

**MOLTEN SPORTS**  
**SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

**NEWSLETTER No. 25**

*By Bill Scholes*

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009**

*Just the two hat tricks this week and, incidentally, both from their respective divisions leading goalscorers. In Division Two Lawrence Bunker netted four times for Pitstone & Ivinghoe whilst in Division One Craig Hammond scored three times for Royston Town.*

**PREMIER DIVISION**

**Harefield United's** lead at the top of the table has been cut to 6 six points following their 1-1 draw away at **Langford**. On a bright but very cold afternoon, the football did little to warm up the spectators. The first half was a scrappy affair with neither team settling into any sort of a decent pattern of play. After a couple of early Langford chances, Harefield scored on 11 minutes when Danny Buckle's shot was deflected into the home net. Harefield looked in control but a momentary lapse allowed Langford to equalise. A poor back pass saw an alert Langford forward latch onto the pass and he was bundled over by the Harefield keeper for a penalty. Up stepped Rob Groves to drill the penalty kick into the net on 27 minutes. The second half was much of the same with the only threat on any goal being well saved by the Langford keeper Steve Young. Whilst Harefield dominated the possession, they did little with it and the game trundled along to a 1 – 1 draw which pleased Langford more than it did Harefield. This game will not last long in the memory banks as there was too much moaning and arguing by the players, too many silly fouls and too little quality football. Two defeats in less than a week have seen **Colney Heath** drop down from second to third – on Tuesday they lost 2-0 at home to Brimsdown Rovers - and followed that with a 3-0 loss away at **Broxbourne Borough**, who now move ahead of Heath into second place.....and three points in front. All three goals came in the second half, a two goal burst inside three minutes putting Boro on the road to victory which was wrapped up by a third from Bradley Poole with four minutes left. Langford remain in fourth spot, but **Leverstock Green** have purred quietly up into 5<sup>th</sup> place, and although 12 points adrift of the leaders, they do have 3 games in hand. Leverstock were indebted to a very late winner from James Armstrong to seal all three points as they overcame bottom of the table **Holmer Green** 2-1 at Pancake Lane. Charlie Gorman got the home Greens off to a good start with an 8<sup>th</sup> minute goal, but Danny Craggs, making his first appearance of the season, equalised for the away Greens ten minutes before half time. In so doing, he became the only other player, apart from Andy Shed, to find the net for Holmer in the League since October! The home Greens could have gone in front on the hour when they were awarded a penalty, but former Leverstock keeper Gareth Tinsley saved well from Davies. With time running out, up popped Armstrong with the winner to make it five wins on the trot. **Hanwell Town** are in an identical position to Leverstock – 12 points behind with 3 games in hand, and they kept in touch with a 2-1 win away at **Aylesbury Vale**, thanks to a goal in each half from Blaise O'Brien. James Baxter's goal briefly gave Vale hope, but they have suffered a bleak January with just one point from their last four games. **Oxhey Jets** surprisingly went down 2-1 at home to **Haringey Borough**, who have now given themselves a four point cushion over the bottom two. Tim O'Mara gave the Jets the lead, but Roy Parker equalised for Haringey before half time, and Niall Ritchie snatched the vital winner just before the end. An interesting situation down in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> places, where sit our two remaining contestants in the FA Vase – Chalfont St. Peter and Biggleswade Town. Both still harbour title aspirations and, although 13 points behind Harefield, they do each have four games in hand. Both could well be in for a hectic end to the season. **Chalfont** enjoyed a comfortable 2-0 home win over **Hertford Town** following their pre match presentation of the "Molten Sports Team of the Month" award for December. After an early scare, the hosts got off to the best possible start when they took the lead after only three minutes, an excellent cross by Ben Stack was met with a firm header by Adam Louth to leave keeper Lee

