

**TT No.77: *Brian Buck*** - Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2018; **Hunstanton** v Marshland Saints; UK Van Solutions North West Norfolk League Division 2 Cup 1st Round; Result: 0-1; Attendance: 20 approx.

Today I ended up roughly where I had set my mind on a day or so earlier. But a combination of overnight frost on some already wet pitches meant that no grass pitch was completely immune from the weather conditions today. But as I sat in my car just outside Cambridge railway station, I got the nod from the Hunstanton secretary that the match would be on and so off I went.

A 45-minute train journey later and I was in King's Lynn. From here it was a short walk to the bus station where buses run at least every 15 minutes to Hunstanton and 50 minutes later I had arrived. The bus passed the ground of Ingoldisthorpe, another club on my hit list up here and I could see that their game was also on as their pitch was being marked out as my bus passed by it. Once in Hunstanton I walked up to the ground, which took less than ten minutes, to make sure that the game was on. Then I retreated to the pub for liquid refreshments and something to eat. Railway enthusiasts will be pleased to note that a remnant of the old King's Lynn to Hunstanton railway line still exists. Although the station and surrounding land is now a large car park, a railway signal is still in place!

I arrived back at the ground in good time for the start of the match. This is not a spectacular venue by any means, although the cedar trees, mainly behind one goal, does give it some character. Otherwise the club seem to be the poorer of the relationship between them and the cricket club, where they now change, having once had their own clubhouse. Today Hunstanton, top of Division 2 of this league, were wearing their new yellow shirts, as a result of having a new sponsors deal, thankfully replacing their navy-blue kit, which can clash with the black kit refs wear. Bet you knew the last bit already!

Hunstanton were expected to soundly beat their second from bottom opponents, but things didn't pan out quite as they expected. The first half was tense and both sides looked a bit rusty after the Christmas break. Hunstanton looked the better side, but couldn't translate this into goals. At half time the Hunstanton number 15 suddenly subbed himself, ran to the changing rooms and shouting, "See you later," got changed and drove off. The game restarted and on 49 minutes the visitors surprisingly scored the only goal of the game when what was really just a cross, ended up as a shot. It wasn't that difficult to save, but somehow it slipped through the keeper's hands! It was scored by Nathan Jones, who immediately flew back to Newcastle afterwards to supervise Luton Town's FA Cup defeat there! This goal was a big setback for Hunstanton. On 63 minutes their manager decided to switch to 3-5-2, from what, I wasn't sure! But almost immediately the ball went out of the ground and landed on the roof of a passing car on the adjacent coast road, causing the driver to stop momentarily! On 67 minutes there were cries of "Do we want this or not?" from the hosts. Answers on a postcard please! Then on 67

minutes the manager switched to 4-4-2, but I think that he could have pulled balls out of a hat. They weren't going to win! Credit to the opposition for doing what they needed to though. Afterwards, rather than go home straight away, I went back to the pub, to watch the football scores come in, before making my way home, thereby not annoying Mrs. Buck by getting home too early! Overall an enjoyable day out in the quite seaside town of Hunstanton.

04/20