

TT No.166: Brian Buck - Saturday 29th June 2019; Foulsham v Longham; Friendly Match; Result: 3-3; Attendance: 35 approx.

My match selection today was influenced by the need to be certain that my chosen match was actually on. I was going to go to a game at Bourne Town, but the Lincs FA, I suspect, put a stop to that, invoking the ‘no football’ in June rule. Having seen a game at one of the Norfolk FA’s own Development Centres earlier in the month I knew that I was on fairly safe ground here, although they told them that this was a combination of a training game or a Charity Match to ‘get away’ with it. In truth it was neither.

We’d arrived here early enough to spend some time in the local pub. I had to wait to be served as the bar man seemed to be serving a lady sitting at the bar. But he stopped when he saw me and asked me what I wanted. “I’ll wait until you’ve finished that lady off.” I told him. She interjected and said in a rather assertive manner, “He’s not finishing me off!” “OK then, I’ll have a pint of cider!” I told the barman. I’d been to this ground before, on a very cold day on 8 January 2011 when I saw Foulsham beat Downham Town Reserves 4-2 in a Gleave & Associates Anglian Combination Division 2 - attendance: 25 approx.

Today the weather was almost completely opposite with temperature hovering around the 30 degrees mark. As a football club, Foulsham don’t exist anymore, but today they put out a side, wearing Aylsham FC shirts, featuring many of the players who helped them win the Norfolk Junior Cup in 2010. The match was played over four lots of twenty minutes and bearing in mind the weather, this was sensible. The first half saw Foulsham being the better side. They led 2-1 at the break and their players looked as though they are still playing regular competitive football. They made it 3-1 within a minute of the restart, but thereafter they seemed to tire, thus allowing Longham back into the match. Goals on 47 and 79 minutes saw them get a draw, but perhaps ultimately, they deserved to win. On the way home we stopped off to look at a couple of stations on the Mid-Norfolk railway line. North Elmham was nothing special, but County School station about two miles further north was a gem. Three platforms, a station building, a level crossing and a DMU train parked in the station was a sight to behold, even for non-train spotters like me. A decent day out to finish off my season, despite the unbearable temperatures.