

TT No.147: Brian Buck - Wednesday 1st May 2019; **Elstow Abbey** v Sporting Lewsey Park; Bedfordshire County League Division 2; Result: 5-2; Attendance: 40 approx.

This game attracted a goodly number of groundhoppers from around the country, a fact which surprised Elstow's chairman when he found out where some of them had come from, Leicester and Bournemouth being the furthest, I think. The fact that the club are serial programme issuers helped and they have been for many years. But also, there was something on the game tonight in that if Elstow won then they would win the league. If they lost then Lewsey still stood a chance.

As the game kicked off the visiting manager told one of his players that he wanted him to be an annoying **** tonight. He probably failed though, as he was subbed on 67 minutes! The first half was extremely feisty and it was amazing that the ref didn't book anyone for dissent. The hosts took the lead on 5 minutes, doubling it on 19 minutes, although Leswey had missed a good chance to make it 1-1 before then. But they did pull a goal back on 27 minutes when a looping header seemed to go in off a defender's shoulder. However, it was 3-1 to Elstow by half time. Lewsey were fuming at this point as they felt that a lot of marginal decisions had gone against them. After the break they played well for a while, as the game became less feisty. But as we moved to the last 15 minutes of the match Elstow scored twice in two minutes to put the outcome beyond doubt, although Lewsey did get the final goal of the evening on 86 minutes.

When all was said and done Elstow were well worth their win and once they calmed down Lewsey accepted this with good grace. By the end the league secretary had turned up to present Elstow with the trophy and they hope that this is the springboard to further success as they aim to be back in the Premier division before, they celebrate their centenary in 2020/21. The whole of Bedford and beyond will be invited to that party!