Robinson with no chance. Midway through the half Charlie Strutton had a goal-bound shot deflected past the post by a covering defender. Owen Beale almost equalized just before the break when he put a cross just wide. The hosts maintained their pressure and almost scored within twelve minutes of the restart when a cross by Louth saw Terrell Lewis shoot tamely at Robinson. On the break, Mark Oliver in the Chalfont goal, did well to deny Hunt an equalizer. Twenty minutes from the end the game was made safe when a cross from Strutton was nodded in by the impressive Lee Togwell, who was playing in the role normally occupied by the unfortunate Danny Hughes, who broke his leg last week against Harefield and will sadly miss any further involvement in the FA Vase. Not a game to remember, particularly for the shivering spectators in the brass monkey weather. Fifty odd miles away up the A1, it seemed another lack lustre game was taking place as **Biggleswade Town** finally overcame spirited resistance from a much changed **Brimdown Rovers** to earn a 1-0 win and keep their title hopes alive. The only goal of the game came from Kevin Cooper half way through the second half, but Rovers chances of causing an upset were not helped when they had a player dismissed late on for a second Yellow card offence. About a mile up the road, **Biggleswade United** also had a narrow victory, beating visitors **Cockfosters** 3-2 after twice being behind. Dave Pigden gave Cockfosters the lead, which Mesach Cole cancelled out shortly afterwards. The visitors went back in front a minute after the break through Matt Brown, but back came Cole with his second to bring matters all square. With 17 minutes left, Liam Kenna put through his own net to give Utd the victory. **Welwyn Garden City** staged an excellent fight-back to come from 2-0 behind to defeat **Tring Athletic** 3-2 at Herts lane. Tring, buoyed by their 3-0 win over Harefield in midweek, went 1-0 up after only 40 seconds when Mark Burfoot side-footed home after good work down the right. Welwyn then went on to dominate Tring for long periods, but found themselves 2-0 down when Ashley Addison scored a superb overhead-kick only a minute in the second half. The introduction of sub Craig Tomkins turned the game for the Citizens as he scored on 73 minutes with a well-taken effort, and then five minutes later striker Stuart Blackburne hit the net to make it 2-2. The superb comeback win was secured when Adam Wallace, making his full debut, crashed a header home in stoppage time to clinch Welwyn's third win in their last four games.

**DIVISION ONE**

It would take a brave man to bet against **Royston Town** for the title as they are now 8 points clear at the top, with two games in hand. Royston kept up their 100% winning record on the road by recording a 6-1 victory over **Sport London e Benfica**. The Crows took the lead from a set piece delivered by Matt Pring and headed home at the back post by Tom Malins. Craig Hammond, playing as the lone striker doubled the lead in first half injury time. Hammond's hard work was again rewarded when he scored the third not long after the restart. Malins got his second on the hour when his shot from 18 yards took a deflection away from the SLB keeper into the net. SLB pulled one back through Saulo Nascimento but five minutes later Hammond completed his hat-trick with a superb finish over the keeper's head from 20 yards. Matt Pring got his first goal for the club in the 85th minute to round off a good day for Paul Attfield's side. **Kings Langley** are heading the chasing pack, and they have a four point lead following their 2-0 win at home to **Sun Postal Sports**. The important goals came in the second half, from Lee Johnson and Gary Clark. In third place are **New Bradwell St. Peter**, who had an impressive 4-1 win away at **Winslow United**. Lee Coulter gave the Saints a first half lead, but Winslow equalised two minutes into the second half through Ian Trott. Within a minute, however, Bradwell were back in front with Coulter's second goal of the game – Dave Cole added the third shortly afterwards and Ed Wheatley wrapped up the win with 15 minutes to go. **Bedford Town Reserves** kept up the pressure with a 5-2 home win over **Tokington Manor**, who took the lead with a Tim Maynard goal after 18 minutes. Ashley Deveraux levelled the scores before half time, but Jesse Reynolds put the Manor back in front early in the second half. Again the Town pulled level, this time through Ishmael George, and Tom Damon put them in front for the first time five minutes later. The score remained the same until added on time when Michael Ewang and Nathan Peacock added two very late goals. Visiting groundhoppers could well have seen two games in one afternoon, as neighbours **Bedford** were also at home, but they lost 3-1 to promotion hopefuls

