

TT No.83: Steve Hardy - Saturday 5th January 2019; **Balsall & Berkswell v Gurdwara GNP**; Coventry Alliance Division One; Result: 4-0; Admission: Free; Programme: No; Attendance: 11 h/c

A definite case of CBA today, as I really didn't want to travel any great distance for my fix. Luckily, the Coventry Alliance is only about 30 miles away and the football served up is generally very good.

I eventually chose Balsall Common as my destination. The two villages that make up this merged club are midway between Coventry and Solihull and the team are the adult side of a very successful junior outfit. Their Lavender Hall Lane ground is most impressive for the level they play at, with an FA funded clubhouse/dressing room block, a huge car park, and several grass pitches for all ages.

Today's visitors are rock bottom Gurdwara GNP. They have only won once all season, and the 3 points they gained then have been taken away for an infringement of some sort.

The match itself looks to have been one-way traffic doesn't it? In fact, though it wasn't until late in the second half that B & B scored their last two goals to make the game safe. I thought GNP tried very hard, but just didn't ever look like scoring. In fact, I don't think they had a shot on target during the entire 90 minutes, so that is obviously why they are bottom of the division.

With two very zealous club linesmen, we had a great many debatable offside decisions throughout. Ironically, one that wasn't given, on 12 minutes, led to B & B taking the lead, and they lead 1-0 at half time. Just 5 minutes for the break and off we went again. The second half was more comfortable for B & B really. Despite missing a penalty on 55 minutes, they did manage a second on 66 minutes, and then a couple more in the last 10 minutes wrapped things up.

Overall, excellent entertainment. When I arrived, I was mistaken for the Ref, as he hadn't turned up by then. Luckily, the real Ref turned up 10 minutes before KO, and was very good, I thought. He handled all the moaning and abuse very well, and even earned praise from B & B on their *twitter* account.