

TT No.94: Steve Hardy - Saturday 18th January 2020; **Portsmouth U18** v Bristol Rovers U18; EFL Youth Alliance South West Division; Kick-Off: 12.00 noon; Result: 3-2; Admission: Free; Team-sheet: No; Attendance: 47 h/c

After the drenching the county got in the week leading up to this Saturday, it was pretty obvious that very little would be played on grass, so I looked around for yet more plastic pitches. Luckily, this game was switched on Friday from the usual Pompey venue to a 4G pitch at the University of Portsmouth so it fitted the bill perfectly. The University of Portsmouth have a huge footprint at their Furze Lane sports ground in Southsea, including 3 x 4G pitches, grass football pitches and grass rugby pitches as well. My match today was played on one of the 4G pitches with hockey being played on a second pitch nearby. After the game I noticed a football game was just starting on a grass pitch behind the pitch we were on. Turned out to be Baffins Reserves v Christchurch Reserves and I did consider staying to watch it, but eventually stuck to my original plan, more of which later.

I thought this U18s game was very good indeed. It looked as if Portsmouth were going to run riot at one stage, as they raced into a 3-0 lead with a penalty on 7 minutes and 2 more on 14 and 28 minutes. Rovers got more into the game after that and managed to pull one back just before half time on 40 minutes.

After the break it was game on when Rovers scored a second on 52 minutes, and with plenty of time left they looked the more likely to score to me. They gave it their everything though, missed a couple of chances, but just couldn't find an equaliser, as Pompey made a plethora of substitutions to waste time.

The noon kick-off gave me just enough time to drive up to Havant after this game finished for match number 2.