athletic themselves knocked out Anstey Nomads 3-1.

07/20