

TT No.90: *Steve Hardy* - Saturday 19th January 2019; **Netherton Tigers** v Armada; Birmingham & District League Division Six; Result: 3-0; Admission: Free; Programme: No; Attendance: 4 h/c

Back to watching my favourite league in the world, this week. During the previous week I had been delighted to discover that two of the league's clubs had moved to new grounds, making 4 that I now need to recomplete the league. Two of those were at home today, so I decided to go to the club that first responded positively to my 'is it on?' text. That was Netherton, so off I went.

Their new ground is in Cradley Heath, at the Bearmore Playing Fields. This is basically a local park, with kiddies play area, a large car park, dressing rooms and two full size football pitches. As I drove in to the car park, my phone went off, and it was Shahid, the Secretary of Netherton, kindly ringing to tell me the game was definitely on. What a lovely man he is. He does everything for the club, even paying for equipment etc out of his own pocket, and we soon bonded over such things as both of us having Mo Salah in our fantasy league teams!

The match itself had been billed as the runners up spot showdown, with the two teams in 3rd and 4th places in the division 6 table. The result looks like a one-sided match, but Armada played their part, and if they had anyone to finish off their many chances, they could well have taken something from the game. As it was, Netherton scored on 4 minutes, and after a long spell of Armada pressure, they scored a second on 44 minutes, for a 2-0 half time lead. The Armada manager reminded me at half-time that the last time I had watched his boys play, they had been 3-1 down with 10 minutes to play, and won 4-3. Could they do the same today? Well, no, is the answer to that one, as Netherton defended very well, before scoring the 3rd goal after 80 minutes.

Finally, a brief word about our diminutive lady referee today. She was superb, and even a 22 man punch up didn't faze her. Can't give you her name, but she certainly wasn't Bob Griffin as the fixtures would have you believe!