

**TT No.29: Steve Hardy** - Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2018; **Boldmere St Michael BFL** v Naija; Birmingham & District League Division Two; Kick-Off: 2.30 pm; Result: 0-0; Admission: Free; Programme: No; Attendance: 11 (h/c)

It is only 13 miles from my morning match in Rowley Regis to this second game on the outskirts of Sutton Coldfield. However, when you add in the 'Birmingham traffic' equation, you end up sitting in your car for over an hour and finally arrive stressed and vowing 'never again'.

Boldmere St Michaels have entered a team in to the Birmingham & District league this season. Not sure what level it is, (Reserves, 'A' team?) but they are not playing on the Mike's 3G pitch every week for sure. This game was played at the Braemar Road playing fields, which after driving up and down Braemar Road several times, I found is accessed up a narrow drive marked Highclare Sports Field immediately on your left as you enter Braemar Road, from Stonehouse Road.

Quite a good set up really, with a changing room complex at the end of the drive, plenty of room for parking, and at least three grass pitches available. On one of these other pitches, the Mike's Veterans team were in action, and I soon spotted that a small tent had been erected next to this pitch where teas, coffees and sweets were available for a small donation.

I have put off talking about the match itself, as my long run without a 0-0 draw was always going to end with a bump here. It could have been salvaged when Boldmere won a penalty just before half time, but an excellent save by the Naija keeper put an end to any hopes I had of a goal.

I thought Naija were the better team in reality, but they really must stop being so selfish when presented with two or even three one-on-ones with only the keeper to beat. At least three times the winger broke through and selfishly shot at goal, when he had two unmarked colleagues standing in front of an empty net. According to Wikipedia, Naija is a Nigerian word for Freedom. Well, they certainly played with freedom today, although losing their discipline towards the end when they had a player sent off for, well, being a prat basically, could have cost them the game, but a draw was the least they deserved.