

**TT No.97: Brian Buck - Saturday 24th February 2018; York Railway Institute v Huntington Rovers; Minster Engineering York League Premier Division; Result: 0-4; Attendance: 25 approx.**

This was a ground I had been meaning to visit for some time, in fact ever since the club were in the Northern Counties East League and it was thirty years ago this year when they actually won Division 1. We got lucky with the trains at Peterborough, where we caught a train to York which was so late that it came in roughly the same time as the next one was due to arrive. I'm still going to claim on the Delay Repay scheme though! As the train pulled in to York on this sunny but very chilly day, I spotted the marked-out pitch of Dringhouses on the east side of us and afterwards I saw the floodlights of York RI, where I would be appearing a few hours later. But before then it was time to have a look around, which was surprisingly a first for me, except for passing through on foot or bus to go elsewhere. I was really impressed by the place and I could have spent much longer here. But we had a mixture of churches and pubs to visit, the former being made easier by one of my very knowledgeable friends and the latter being made easier by my other very knowledgeable friend. Eventually it was time to go our separate ways and so I walked to the ground, which takes roughly 15 minutes from the railway station.

I was a bit worried when on my arrival not only I could not see many people, but a few cars were coming away. Then I saw some players warming up in the distance and I breathed a sigh of relief. I was a bit surprised that the match was not played on the pitch I perceived to be the best one, which had metal barriers all around it, proper dugouts and floodlights. Not sure if they still work though. The tall floodlights I saw from the train illuminate the rugby pitch, but 'my' match was the only thing going on today here. This pitch had metal barriers round three sides with the fourth being roped off and I was later told that this was the pitch they used in their NCEL days, although probably true, it was still hard to believe. York RI are bottom of this division, justifiably so from what I saw today and the visitors (not to be confused with Huntingdon Town) didn't really have to work too hard for their win. They scored all their goals by the 35th minute. York RI did improve after that, marginally initially and more so after the break when the visitors had probably declared. I spent this period, talking to the League Secretary, who was also assessing the ref, who came from Bradford, although he didn't hold that against him! Afterwards I was going to spend some time in the club bar, but they had no TV in it. So, I went back into town and in trying to find a pub which had football on in it, on this rugby day and I ticked off two more pubs while I waited for my friends to return from their York City match. But it was only when I was in the middle of doing something in the gents that I got a phone call saying that they'd caught an earlier train home!

