

MOLTEN SPORTS
SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

NEWSLETTER No. 36

By Bill Scholes

Saturday 18th April 2009

It was a fine sunny afternoon for a change, and it certainly brought the crowds out, with some excellent attendances being recorded around the grounds. By far the largest crowd was at Royston Town, where 822 gathered to pay homage to their heroes as they collected the Division One League Trophy, but the two top teams in the Premier Division attracted 157 at Biggleswade Town, and 94 at Colney Heath, where Harefield were the visitors. Elsewhere, other healthy attendances were recorded at Chalfont St. Peter (72), Biggleswade Utd (68) Cockfosters (67) and Oxhey Jets (64). Incidentally, last years Premier Division champions Beaconsfield, currently in a play-off spot in BGB Southern League South & West, only attracted 65 attendees.

There were 4 hat tricks in total, with two of them coming in the same game. The unluckiest player to score a hat trick must be Jason Caswell of Hatfield Town, who found the back of the net four times but still ended up on the losing side. Dan Walker scored three for Stony Stratford in the same game as they won 7-6. Ryan Wade scored all three for Broxbourne Boro in their 3-3 draw, and Mike Ryan's three accounted for one half of Wodson Park's total.

PREMIER DIVISION

The finishing tape is getting ever closer but the final result is still very difficult to call as the top three all won on Saturday. Biggleswade Town remain in pole position on 82 points, but only because they have a slightly better (+2) goal difference than Harefield Utd. It looks like going right down to the wire – a situation which could not have been envisaged just a few weeks ago – and the upcoming games this Saturday will be all-decisive. Neither of the top two have easy games - Biggleswade Town playing host to third placed Chalfont St. Peter whilst Harefield travel to fourth place Broxbourne Boro. Both of the leaders had narrow victories on Saturday, **Biggleswade Town** beating **Hanwell Town** 1-0 at home, but it took an OG from Chris Pate in the 56th minute to do so, whilst **Harefield Unioted** were indebted to Warren Gladdy's 37th minute goal for their 1-0 win away at **Colney Heath. Chalfont St. Peter** still have a large part to play in the final denouement, as they positively "romped" to a 2-0 win at home to **Brimdson Rovers** - a goal in each half from Terrell Lewis and Charlie Strutton sealing the win., and should results go their way could even finish top themselves – a fitting reward to offset their Vase disappointment. Beneath the top three it is all bubbling under as 6 clubs compete for a prestigious top 6 final placing. **Broxbourne Borough** is certain of fourth place following their 3-3 draw at home to **Langford**, who have slipped back into mid table in recent weeks. Ryan Wade scored all three of Boro's goals, whilst Lee Pateman (twice) and Ben L'Honre were on the score sheet for Langford. Any one of four clubs could conceivably claim the remaining two places, and of these four, **Tring Athletic** were the only ones to garner all three points, beating **Oxhey Jets** 4-3

in a see-saw game that saw them take an early lead on 9 minutes through Andy Mullins, and go behind to three goals from Tim O'Mara, Paul Turner and Karl Bull. Jets could have been increased their lead, but Paul Turner missed a penalty immediately before the break. Mullins' second, with 20 minutes left, gave Athletic a glimmer of hope and two goals in the last three minutes, from Vinnie Iannone and Luke Byrne, completed the unlikely turnaround. **Kingsbury London Tigers** drew 1-1 away at **Hertford Town**, but **Leverstock Green** could not consolidate 5th place as they went down 1-0 to the late emerging **Welwyn Garden City** who move up to 9th spot as a consequence. **Biggleswade United** picked up all three points as they beat **St. Margaretsbury** 2-1 at home , thanks to Sean Murray and an OG, whilst **Cockfosters** made sure they would finish outside the bottom two with an emphatic 3-0 win at home to **Aylesbury Vale** -Dave Pigden, Danny Curbelo and Danny Little doing the damage. **Haringey Borough** ensured that they banished the spectre of relegation with a 4-2 home win over **Kentish Town** – a result which condemns Town to a bottom two finish.

