

TT No.52: *Brian Buck* - Saturday 1st April 2017; **London Bees v Sheffield FC Ladies**; FA Women's Super League 2 Spring Series played at **Barnet FC**; Kick-Off: 7pm; Result: 2-1; Attendance: 387.

After the previous match had finished, I spent a while in the bar watching the Football League results come through on the TV. Then I left for my final game of the day, knowing that I would easily get there in the 50 minutes that my sat-nav told me it would. But in the end, it took twice this long as I got stuck in a traffic jam about five minutes from the ground. But my problems weren't over! After parking up I arrived at the ground some ten minutes before kick-off. You would think that with this match being free admission all you needed to do was go in through the usual entrance for these games, through the bar, purchasing your programme, as you did so. But, first of all, I was told that I needed to buy a programme, from the club shop. This I did (£2) and then I returned to the same entrance, where they wouldn't let me through, because I didn't have a ticket. I couldn't quite get my head round why I would need a ticket if the match was free admission, but time was running short now and so I asked where non-ticket holders could get in. I was told to go down to the north end of the stand. I did this and after entering through a turnstile I found myself in the North Stand, behind the goal. I wasn't happy with this, got let out and returned to the previous entrance to find out if I could get a ticket so I could sit on the side. I was told I couldn't and so I had to return to the North Stand and watch the match from there. It seems that you either had to be Press, associated with one of the teams or have bought one of their pre-match hospitality meals before the start to sit on that side, although I wasn't sure of the last part. But as things transpired, I sat in about the right place to witness the key moments of the match.

The first half was one of the poorest I've seen at this level. Sheffield were marginally better than the Bees, who were dreadful. But I didn't like their gamesmanship tactics. However, having seen the ref, Abigail Marriott, put in some good displays in the Thurlow Nunn Youth League in the past, I knew that she was up for the challenge here and so she was. Sheffield perhaps should have scored on 3 minutes when the ball seemed to go over the line when it came down off the crossbar, but no one could be sure. The second half started in much the same way, but gradually the Bees dominated possession and eventually scored on 83 minutes through Jo Wilson, although I thought she was going to miss, as earlier she had put wide a shot from a similar position. On 89 minutes, she scored again after cutting inside and thumping home a really powerful shot from about 12 yards out. Then on 90(+2) minutes Sheffield scored after some awful marking left the scorer free. So overall it wasn't so bad and most of the 180 people I counted would have gone home happy.