

TT No.115: Steve Hardy - Saturday 29th February 2020; **Ripley Town** v Wirksworth Ivanhoe; Central Midlands League Division One Cup; Kick-Off: 2.30pm; Result: 2-3; Admission: Free; Programme: No; Attendance: 16 h/c

Yet more plastic fun for me today, and for once I was spoilt for choice by having at least three new venues to choose from. One in Walsall or two in Derby. In the end I went for the one that I thought was the least used, and that was at the Lees Brook Community School in Chaddesden, Derby. Once again, a club that was fed up with not playing week after week due to the rain, had proactively gone out looking for a 3G pitch they could use to get a game played. Ripley to Derby isn't exactly close, but I understand this was the most reasonable cost they could find, with some Leisure Centres seemingly upping their prices to take advantage of desperate clubs.

The venue is the usual floodlit 3G pitch in a cage. No spectator standing area here, but the Referee kindly allowed those hoppers that wanted to, to come in and stand down one side. Strangely, only four people bothered, with the rest peering through the mesh from the outside. What we got was an excellent end to end game with Ivanhoe much the better side in the first half where they led 2-0 at the break. Their *twitter* account says it was a good win for them, although the overall performance was poor, with plenty of room for improvement. It certainly was in the second half, as they allowed Ripley, who had offered very little up front all game, to get a couple of goals back before squeaking a 3-2 win.

Driving home after the game my depression suddenly returned with a vengeance. It is amazing how quickly my mood can change, and I felt really miserable once again having been quite happy at the football just half an hour earlier. Sarah *Satnav* tried to cheer me up by not sending me home via Truro for a change, but to no avail unfortunately. Ho hum, it will soon be next Saturday, and maybe, just maybe, a game on grass.