

TT No. 121: Steve Hardy - Saturday 23rd March 2019; **Notts County U18** v Burton Albion U18; Football League Youth Alliance North East Division; Kick-Off: 11.00am; Result: 1-1; Admission: Free; Programme: No; Attendance: 36 h/c

A tale of two penalties.

Today's fun and games in Nottingham started with a revisit to the University of Nottingham Sports ground on University Boulevard. This is really the sporting quarter of Nottingham, with the impressive Beeston Hockey club facilities next door, and Nottingham Tennis Centre after that. There are a great many grass pitches here, and it was unfortunate that today's game was on the one pitch I had already visited!

The sun made a brave effort to come out for once, but it was still coat, hat and gloves weather for me, and the 35 other folk who turned out to watch the U18's of Notts County and Burton Albion do battle. After a fairly dull first half had ended goalless, visitors Burton finally broke the deadlock on 47 minutes when they were awarded a fairly blatant penalty. Plenty of huff and puff followed from both teams before County were awarded their own penalty on 87 minutes, to snatch a point at the death. County are joint second bottom in the table and looked it. We heard someone in the crowd saying this was the best he had seen them play in 6 weeks at the end of the game. They must have been really poor during that spell, is all I can say about that.

Access to the ground was not a problem, and I was able to walk round all four sides taking photographs, including the area where all the scouts had congregated. During the more-dull spells of play, I had positioned myself in just the right spot to take an action match photo with two trams crossing each other as a background. For one reason or another I never quite managed it. That is the trouble with modern footballers, isn't it? They never are in the right place when you need them to be.

04/20