

TT No.103: Brian Buck - Saturday 1st February 2020; **Broadbridge Heath v Saltdean United**; Southern Combination Premier Division; Venue: played at High Wood Hill Sports Ground; Result: 2-0; Attendance: 175. (120 approx. head count!)

This was my destination today, as soon as I found out that the Peterborough to Horsham trains were running. My one arrived about ten minutes late and thus I missed a bus I may not have been able to catch anyway, had my train run to time. An hourly service, Bus 63 runs from Bay A at 51 minutes past the hour at the bus station to *Tesco* Broadbridge Heath gets you there and the last return bus leaves at 5.28pm. When I visited their previous ground on 20 April 1991 to see them lose 3-1 to Chichester City in a *Unijet* Sussex County League Division 2 match, (Attendance: 35 approx.), I walked it from Horsham station, but although I could have done so today, 29 years later, the legs weren't quite so willing!

Anyway, by now I had latched onto Barry from Crawley, who I haven't seen for a few years now, but once you have met him you don't forget him and between us, we found the ground. It wasn't that easy to find either. First of all, we found the hosts previous running track ground, which is still there, complete with dugouts. Then we headed through the car park in a southerly direction and soon we spied the ground. There was a gate in the fence near the Leisure Centre and soon we were inside.

After some ample refreshments we were ready for the action. I walked round to the far side and sat in the seats there. From here the view was pleasant. There was some covered standing behind one goal, but most people stood on the clubhouse side, which would look attractive outside of winter, as there are a number of trees dotted around. However, had I stood on the clubhouse side then the view wouldn't have looked so pretty as behind the seats and at a distance was the raised dual carriageway where the A264 meets the A24.

The match was between two lower placed sides in the league and at times the game reflected this. The first half saw little to excite, even though it wasn't for the lack of trying. On 24 minutes though a Heath player was sin binned and on 37 minutes a lino became injured and was replaced by a seemingly qualified spectator. Oh yes, the club welcomes well behaved dogs and the two I met here were! It seemed that neither side were capable of scoring from open play and so it proved. Therefore, it was fitting that both the Heath goals came from the spot, firstly on 52 minutes after the keeper barged a player illegally and on 73 minutes after a gentle push. Saltdean did make an effort towards the end though, but overall, there was little between the sides and on another day the visitors may have won.

After more refreshments it was time to go home. Barry was also helpful here as he knew where to get off the bus to make it easier to get to the station and the 17.55pm train was caught, as it would have been had we walked from the ground.

Overall, I enjoyed the day out. For a new ground, it was well designed and the people and facilities were smashing. It seems that the pitch drains well, as I'm told that others came here after their games were postponed today.

04/20