

TT No.64: *Rob Champion* - Saturday 14th February 2015; **Thurnby Nirvana Reserves** 1-5 Anstey Nomads Reserves; Leicestershire Senior League Division 1; Venue: Hamilton Park, Sandhills Avenue, Hamilton, Leicester, LE5 1LU; Admission: None; Attendance: 5.

Due to my limitations regarding football this season due to work one of my aims was to re-complete one of my local leagues, the Leicestershire Senior League (LSL), and at the start of the season I had three venues to visit - one in the Premier Division and two in Division 1. The other two were both visited before Christmas and they were GNG's new ground (The Riverside Football Ground) on Braunstone Lane East in Leicester and Aslockton Cranmers home on Spa Lane in Orston, Nottinghamshire.

Thurnby Nirvana is the result of a merger a few years ago between Thurnby Rangers and junior set-up Leicester Nirvana. All the club's teams apart from the men's 1st and reserve sides play under the latter name, and Hamilton Park is home to them. Around Christmas time when at work one night I got talking to a customer who was wearing a Leicester Nirvana jacket and was told that the first team will be moving to Hamilton Park once the ground is ready for step 5 football, and this would be by the end of 2015 latest. I did ask if when they move, they would change the first team's name to Leicester Nirvana and was told probably.

Hamilton is an estate on the north east side of Leicester with work beginning in the late 1980's. I used to live not far from there until 1988 and remember it being farm land with a farmhouse set on its own with nothing else around it. The name itself comes from the name of a deserved mediaeval village in the Barkby Thorpe parish that lies outside of the City boundary. More information about the history and location can be found on the Charnwood Borough Council website by clicking [here](#).

Thurnby Nirvana Reserves are new to the LSL this season having transferred or depending on which way you look at it, promoted from its reserve team competition, the Leicestershire Combination, while their opponents joined the previous season. The fifteen teams in the LSL's division 1 are made up about as equally as you can get with an odd number of eight first teams and seven reserve sides. Both teams today are in the lower half of the table with Thurnby occupying 13th position with fourteen points and Anstey two places and one point better off.

I also used this afternoons football to catch up with my dad who I had not seen for six weeks, and with him living a five-minute drive from Hamilton Park I picked him up. On arrival there is a small car park and club house decked out in Leicester Nirvana signage. It is an L-shaped venue with two full size pitches in front of the clubhouse and one to the left - this was the one used this afternoon. There was nothing pitch side literally and the pitch wasn't even roped off, and was without

doubt the most basic of venues I have seen a game in the LSL at with my first one being back in 1998.

The game itself wasn't that bad and had a mix of some excellent goals and goalkeeping howlers. Anstey playing in all blue started the brighter but on ten minutes were one behind, when against the run of play Thurnby broke on the left and a powerful shot on the left-hand side of the penalty area from gave the visiting keeper no chance. The home defence were at fault for the Nomads equaliser when they gave the ball away on the edge of their own penalty area and they were punished with a first time shot. The rest of the half was a reasonably even affair and it looked like the teams would go into the interval all square, but in the final few minutes the Anstey took the lead. In the second half Anstey looked the more dangerous of the two teams going forward and the more likely to add to the scoring. They did just that by adding three more - the first being a simple finish from a few yards out following a low cross from the right. Goal four for Anstey of the afternoon was the result of an instance that goalkeepers dread and have nightmares about, as the Nirvana keeper made a complete hash of a kick from a back pass and this allowed the Anstey #12 to roll the ball into an empty net. Without meaning to sound patronising I felt sorry for the keeper as it was his only mistake of the afternoon and had played pretty well. He could though do nothing about the visitors fifth goal of the afternoon - one of the best strikes that I have seen this season as the ball flew into the top corner from twenty-five yards or so.

04/20