

TT No.68: *Steve Hardy* - Saturday 1st December 2018; **Brocton U21s** v Cheadle Town Reserves; Staffordshire FA Challenge Cup Quarter-Final; Result: 3-0; Admission: Free; Programme: No; Attendance: 32 h/c

As all of my planned fixtures disappeared one by one, I texted 5 local clubs with the intention of going to the first club that replied positively. That turned out to be a very easy choice, as only one club bothered to reply, and that was Brocton. What the club didn't tell me though, was that the match wasn't being played on the main pitch, but on the one that is next to it! Didn't bother me that, as I hadn't seen a game on the second pitch before, but I can think of several groundhoppers who would have driven away once they discovered that.

This match was in the quarter finals of the Staffordshire Challenge Cup. This is the lowest of the three county cups organised by the Staffordshire FA, and features plenty of reserve teams, several U21 sides as well as clubs from the lower divisions of the Staffs Senior league. Brocton play in the under 21 division of the Midland league, and Cheadle Town Stiffs are in the Staffordshire Senior league.

The match itself turned out to be a comfortable win for the Brocton team. They took the lead through a penalty in the 27th minute, when a Cheadle defender decided to jump up and punch a cross away for no apparent reason, and led 1-0 at the break. Their second goal came on 71 minutes when a corner was headed in and the 3rd arrived on 77 minutes to wrap up a decisive victory. Cheadle gave it a good shot, but their heads went down once the second goal went in, and that was that really.

I always enjoy visiting Brocton, a club who do things correctly both on and off the pitch. A top afternoon out and only 10 miles from home too!