

TT No. 132: Brian Buck - Saturday 28th April 2018; ACD United v Docklands Albion; Essex Alliance Fenton Cup Final; Venue: played at Dagenham & Redbridge FC; Kick-Off: 6pm; Result: 1-2; Attendance 250 approx.

It was a short drive to my last match of the day and so not only did I have plenty of time to chill out here, I also got a good spot in the car park. I've been anxious to return here for a game for some time as back into the 1970's and early 1980's this was a regular haunt for me on Monday nights. In those days there was no internet or magazines telling us about forthcoming fixtures, so Groundhoppers would meet here and also at Croydon, to swap fixtures verbally instead. My last visit here was on Boxing Day 1986 when I saw Dagenham draw 1-1 with Welling United in a GM Vauxhall Conference match (attendance: 671).

Tonight, and after spending some time watching the TV in the clubhouse, I ventured into the ground shortly before kick-off where I partook in some slightly expensive food, but, needs must.

As for the ground since my previous visit the shallow main stand has been rebuilt. A new big one has appeared behind one goal. The covered terracing on the far side looks much the same, but cleaner and the narrow standing behind the Victoria Road goal also looks much the same.

As for the match it was a noisy passionate affair. The players of both sides looked good, when they weren't misbehaving and it was all very watchable. ACD (or ACDC, as one excited lady told me) took the lead on 26 minutes, but Docklands were level on 51 minutes after a spot kick was followed up by the taker. Then 4 minutes later there was a punch up after someone took exception to a dive. The former was sent off and the latter booked. I consider the former very unlucky to get sent off as when I watched the video later there were at least half a dozen more deserving cases! Driven on by their screaming fans Docklands then managed to get the winner on 85 minutes. Ultimately this game was just exciting as they were when I first started coming here.

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