

TT No.113: *Brian Buck* - Saturday 31st March 2018; **AFC Christchurch The Magpies** v Somersham Town 'A'; Cambridgeshire County League Mead Plant & Grab Division 5B; Result: 3-0; Attendance: 25 approx.

Yet more heavy overnight rain meant yet another nightmare in trying to find somewhere to go where I hadn't been before and somewhere which was actually on! Furthermore, this was the fourth day in a row where more games were off than on and as this was now starting to tire me out, ideally, I wanted to go somewhere about an hour from home. Well, I may have got home in just over an hour, but it took me twice as long to get there. But before anything could happen, I had to confirm that the match was on. I had no contacts for the hosts, so I had to check things out through the helpful Somersham Town secretary. Eventually a message came through, that as of 11am the match was on, but to ring this number.

However, en-route I discovered that my phone battery was flat. Further problems arose when I discovered that the road through St Ives was closed. A long detour followed, during which time the sun actually came out for a while and despite the cold weather I saw steam coming off the ploughed fields in The Fens. I had nearly arrived at the ground when I encountered another road closure. Cue another diversion. I finally arrived at the ground some 40 minutes before kick-off, to see players (the away team) milling around in the car park. I walked round to the changing rooms, which were in a newish building. Here I found the ref and I asked him if the match was on. He told me that he hadn't inspected the pitch yet! Then he walked up and down the centre of it and came back confirming that it was OK. This left me minimal time for a pre-match slurp, but I managed it despite it being a rather rushed experience.

Once back at the ground the game soon started on a very bumpy pitch, but on the sort that apparently doesn't waterlog. Any port in a storm and that arrived almost as soon as the game started and continued until just before it finished. Luckily, I had a brolly which the brave home secretary declined to share with me! The hosts unusual name comes from the fact that they wanted their nickname included in the title. It's possible that they might get promoted at the end of the season and today's win against the spirited bottom of the table was effectively a formality and the visitors didn't have a shot all match. The goals were scored between the 18th and 26th minutes and really the hosts should have scored more. Just one unusual situation in that on 43 minutes the ref in effect told one of the home players or coach, on the sidelines to stop getting on his nerves or he would be banished, to where, I don't know! But later it transpired that he was in fact the ref's uncle and this was all a bit of a wind up! I really enjoyed this day out in the company of the soaked home secretary. There is something peaceful and relaxing about watching football in the beautiful flat fens.

