

TT No.89: Brian Buck - Saturday 11th January 2020; **Norsemen** v Dorkinians; Southern Amateur League Senior Cup 3rd Round; Kick-Off: 1.30pm; Result: 4-2; Attendance: 15 approx.

After the previous game had finished, I arrived at my next game with just under half an hour to go before kick-off. In the old days the upstairs bar would be thriving on match days before games started but today although part of it was open, to allow people to watch the lunchtime footy on the TV, the actual bar wasn't open. I was hoping at the very least to get some food down me before the start of the match. I was going to watch the game from the balcony, but didn't because I was fearful that I might get blown over by the strong wind. So, I went down pitch side and lo and behold I found that there was a mobile food bar here instead. Soon my needs were satisfied and I then watched the match from the overhang to the changing rooms, also pitch side.

Norsemen are a well-established Southern Amateur League club and they still run at least seven Saturday sides. Perhaps their most famous player, for me at least, was Richard Blanchflower, son of Danny, the skipper of the Spurs Double side in 1960/1. I'm pleased to say than I've seen both of them play over the years. As for today's game the visitors took the lead on 4 minutes from close range but the hosts were level three minutes later after the keeper was lobbed from the edge of the area. Then on 25 minutes we had a problem which took some time to resolve. One of the Dorkinians' players suddenly went down on the other side of the pitch and there he stayed for at least five minutes. Dorkinians had one sub and no other officials whatsoever, except perhaps a spectator who was no more than that. Eventually he was persuaded to walk off the pitch, but no sooner had he done this then he lay prostrate, face down, for ages as the game then continued. Someone soon took a chair around for him and later he was wrapped in tin foil. The latter seemed to work, and fearful of getting roasted he eventually got up and sat on the chair. I was told that he declined the offer of an ambulance and he reckoned that he had cracked a rib. He'd done this before apparently! Part of me wondered if he actually had a *National Insurance* number, but while this was going on there was a game to be watched. On 36 minutes a 30-yarder put Norseman into the lead and in the second half further goals on 73 and 83 minutes sealed the hosts passage into the next round although a goal from the tiring visitors two minutes later made the margin of victory for the hosts about right. After the match had finished, I partook of some refreshments in the now open bar, before going on to my third match of the day, Spurs v Liverpool, a 5.30pm kick off.