

TT No.100: *Brian Buck* - Saturday 9th February 2019; **Yelverton** v Fakenham Town Reserves; Hadley & Ottaway Anglian Combination Division 1; Result: 2-3; Attendance: 20 approx.

Heavy rain on Friday afternoon not only scuppered my football watching plans that evening, but meant that I decided to wait until Saturday morning before deciding where to go. Fortunately, I got the heads up on my first-choice match and duly arrived at the Garrick Field an hour and three quarters later.

The ground is named after Mrs Y Garrick following a generous bequest from herself and other grants allowed the ground to be built in 2002. However, you would struggle to find it without prior research, as it is down a long track running parallel with the south side of the adjacent churchyard. In fact, in years gone by the chairman of the football club was the vicar at the time! No parking is allowed on site so you have to park at the nearby village hall instead.

There was hardly anyone at the ground on my arrival, but I soon learned that the local pub had neither food or *Sky Sports*. Then I suddenly remembered that when I visited Poringland Wanderers FC, a couple of miles away, (on 21 April 2001 - v Bungay Town, 2-1, Lovewell Blake Anglian Combination Division 1 match, attendance c.65), there was a chip shop nearby and so, headed over to see if it was still there. It was and I found a pub which had *Sky Sports* as well.

When I returned, shortly before kick-off, there seemed to be just as many non-playing people as there were when I first arrived, an hour earlier. But come kick-off the locals and some visiting fans appeared.

Yelverton are top of this division, but they can be caught, especially after losing to their lower mid-table visitors today. They got off to a poor start and were put under immediate pressure before Fakenham deservedly took the lead on 5 minutes. From then onwards they were chasing the game throughout. Fakenham deservedly scored a second goal on 19 minutes and were technically superior to Yelverton. After a welcome cup of coffee from the pavilion, built in 2016, at half time, the hosts brought on their number 14, who managed not only to blast a penalty kick over the bar, given 88 seconds into the restart, but soon missed a chance so simple that even I could have scored it! At the time of the spot kick a Fakenham player was sin binned for ten minutes and booked for saying some naughty to the ref. On 54 minutes a clever back heel saw Yelverton reduce the arrears. But just before the sin-binned player came back on his side got a third goal and this left Yelverton frantically looking for goals. They attacked persistently and did manage to score again on 83 minutes. But it was all very disorganised and really Fakenham, who had a few first teamers in their side coming back from injury, did everything right, didn't employ gamesmanship and deserved to hang on. If you ask me, Yelverton's biggest problem was that they play in the same colours as the Woolwich Nomads. So, what can you expect!

