

TT No.47: Brian Buck - Saturday 20th October 2018; **Herstmonceux** v Icklesham Casuals; Macron Store Hastings East Sussex League Division 1; Result: 3-6; Attendance: 10 approx.

Today I took my wife to see her auntie who lives in Woodingdean, near Brighton, which had the advantage in that I was well fed both before and after the game I went to see while the pair of them were yapping away in my absence. Initially I chose this match because not only is there a very attractive castle not far away, which I never got to see, but the hosts were allegedly issuing programmes. However, when I confirmed the game on the previous night, I discovered that this is no longer the case. I was told that the club have had a change of management, which equates to the fact that the editor has left the club! Anyway, despite this setback I decided to go with it anyway.

You can get here by bus, an hourly service from either Polegate or Bexhill. I arrived at the ground just under an hour before kick-off and saw that things were on the move. Icklesham were getting changed from their cars, as there are no dressing rooms on site. There was no sign of the hosts. I was told that they walk up from The Woolpack Inn, a pub in the village, about a third of a mile away. But as I drove to the said pub I neither passed them or saw them in the pub. Later I was told that there are some dressing rooms between the two venues. So, it was now time for a relaxed slurp and to watch the end of the Chelsea v Man United game at the same time, with the former equalising in the last minute of injury time. This must have upset the landlord's dog as it immediately crapped close to the dining area!

I then returned to the ground where they were just about to start. The club committee, which seemed to be made up of three people, had erected a gazebo from under which hot tea, coffee and biscuits were sold. There was also a connection between the two clubs in that they are both sponsored by *Littlewood*, a local fencing company, seemingly run by two brothers. They each sponsor one of the teams! No wonder we got a catalogue of disasters during the game! Then it was time for the match to start, on this undulating pitch, which slopes in all directions. The visitors went 2-0 up against the bottom of the table hosts within 6 minutes. But by the 21st minute it was all square and then the hosts took the lead on 35 minutes. However, on 45(+2) minutes Icklesham equalised. The second half was fairly even until the 72nd minute when the ref decided to give the visitors a spot kick. But I and the 'unbiased' home coach thought that the foul was committed just outside the area, but the ref 'won'. This displeased the home players and after Icklesham scored again, five minutes later one of their number was sin binned. But the bloke (the goalie actually) who called the ref an 'effing you know what', wasn't carded at all. He had to let that one go, because he couldn't find out who swore at him, as no one would admit to it! Then on 85 minutes Icklesham scored their 6th goal and then another home player was sin

binned! When I went to get their scorers names at the end I was described as “the man from the papers wants to know!” Overall, probably just another Saturday in deepest East Sussex!

04/20