

TT No.57: Brian Buck - Saturday 10th November 2018; **Chesterfield** v Billericay Town; Emirates FA Cup 1st Round; Result: 1-1; Attendance: 2,952.

When I discovered that it was only a fiver to get in here for old boys like myself, I jumped at it, slowly! The only other time I've seen a Chesterfield home match was at their old Saltergate ground on 24th July 1985, when Spurs won there in a pre-season friendly (Waddle (2) Roberts & Chedozie - attendance: 5,495). But the highlight of that day was watching the last half hour of Derbyshire playing Yorkshire at cricket beforehand, which remains the only time I've ever seen any county cricket. But I did get to see Geoff Boycott fielding! They moved to their current ground in the summer of 2010 and outside of the sponsors name for the new ground it doesn't seem to have a proper name and the best I can come up with is the Chesterfield FC Stadium, 1866 Sheffield Road, the name they use when International games are played here.

Today I travelled to the game by train and then walked a mile and a half to the ground, where I picked up my match ticket. I thought that my luck was in when I opened the envelope as there was a fiver in it as well as the match ticket. Turned out that they'd charged me twice for the game! Then it was off to the pub across the road, *The Spireite*. But as good and handy as it was, there was only one real cider available, Mango Cider. I didn't like it, but it took me three pints of the stuff to be sure. Then it was time for the match. Most of the crowd were housed either in the main west stand or the south stand of this 10,505-capacity stadium. The Billericay fans, about 250 of them were in one end of the east stand. Overall, I thought that there were more people here than was stated. As for the game, it wasn't great. Chesterfield took the lead with a headed goal on 17 minutes and Billericay equalised with a well hit 20-yarder on 52 minutes. They could be pleased with their afternoons work, but not their timewasting. The hosts meanwhile seemed incapable of responding to manager Martin Allen's encouragement and perhaps they never will. They only looked like scoring when he brought on two big lumps to play up front later on and one of them should have started. But this was all the ref's fault according to some fans who believed that he was just as crooked as the famous church spire! After the game I nearly got locked in as I was engrossed in watching the final scores come through on the TV, not noticing that I was last to leave. Luckily a steward came along and let me out through a side door. Overall a decent day out watching higher level football for a change!