

TT No.65: *Brian Buck* - Saturday 9th November 2019; **Christchurch Ware v Holy Rood**; Herts & Borders Churches League Division 2; Venue: played at Broxbourne Recreation Ground; Kick-Off: 10.30am; Result: 2-5; Attendance: 7.

The email I sent to the ref on the previous night paid dividends, as he didn't reply, actually meaning that either the game was on, or it was off because he had forgotten to tell me. Luckily, my first observation was correct! However, had it been off then it might have been for fog rather than waterlogging! Apparently, when the captain of the home side arrived some 90 minutes before kick off the ground was covered in fog. Even by the time I arrived, it was still misty. But eventually the sun came out for a while, until it clouded over, the prelude for afternoon and evening rain.

Anyway, the other surprise here was the width of the pitch, which must have been down to the bare minimum and you could see where the lines were from my previous visit here in late September. The club share the ground with two other sides and it was marked out by one of those, rather than the Council. The match started a few minutes late because both I and the ref got stuck in a queue of roadworks traffic on the way to the ground. Because it was, a misty yellow ball was used.

A home victory was expected today but only because the visitors had yet to win a game this season. So Holy Rood couldn't believe their luck when they took the lead on 3 minutes. They scored again on 6 minutes and another one went in on 14 minutes. Suddenly life was great for them. Then after they went 4-0 up by the 30th minute, a deflated Christchurch side had a further set back on 45(+1) minutes, they had a goal disallowed. I never found out why, as from my angle, behind the other goal waiting to head off to the café to get a cup of tea, it looked as though someone headed the ball home. But I was in no position to judge, although Christchurch were still discussing it with the ref during the half-time break. On 52 minutes there was an unusual incident, when a home player was asked by the ref and friend, ex-Spurs player, Bobby Scarth, to book himself! Bobby is almost completely deaf, but not totally as some players find out from time to time! Today he showed the player concerned a yellow card and then gave him his notebook (and a pen!) to write down his name. Three minutes later Holy Rood scored their fifth goal. Thereafter they seemed to declare and suddenly the hosts came to life, far too late though. On 74 minutes they scored from the spot following a handball and then on 83 minutes with a header. Overall a decent morning's entertainment.