

**TT No.47: *Brian Buck* - Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2017; **Newport Town** v Worcester Raiders; West Midlands (Regional) League Division 1; Result: 2-3; Attendance: 45 approx.**

Today I was fortunate enough to be given a lift to my game and I was very grateful to my chauffer for dropping me off on the way to his game, about 12 miles away at Market Drayton Town. The added advantage of this was that I could have a longer slurp both before and after my match. Newport can be found roughly equidistant from Stafford and Telford and you would think that the clubs name coupled with the level of football they play in, would mean that they have a nice ground. But, in reality, it's just a railed off pitch in little more than a public park. It is not enclosed and the only other facilities they have are the obligatory dressing rooms and a room which is in effect the tea bar. But there was hot food available, which I partook of. The club officials were very welcoming though and the nice lady secretary told me that the club recognized that they need to try and move forward and, with this in mind, they have acquired some land in another part of town, which they hope to move onto in 2018/19. But from the way she was talking, in the early stages don't expect the facilities to be any better than they are now! This was hot news, just out on the previous Wednesday and even some of the locals didn't know about it!

As for the match, well, as it was the warmest Saturday of the year so far, I was able to dispense with my coat and jacket to watch the game. My hat remained firmly welded to my head though, until I realized, when I got home, I'd left it in my driver's car. The hat that is, not my head! This was an encounter between the second and fourth placed sides in the league. I think that the ref might have been expecting trouble as when he booked his first (of four) player on 20 minutes he produced one of the biggest yellow cards I've ever seen! There had already been a goal by this point in this feisty match when the visitors scored on 13 minutes. The equalizer came on 20 minutes and then Newport took the lead two minutes after that. Six minutes later the raiders equalized, amidst claims of offside. Then on 34 minutes Newport were awarded and missed a spot kick. This was really their big chance blown as after the break the Raiders looked the better side, despite their persistent nagging of the officials. The linesman on my side was so good at limiting their expectations that I invited him round to see if he could do anything with my wife! The winning goal deservedly came Raiders way on 67 minutes and then right at the end Newport missed a good chance to equalize. This brought to a close a good day out. I wish both sides all the best for the future and I do hope that the Raiders find their lost ark!