

TT No.131: *Brian Buck* - Saturday 28th 2018; **Leytonstone United** v Manford Way Reserves; ProKit UK Essex Olympian League Division 3; Kick-Off: 2.30pm; Venue: played at Forest Row Centre, 241 Lodge Lane, Collier Row; Result: 0-7; Attendance: 15 approx.

This was a damp drizzly day and I arrived here at this Community Centre, from my morning match at Stevenage U18's, about 45 minutes before kick-off. I assumed that the match was on, but at this point all I could see were a lot of very smartly dressed Indian people turning up for a party. They must have had a fright when they saw me!

I went into reception to confirm that the game was on. Then I enquired as to if there was a bar here. There is, but it was not open today because of this party. Where's the nearest pub then? I was invited to wait a few minutes and eventually my drinks request was accepted and together with crisps, I cut a lone figure, drinking in what in effect was the foyer! Soon it was time for the game to start.

They have five pitches here and three of them were in use today. Collier Row, also play their home games here. I don't know if this is the same club who once had their own ground a mile away though. What I hadn't realised until I got home was that this was a match between the bottom of the table hosts and the already won the league visitors. In fact, by the end of this game Leytonstone had scored just 8 goals and conceded 159 goals in their league matches. Lady luck was to be against them again today, but there were some positives.

After conceding the opening goal on 12 minutes, an own goal made it 2-0 on 15 minutes. Apparently, it was the 5th own goal this player had scored this season! Then things got worse. A shot was handled on the line and it saw the Leytonstone offender get sent off. Then some double good news. The penalty was saved, but by the player in goal who wasn't actually a keeper! Furthermore, he saved two more penalties in the second half as well! But by half time the hosts were 6-0 down and it was 7-0 by the 46th minute when the scoring stopped and the visitors eased off a bit. Leytonstone actually accepted this defeat with good grace, possibly because this was a good day for them as they had lost 13-1 the previous week!