

TT No.96: *Brian Buck* - Saturday 26th January 2019; **Castle Cary** v AFC Brislington; uhsport Somerset County League Division 2; Result: 4-1; Attendance: 20 approx.

Once again, I was fortunate to be given a lift today, with my driver and co-passenger going on to watch Street play, I was dropped off here instead. January is a good time for driving and there were no traffic jams either on the M25 or at Stonehenge where there were quite a lot of people circling around waiting for the match to start! No pre-match food today, but the bar was open and I made use of it whilst I watched Accrington Stanley play Derby County on the TV. Their pitch looked awful, but it was nowhere near as bad as the one I was about to see today's match take place on.

Meanwhile on this cold blustery day rain was imminent and I was told that if you can't see Glastonbury Tor, about 8 miles away, you should head to the clubhouse immediately, as it was about to rain. This turned out to be correct in that in the first half I could sometimes see it, but not at all in the second half. As the game started so I walked round the pitch, looking for the best view of the game. The sensible place to stand would have been along the side where the permanent brick dug outs were. On this side there was a paved footpath and at one point a wall to lean against. The footpath was a public right of way and was frequently used by people going to and from the town centre. However, I couldn't get a clear view of all of the pitch from here, so I walked back round to the clubhouse side. As I did so I saw the full nature of this undulating pitch and from one corner it was a struggle to see all of the diagonally opposite corner flag. Also, at this end the pitch sloped dramatically down from the penalty area to the goal. The other half of the pitch was flatter. Well, as flat as you are going to get in these parts!

Castle Cary opened the scoring on ten minutes when a blocked shot was followed up and it seemed for a long while that the worsening wet and very windy conditions would prevent any more goals being scored. But on 63 minutes the hosts doubled their lead and then tripled it five minutes after that when a wind assisted free kick was parried by the keeper to the scorer who nodded the ball back over him. A further five minutes later Castle Cary concluded their scoring for the day. Brislington then deservedly pulled a goal back with a curling 25-yard direct free kick which kept low and out of the sight of the keeper. Afterwards it was back into the bar to wait for my chauffer to reappear. While I waited my genial hosts brought me some of the hot food the players were having and this was exceptionally well appreciated. This was washed down with a couple of cans of Scrumpy Jack to bring to a close an enjoyable day in awful conditions, but also one in which I was thankfully well looked after by my hosts.