

TT No.80: *Rob Campion* - Sat 29th October 2011; **Genesis** v Houghton Rangers; Leicestershire Intermediate Cup 2nd Rd; Result: 1-1aet (9-8 pens); Lodge Farm, Oakley Drive, Loughborough; Admission/Programme: None; Attendance: 9; Match rating: 2/10.

The drive from the University to Oakley Drive is less than a mile but with having some time to kill between the games I went and had some lunch before arriving at the venue about ten minutes before kick-off. The venue is basic with three pitches and a wooden changing room block on site. Genesis use the back pitch with Loughborough United the front one. The third one which could be described as the "top" pitch with it being set above the other was not in use. Also, at home today was Loughborough United Reserves Saturday Vase 2nd round match with Knighton EFC. There is nothing to distinguish each pitch from one another as none of them had dugouts or were railed or roped off.

Despite watching a poor game in the last round of this competition, this did not deter me in any shape or form to stop me watching a game in the next round. The draw was finally released to the public just three weeks before the game itself - good planning and organisation from the County FA!!!! There are 16 ties in the second round with Genesis thrashing fellow North Leicestershire League side Markfield 8-2 in the 1st round while District Leaguers Houghton received a bye. I did state in the report on the 1st round tie between Asfordby and Glenfield that the competition was competed for by teams in only three divisions. Well I was almost right as there are two teams from other leagues - Ketton who play in division 1 of the Peterborough & District League and Witherley United who play in division 2 of the Coventry Alliance.

One thing that attracted me to this tie was that both sides are top of their respective leagues and are also unbeaten. Genesis have recorded seven wins from their eight league outings and last week beat Birstall Old Boys 5-1 @ Lodge Farm. Houghton meanwhile have five wins from their six league games and last week beat Mounsorrel Amateurs 3-2 at the Weir Lane ground.

Who is Genesis FC? Taken from their official website and written by Jez Cromie -

“Genesis FC started in a pub in Loughborough by five guys who used to play football together in the Christian Union team at Uni. The five of us Si Brown, Adrian Holland, Stu Arnold, Steve Straker and myself Jez Crombie had stayed around in Loughborough to live and work. We were reminiscing at some of our glory days when someone suggested the idea of starting our own club. After much amusement the idea gained momentum and became a serious possibility. So, in May 2002 we decided to go for it. We had a squad of five but that wasn't going to stop us. Over the coming months many different mates joined us and we had a squad of 15 for our opening game in the North Leicestershire League Division 2.

The name Genesis was chosen as Si Brown was a huge Phil Collins fan, not really. We knew we wanted to set up a club that was a bit different to your average club. Some of the guys were Christians and we wanted the club to reflect some of the Christian values in the way it was run and the way we played our football. So, Genesis was chosen as it reflected our Christian influence and also because in the bible Genesis is known as the book of the Beginnings, and it was the beginning of Genesis F.C.”

Their playing since joining the NLL is as follows:

2002/03 - N LEIC-2 - 4th; 2003/04 - N LEIC-2 - 2nd; 2004/05 - N LEIC-1 - 3rd; 2005/06 - N LEIC-1 - 1st; 2006/07 - N LEIC-P - 10th; 2007/08 - N LEIC-P - 6th; 2008/09 - 7th; 2009/10 - 4th and 2010/11 - 2nd (P)

On arriving at the venue, the weather turned and the glorious sunshine from the morning game had turned into rain - thankfully it did abate during the game and also thankfully I managed to shelter from the rain under some trees. This was a game that could have gone either way - two inform teams producing an open, entertaining game or two inform teams cancelling each other out. Unfortunately, it was the latter of the two that I witnessed. The first half was especially turgid with neither side seemingly up for it. Or it could have been the case that both sides were afraid of losing? The hosts only effort was from long range that did not trouble Jimmy Greasley in the Houghton goal.

The second half started as the first ended though as it wore on the game became more open. Genesis had three good chances midway through the second period in the space of five minutes, but two went wide and the other saved by Greasley. Houghton then stepped up a gear themselves but could not break the deadlock and the game went into extra time. Not something I was looking forward to following the previous ninety minutes!!!

The first period of extra time was the most entertaining of the game. Genesis took the lead midway through it when their #6 was found unmarked in the penalty area and, he side-footed the ball past Greasley. The lead lasted just two minutes as Andy Almond headed home the equaliser following an excellent cross from the left. Almond should have given Houghton the lead on 114 minutes but somehow put the ball over from a couple of yards out when it was easier to score. The final fifteen minutes saw neither keeper tested and it invariably the game would be decided by kicks from the penalty spot. Both sides missed two from their first five kicks and on it went until it got round to the keepers having to take one. As always in penalty shoot outs there is a hero and a fall guy. Unfortunately for Houghton Greasley had his kick saved by the Genesis keeper and the game ended some two-and-three-quarter hours after it had started!

Penalty shoot-out sequence: GEN - O; O; X; X; O; O; O; O; O; O and O and HOU - O; X; X; O; O; O; O; O; O; O and X - GEN won 9-8 on pens).

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