

TT No.85: *Brian Buck* - Wednesday 2nd January 2019; **Walthamstow** v Redbridge; Essex Senior League Errington Challenge Cup 2nd Round; Venue: played at Wadham Lodge Stadium; Result: 5-0; Attendance:81.

I'd been meaning to revisit this ground for some time as my only other time I'd seen a game on this particular pitch in the complex was on 21st August 1985 when I watched Pennant beat Crown & Manor 3-1 in a London Spartan League Premier Division match (attendance: 50 approx.). However, I have seen a few matches on the adjacent 3G pitch in the meantime. In those days the ground was rather basic, but I'm pleased to report that it now looks much smarter, even if it has a lived-in look about it.

There is full length covered terracing behind both goals, a bit of uncovered terracing in between the dugouts on the far side and a decent size main stand with good viewing sightlines. In short, the place has character. Walthamstow are last season's Waltham Forest, not to be confused with the other ground-sharers here, Leyton Athletic, who are last season's Wadham Lodge. It seems that around this part of East London no club keeps their name for very long.

As for the match, it was initially full of huff and puff with much of the talk amongst the Groundhoppers around me being about the sad passing of Les Bull and Colin Kempster, both well respected Groundhoppers. The former would have been in his element here tonight. Then on 28 minutes the game finally kick-started into action when the ball was bundled in almost on the line from an in-swinging corner. The hosts then doubled their lead on 47 minutes from the spot following a difficult to see handball. The same player then hit home an impressive 30 yarder on 65 minutes and then seven minutes later a visiting player was red carded after getting a second yellow one. The game was now over but when the next goal went in on 74 minutes the home fans behind the goal apparently started shouting out, "We want four!" seemingly oblivious to the fact that their heroes had already obliged! However, when Walthamstow did get a fifth goal on 82 minutes, no more demands were made on the team. Overall a lovely return to a venue in an area East London I don't get to as much as I would like these days.