

TT No.142: *Brian Buck* - Wednesday 24th April 2019; **Houghton Athletic** v Sporting Lewsey Park; Bedfordshire County League Division 2; Venue: played at Parkside Drive Recreation Ground, Houghton Regis; Result: 0-4; Attendance: 15 approx.

This ground can be found just off the new Junction 11A of the M1 as you go on towards Dunstable. After avoiding the Houghton Regis Leisure Centre, where you got the impression that none of tonight's players had ever set foot, you eventually find the ground on your right and it's right behind the Go Houghton Bar & Restaurant. I have to say that if I was a patron of this establishment then watching a load of sweaty, un-shapely men kicking a ball around while I ate my evening meal would probably put me off my food though! But viewing the game whilst eating was possible.

This was a friction free evening and the match was played out on a bumpy pitch which in parts looked like a dried out river bed. There were loads of cracks in the pitch, but they were not wide enough to prevent the game from taking place. After a few days of hot weather this was a rather cold evening and furthermore the low setting sun was a problem for the players at times. There were other activities going on around us, such as some kiddies football training. In the first half few chances were created and for the first 20 minutes or so the hosts seemed to have the better of things. But it was the visitors, going for the title, who took the lead on 34 minutes via a header from a corner, with the goal coming as they were just starting to get into it. Their second goal came on 60 minutes, from another header, immediately after their manager had made a substitution and a tactical change, a fact which seemed to surprise him when I told him he'd done this! The third goal came on 76 minutes after a defender miskicked the ball to the scorer and the same player got the final goal on 81 minutes, although some might credit the goal to a defender. The visitors had played well once they settled down whilst it was a disappointing night for the hosts who finished the evening in fourth place.

04/20