

MOLTEN SPORTS SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

NEWSLETTER No. 3
By Bill Scholes

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There were only three hat tricks this weekend. Reece Lyons of Hertford Town topped the list with 4 goals, whilst Emeko Nwanodi of Hoddesdon Town and David Douglas of Markyate both came up with three.

FA CUP – PRELIMINARY ROUND

There were a total of 12 matches involving SSMFL sides in this preliminary Round, with the result that 4 clubs are definitely through to the next round, and 3 will be involved in mid week replays. Congratulations to the 4 definitely through – their bank managers will be well chuffed – and best of luck to the 3 who have to play again.

Pride of place must surely go to Division One **Royston Town**, who journeyed to **AFC Hayes** (Brook House in old money) who play in BGB Southern League South & West (i.e. two levels higher) on a boiling hot afternoon and came away with a very well deserved 3-1 victory. From the start it was clear that Royston were the better organised side, moving up and down as a unit, and the Crows took the lead in the 15th minute when Ryan Lockett followed up on a Craig Hammond shot that the keeper could only parry. A moment of defensive madness gifted Hayes an equaliser 3 minutes later, but they failed to profit from their good fortune and in the 34th minute Luke Robins skipped past a static Hayes defence to slot home in the bottom corner. Just before half time Hammond converted Lockett's pass from close range for the Crows third to make the half time Jaffa's even sweeter. No further scoring in the second half but Royston continued to make their hosts look second best in all departments, and with newly elected Chairman Steve Jackson wearing a wide grin, they now look forward to hosting Ryman Premier League side Hendon in the next round. **Oxhey Jets** are another side who beat opponents from a higher league – in their case it was **Iford** from Ryman One North and the result was an emphatic 5-2 victory. The Jets, inspired no doubt by the sight of the new Wembley Arch from their ground, were quickly into their stride and went two up in the first 16 minutes with goals from Tim O'Mara and Jamie Arthur. Paul Turner added a third just after half time, and although Iford pulled one back through Chris Thomas, Arthur, again, and Gary Page added two more before Thomas scored his second for the visitors in added on time. **Chalfont St. Peter** hosted Hellenic League Premier Division opposition for the second round running - this time it was **Harrow Hill**, and again the result was the same – a 2-1 win for the Saints. The visitors scored first after 50 minutes, but unfortunately it was in their own net, to give Saints the lead, but not to be outdone, the Saints returned the favour and levelled the scores with another OG. Ray Walsh did however, score at the right end with 15 minutes left to give the Saints a prestigious home tie with Gloucester City. **Biggleswade United** won the battle of the SSMFL sides, defeating hosts **Tring Athletic** 2-1, thanks to a brace

from Luke Lincoln., his second a twice taken penalty. Thanks to a 7th minute goal from Justin Gordon, **Aylesbury Vale** were a minute away from going through in their game with **Burnham** only for the visitors to pop up with an equaliser from Geoff Brown, and take the Vale back to the leafy Beeches for a Tuesday night replay. **Harefield United** and **Saffron Walden Town** must do it all over again as their game finished in a 1-1 draw – the Hares did score both goals but unfortunately one was in their own net. **Broxbourne Boro** recorded a meritorious 1-1 draw away to **Dulwich Hamlet** on Sunday, a late equaliser from Ryan Wade being enough to ensure the replay. Saturday's biggest crowd (161) was at **Langford** to see the local derby with **Arlesey Town**, but Jamie Osbourne's 60th minute goal was enough to see the visitors through. A large crowd of 140 attended **Amptill Town's** clash with Southern league **Dunstable Town**, but the visitors proved too strong for their opponents from Division One and ran out comfortable 4-0 winners, with two goals in each half. **Hanwell Town** must have been disappointed with their 5-0 reverse at home to Ryman North side **Aveley** whilst **Kingsbury London Tigers**, losing 2-0 at Concorde Rangers, and **Hatfield Town** losing 4-2 at **East Thurrock United**, both saw their road to Wembley blocked off for another year.

MID WEEK REPLAYS

Aylesbury Vale produced an excellent performance on Tuesday night, away at Southern League **Burnham**, to win 2-1 and set up a home tie in the next round with Downton, from the Wessex League. Burnham started the brighter and quicker, with the big No 9 Leon Yardie proving a real handful, and they took the lead after 21 minutes with a Ryan Bird header. After the break, the Vale looked more purposeful, and it was no surprise when Neil Roberts equalised from the penalty spot just on the hour. The remainder of the game revolved around two substitutions – Burnham took off danger man Yardie, to the amazement of all in the ground, and Aylesbury brought on Martin Kinsey who scored the winner with his very first touch of the ball! **Broxbourne Boro** could not repeat their heroics at **Dulwich Hamlet**, and put up a brave fight before going down 2-1. Hamlet took an early lead, but Matt Kearney gave Boro hope with an 80th minute equaliser, only for the visitors to grab the winner two minutes later. **Harefield United's** trip to **Saffron Walden Town** on Wednesday night ended in disappointment as they went down 2-0 in front of a large crowd of 209.

