

TT No.50: *Brian Buck* - Saturday 1st April 2017; **Welwyn St Mary's Blues** v Welwyn St Mary's Reds; Hertfordshire & Borders Churches League Division 1; Kick-Off: 10.30am; Result: 0-1; Attendance: 5 approx.

I started off my day with this spicy local derby, played at Welwyn Playing Fields, Ottway Walk in Old Welwyn. These days it's home to Lemsford who play in the Herts Senior County league and it's railed off on one side and half along behind both goals. The pitch is on a bit of a plateau on the railed off side and therefore the car park is below pitch level. Thankfully since my last visit the concrete bollards, presumably put there to stop illegal fly tipping, have now been removed. However, my first visit here was back in 1982, when Welwyn, as opposed to Welwyn Garden City or Welwyn Garden United, were the tenants. I recall that as I didn't have a car at that point, I was given a lift back to Welwyn North station by a man driving his blue invalid three-wheeler. Like me he was also a regular watcher of the Spurs Youth teams who played at the then Spurs Training Ground at Brookfield Lane, Cheshunt.

Talking of Spurs, I also knew the ref today, who was Bobby Scarth. We'd met before at another one of these games and some 45 years ago I watched Bobby play regularly for the Spurs youth and reserve sides then. He is always happy to be reminded of this. There was something on the game today in that by winning the Reds moved to the top of the table with one match left. So, the title was now theirs to lose. Had the Blues won though then it would have still been possible for them to claim the title. This was a feisty match despite the connection between the sides. The only goal came on 12 minutes, going to the more antagonistic side. But the goal calmed them down a bit and they were further calmed down when they found out that the ref wasn't quite as deaf as they thought he was! Meanwhile the Blues were in a bit of a mess in this first period. There were claims from the sidelines that they were disorganized. At the break this was addressed and the second half was a much more even affair. Despite this the Reds won because overall, they were more up for it than the Blues were.