

**TT No.122: Brian Buck** - Saturday 14th March 2020; East Ruston v Hickling;  
Walcott Lighthouse Inn North East Norfolk League Division 2 Section 1; Result: 3-1;  
Attendance: 20 approx.

With most of fixtures at Step 6 and above called off because of the dreaded Coronavirus, it was down to one of the feeder leagues to get my fix today. So, not wanting to catch anything on public transport, apart from a train or two of course, I elected to drive to my game and I picked one that is, as far, as I know, very difficult to do by public transport. It took me just over two hours to get here and the ground is adjacent to the village hall, not that they really need one, as this is a very small village. The changing rooms are wooden and here I bumped into the jovial home management team, who pointed me in the direction of the local pub.

After my recent experience of paying £4 for a pulled pork roll at the Hampshire FA ground, I thought that I couldn't do any worse here. I was wrong. The chilli con carne with pasta with garlic bread (two slices) for £4.50 looked tempting and when it arrived it tasted nice. Problem was that it came in a large coffee mug! Back at the ground I mentioned this to my 'trip advisor' who told me, "I forgot to tell you that the food's not very good!" Perhaps the clue was that no one came around to ask me if I was enjoying my meal, possibly because I didn't give them time, as I ate it in a few mouthfuls!

Anyway, by now we were ready to go and once the rotund ref had finished off his fag the game soon got underway. The pitch, a bumpy one, was rather hemmed in on all sides, but it was not unattractive and daffodils dotted around made it look quite pleasant. They also have a small wooden stand here, but recently its roof got blown off! Eventually though I watched the match sat on a tree stump. It was a good honest game contested by players of varying ages and ability. But both sides gave their all and this was an enjoyable afternoon. The first half saw Hickling start well, but without being able to score from the chances they created. Then the hosts took over and they took the lead on 31 minutes with a close-range effort. In the second half I was joined by the home lino who offered me some of his biscuits! 'His' side saw off the game with two goals in a minute on the 60-minute mark, the first of these coming from a good one touch passing movement, difficult on a pitch like this. On 79 minutes Hickling got the goal they probably deserved, from the spot, given for what I would call, an ordinary foul, but in the ref's eyes serious enough for the perpetrator to be shown a yellow card. Soon the game was at an end and after having a farewell chat with the home manager and a visit to the WC in the away dressing room, where I might have caught the virus off this lot, I made my way home. As I left the ref was having another fag! When will my next game be?