

TT No. 110: *Steve Hardy* - Saturday 24th March 2018; **AFC Stockport** v Whalley Range Reserves; Lancashire & Cheshire Amateur League Division D; Kick-Off; 2.00pm; Result: 5-2; Admission charge/Programme: None; Attendance: 6 h/c

After the excitement of the morning's match in Rusholme, it was back on the 192-bus towards Stockport again, and a ten-minute ride to South Reddish. My chosen match was in the Lancashire & Cheshire Amateur League and once again featured a team at the bottom of the Division with no points at all.

The action took place at the Frederick Whittaker Scott playing fields, which is a huge area with numerous pitches laid out for both adult and youth team matches, set in what looks like an industrial estate, and located next door to the Reddish Working Men's club. When I got there, there was a crooner in the building next door, belting out standard classics. He had a really good voice, actually, and it was nice to sit and listen to him whilst I ate my sandwiches and waited for the footie to start.

Sadly, the nice fuzzy glow of his voice faded once the football started. I really couldn't get in to this one with the main problem being Whalley Range Reserves. They obviously are having a terrible season, and they spent most of the game in a state of civil war with each other. Arguing, swearing and throwing hissy fits for the entire 90 minutes, it was not nice to watch at all. AFC Stockport only started their Saturday team in 2015, having been mainly a Sunday side until then. Today was really about how many they would score, but frustration grew as they missed chance after chance in the first half with the score stubbornly remaining at 0-0! Then a home penalty following a blatant dive. A chance to opening the scoring...but no, a brilliant save from the keeper and it remained 0-0.

I was just beginning to wonder if the Ressies would hold out until the break when the floodgates opened. 2 quick goals, one of which was embarrassingly offside, gave us a 2-0 half time score, and the prospect of many more after the break, I thought. It wasn't to be though, with the Ressies actually managing a couple of goals themselves which they hadn't looked remotely like scoring in the first half.

The result was never in doubt though and finished in a deserved 5-2 win for AFC Stockport. This was only my second game in this league, which offers a large number of new grounds to be visited in the south Manchester and north Cheshire area. I will definitely be back for more.