

**TT No.62:** *Brian Buck* - Saturday 22nd April 2017; **Balcombe** v Old Varndeanians Reserves; Gray Hooper Holt LLP Mid-Sussex League Premier Division; Kick-Off: 1.30pm; Result: 3-1; Att: 15 approx.

My next game was just over a 20-minute drive away and I reached the ground with about 15 minutes to spare. I was rather hoping at this point that there would be some refreshments, of any type, available, but there were none around. When I texted the home officials on the previous night, about this game taking place, I was met with the response, "Who's asking?" I thought about telling them that I was the local axe murderer, but eventually I got the reply I needed from them. On this sunny but chilly afternoon, I found myself a park bench to sit on, level with one of the penalty spots. I fell on my bottom here as this turned out to be the end all the goals were scored. On my way to 'my' bench I passed the visiting coach who told one of his players, "Don't worry, you're in the team." This was met by the player telling him, "I'm not bothered!" The manager then warned the ref that the home lino was a dodgy one, but was brushed off by him. From what I saw of him though he was overly fair to the away side. On 4 minutes the visitors took the lead and by half time their management team were more than happy. In fact, they told their players that they had no criticisms with anything, including the match officials, even though I thought Balcombe shaded it. After the break, Balcombe gradually began to dominate and on 50 minutes they equalized. Then on 70 minutes the hosts took the lead. Suddenly the home lino came under the microscope and on 81 minutes the visitors had a player booked for calling him a cheat. Then right on time Balcombe scored their third goal to seal their win. This was a game which got better as it went along.