**Hoddesdon Town.**, for whom Omer Omer's two goals book ended Colin Metivier's goal. Bedford's reply came from Ricky Lawrence. **Hatfield Town** overcame the handicap of having two players sent off as they ground out a 1-0 win away at **Crawley Green**. The only goal came from Martin Standen in the 65<sup>th</sup> minute, and it was sandwiched between the dismissals of Daniel Staples and Barry Chamberlain. **London Colney** remain in 6<sup>th</sup> place, despite losing 3-1 at home to **Arlesey Athletic**. Ian Thorne gave the visitors a first half lead, which Adam Furness doubled 15 minutes after the break. Paul Danslow reduced the deficit shortly afterwards but Stephen Muggeridge made the game safe with 5 minutes left. **Amersham Town** kept their flickering promotion hopes alive with a 4-2 win at home to **Stony Stratford Town**. Danilson Vincente scored a brace before half time for the home side, but Lewis McBride cut the lead on 70 minutes. Back came Town with two goals from Adamson Ajayi and Toby Francis, although McBride netted his second in added on time. **Cranfield United** have been slowly edging their way up the table and they moved into the top half following their 3-0 win away at **Ampthill Town**. An og from Steve Templeman set them on their way in the first half, and two from Stuart Reynolds, the second from the penalty spot, completed the scoring in the second half. **Brache Sparta's** woes continued as they lost their fourth game on the bounce – this time going down 3-0 at home to **Harpenden Town**. Jack Cartwright and Nick Ross, with a pair, did the damage.

### DIVISION TWO

With AFC Dunstable involved in Cup action, **The 61 FC** took the opportunity to take a three point lead at the top with a 3-0 win at home in the Luton derby with **Kent Athletic**. On target for The 61 were Ryan Smith and Alex Bennett in the first half, and Darren Lewis in the second. **Hadley** remain third following their 3-1 win at home to **Caddington** - their goalscorers being Matt Smethurst, Ian Kirkwood and Matt Hudson, whilst Mark Medlin replied for Caddington. **Wodson Park** lost ground on the three clubs above them as slipped to a 2-0 defeat at home to **Bucks Student Union** – two goals in quick succession from Daddy Moses doing the damage in the first half. The division's leading goalscorer, Lawrence Bunker, added four more to his tally as **Pitstone & Ivinghoe** had a comfortable 5-0 win away at **Bletchley Town**. Kevin Temple was the other goal scorer. **Markyate** and **Tring Corinthians** shared 6 goals in their top 8 encounter, with both sides scoring in the 85<sup>th</sup> minute, Aaron Wilson for Markyate and Darren O'Callaghan for Tring, to ensure a share of the spoils, and an identical scoreline was recorded in the game between **Mursley United** and **Old Bradwell United** – Bailey-Browne saving Bradwell's bacon with a 90<sup>th</sup> minute equaliser. In the days other game, **Padbury United** returned from **Risborough Rangers** with a 2-0 victory, thanks to two first half goals from Dominic Lawless.

### DIVISION TWO CUP – QUARTER FINAL

Bottom club **Totternhoe** rather upset the form book in this Quarter Final, defeating close neighbours, high flying **AFC Dunstable**, by a single goal to nil. The goal-scoring hero was Gary Capehorn after 54 minutes.

### BERKS & BUCKS INTERMEDIATE CUP – 5<sup>th</sup> ROUND

Although they took an early lead through Gavin Haskell, **Buckingham Athletic** narrowly failed to hold on against North went down Berks side **Saxton Rovers**, suffering last minute heartbreak as Rovers scored their winning goal in the 90<sup>th</sup> minute.

### FA Carlsberg VASE – 5<sup>th</sup> ROUND

The very best of luck this Saturday to our two clubs left in the last 16. **Biggleswade Town** are at home to Market Drayton Town, from the Midland Alliance, whilst **Chalfont St. Peter** host Wessex League side Christchurch.

**Frosty the Snowman and Jack Frost seem to be back with a vengeance this week, so fingers and everything else crossed that we will be able to get our weekly fix of footie this Saturday.**

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

Bill Scholes Tel No. 01494 713867 Email: billscholes@hotmail.co.uk