PREMIER DIVISION

A truncated programme this week, due to FA Cup action, but **Biggleswade Town** made it a week to remember, running in 10 goals without reply in the last 5 days. On Tuesday they walloped **Welwyn Garden City** 7-0 away, and away again on Saturday they came back from **Brimdown Rovers** with a 3-0 win, thanks to Ryan Redford's first half goal and a late pair from Dan Heron. **Kentish Town** have made a good start to their first season in the Premier following last season's promotion, and they moved up into second place with a 3-1 win away at **Holmer Green**. Aaron Hutchings gave Town the lead in the 53rd minute and it stayed that way until the 90th minute when 3 goals were scored in two minutes! Jonathon Donoghue and Thomas Looney made it 3-0 in the 90th and 91st minutes, and the on loan Andy Shed pulled one back for Holmer a minute later. **Hertford Town** recorded

their first league victory of the season, doing so in style with a 5-0 win away at luckless **Welwyn Garden City**, who have been shipping goals recently at an alarming rate. With 5 ex-Hertford players in the Citizens side, a closer game might have been anticipated, but 4 goals from Reece Lyons and one from Kevin Cooper sent the Blues supporters' home happy. **Berkhamsted Town** were too good for **Cockfosters**, winning 3-0, helped by a brace from Tony Field and **Leverstock Green** were grateful to James Armstrong's last minute goal which secured their 2-1 win over visitors **Haringey Boro**. **Colney Heath** moved themselves out of the bottom two as Ritchie Howard's 74th minute goal earned them a point at home to **St. Margaretsbury**, for whom John Barker was on the scoresheet.

DIVISION ONE

Bedford Town Reserves went to the top of the table following their 2-0 win over lowly **Harpenden Town**, but **Kings Langley** kept up the pressure with a slightly surprising 5-1 win away at **Stony Stratford Town**. The home side actually took the lead after just 2 minutes through David Cole, but Kings Langley hit back with five different scorers. Another side to hit five goals, but without reply, was **Hoddesdon Town**, for whom Emeko Nwanodi notched a hat trick and Matt Spiers hit a brace, who were away at **Tokington Manor**. An entertaining game took place at McMullen Park where **Bedford FC** narrowly edged out **Crawley Green** by 4 goals to 3. A couple from Mark Reed, his first after 2 minutes set the home side on their way. More symmetry at **Brache Sparta** where 4 spectators (I wonder if they were the same four as last week?) saw John de Souza get the home side off to a good start in their game with **Buckingham Athletic** with two goals inside the first half hour. Scott Latham pulled one back for the visitors just after the break, but Andre Juraszek wrapped up the scoring with 5 minutes left. **London Colney** recorded their first win of the campaign as they beat **New Bradwell St. Peter** 4-1 at home, thanks to goals from Paul Danslow, Sam Mitchell, Jermaine Davey and Josh Humbert whilst Paul Stokes replied for the Saints. **Winslow United** remain unbeaten, and in third spot, as they beat **Arlesey Athletic** 1-0 thanks to a Chris Hill goal after 24 minutes, and in the days other game, **Sun Postal Sports** rescued a point away at **Amersham Town** with a 73rd minute goal from Stuart Farrell., Bradley Wilkinson having given the home side the lead after 20 minutes.

DIVISION TWO

With a number of clubs having played almost one quarter of their fixtures, a queue is beginning to form at the top of the table. Once again **AFC Dunstable** are making the early running, and they returned from **Risborough Rangers** with a 3-0 win. They remain unbeaten, as do **Wodson Park** who are hard on their heels having beaten **Pitstone & Ivinghoe** 2-0. Just three points behind the two leaders are **Hadley**, who beat **Bucks Student Union** 2-0 and **The 61Fc** who triumphed 2-1 over their near neighbours **Caddington**. On a wonderful sunny day in Milton Keynes, new boys **Bletchley Town** hosted **Aston Clinton** in an entertaining match. The first half was dominated by the visitors, who had enough chances to have won several games over. However, they did not take these chances and fell behind on 29 minutes when Graham Anderson struck home a

20 yard free kick. The second half saw more of the same but Aston Clinton equalised on 59 minutes when a free kick on the right touchline beat everyone to creep into the Bletchley net. It was all Aston now and the crowd expected them to go on to win the match. Bletchley however had other ideas and on a breakaway, scored when Anderson headed in a free kick on 65 minutes. The visitors continued to both create and miss chances at regular intervals and worse followed for them on 81 minutes when Martin Sweet of Bletchley swept in the third goal. But Aston rallied and scored two minutes later by O'Sullivan from close range. With the home side hanging on for their first league win, Aston Goss scored the equaliser on 88 minutes to share the points. One of the surprise packages of the season so far are **Markyate** who notched their fourth win by 4-0 over **Padbury United**, including their second hat trick of the season from David Douglas. **Kent Athletic** beat **Old Bradwell United** 2-1 at home, whilst **Mursley United** and **Tring Corinthians** shared the honours in a 2-2 draw.

HAS THIS EVER HAPPENED BEFORE?

In the Div 1 game at **Brache Sparta** on Saturday, a **Buckingham Athletic** player suffered a serious head injury just prior to half time, for which the Brache player was booked. Athletic had already substituted one injured player earlier. After the interval the Manager wanted to send on one of the two remaining substitutes who happen to be brothers..... the elder of the two refused to allow his brother to enter the field of play, giving as his reason the earlier serious injury to his team mate. The brothers then went back to the changing rooms and left the ground. Buckingham Athletic therefore had to play with 10 men for the whole of the second half.

AGEISM? - NOT IN THE SSMFL!

Two examples of how League RefSec Mick Ewen covers the age spectrum. Referee Ray Ward reports that at the recent Winslow v Bedford game, the combined ages of his two assistants, Eddie Ephgrave and Ken Leach, was around 122. Five days later, at the Kent Athletic v Old Bradwell game, his two assistants, Aaron Colbert and Mark Baron, totalled just 33 years. I wonder which pair were sprightlier. Must be a record variation from one game to the next.....or do you know differently?

All items of news, interest, tittle-tattle, etc. re your club, are very welcome.

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