DIVISION ONE

Royston Town finally got their hands on the Spartan South Midlands Division One Trophy after winning their last league home game of the season 3-1 against **Buckingham Athletic**. They did so in front of a huge crowd of 822, just 54 short of the record attendance of 876. A fantastic atmosphere in the ground saw an outstanding performance from man of the match Ricky Young who scored the Crows first goal. It wasn't one of the Crows best performances but the pressure was off and once Craig Hammond was through just before half time and smashed home the second the Crows could relax a little. In the second half Buckingham pulled one back after sloppiness at the back but all that was forgotten after Ricky Young fire home from 25 yards out at the clubhouse end of the ground. At the end of the match Royston walked back out onto the pitch through the guard of honour from Buckingham Athletic to receive the Division One Trophy, as well as player's league winner's medals and the Molten Sports Team of the Month award. **Kings Langley** made sure of the runners up spot as they won 2-0 away at **Crawley Green** with goals from Lee Johnson and a Lee Bircham penalty. Third place **Hatfield Town** were the visitors to Ostlers Lane to meet **Stony Stratford Town** and the watching spectators saw an extraordinary match involving two hat tricks, three sendings off and the home team recover from four nil down to eventually win the game 7-6. Hatfield started like an express train and carved through the Stony defence like a hot knife through butter. A Jason Caswell hat trick on 11, 13 and 20 minutes, plus another goal from Jason Beck on 19 minutes looked to be game over. But Stony battled back through the sheer determination of Dan Walker who pulled a goal back on 25 minutes. Another Stony goal arrived on 33 minutes from Ricardo Archer and the watching faithful began to believe at last. The impossible happened with two more Stony goals in quick succession. First Dan Walker burst through to score his second goal on 44 minutes and then Louis McBride chipped the Hatfield keeper to level the scores right on half time. Surely the second half could not match the excitement of the first, but it did more than that. The game was progressing nicely until a fairly routine foul caused a melee involving almost all the players from both sides. The three match officials took five minutes to sort it out which resulted in a yellow and a red card for two Stony players and two red cards for two Hatfield players. Thankfully the game restarted and the break in play seemed to lift the Stony team, now

playing against nine men, to score on 77 minutes through Archer and on 84 minutes when McBride's shot hit the inside of a post and into the net. Just four minutes later Hatfield were caught on the break and from a poor back pass Walker beat the keeper to the ball to score his hat trick goal on 88 minutes. The Hatfield players were distraught but in a storming finish scored twice in injury time through Jason Caswell and Martin Standen. There was not the time to get another goal and Stony ran out unlikely winners 7-6. As a stalwart Stony supporter said, shaking his head in amazement, "now I believe that miracles can happen." **Hoddesdon Town** have put themselves in pole position for fourth place with a 3-1 win at home to **Sport London e Benfica**, but **New Bradwell St. Peter**, following their 3-1 home win over **Sun Postal Sports**, are just two points behind. Bedford Town Reserves, who didn't play, have the same number of points, but on their heels are **Amersham Town** who enjoyed a 3-2 win over **Tokington Manor** – Jude Eboji netting the winner in the second minute of added on time. Two sides netted six times – **London Colney** had an excellent 6-1 win away at **Arlesey Athletic**, whilst **Amphill Town** also found the net six times as they beat bottom club **Brache Sparta** 6-2. **Cranfield United** remain in 10th spot after beating **Bedford** 1-0, whilst **Winslow United's** slip down the table continued following their 3-0 defeat at **Harpenden Town**. With Brache Sparta assured of the wooden spoon, the fight to avoid relegation is between Sun Postal and Buckingham Athletic, and will depend on the outcome of next Saturday's games.

DIVISION TWO

Match of the day in this division was the clash between the top two sides – **Hadley**, leading the table with 73 points and **The 61 FC**, five points behind but with two games in hand. As is often the case, expectation of a cracking game was not fulfilled, and the match ended in a 0-0 stalemate. It was not boring, and it was end to end – literally with the ball spending an inordinate time in the stratosphere as it made its way from one end to the other, but a classic football game it was not. **AFC Dunstable**, safe in third place, did very well to escape with a 3-3 draw away at local rivals **Caddington**, as they were three nil down with just 7 minutes remaining. A goal from Richard Harker, and two very late strikes from Jim Baldry ensured the point. **Tring Corinthians** have made a late run for a promotion slot, but have left it too late to catch Dunstable. They did wallop **Totternhoe** 7-2 to keep ahead of **Wodson Park**, who themselves had an excellent 6-1 win away at **Kent Athletic** – aided and abetted by a Mike Ryan hat trick. **Bucks Students Union** are looking for a top six finish, and did their chances no harm with a 2-1 win away at **Mursley United**, although they left it right till the very last knockings before Gerald Kelly popped up with the winner. Another side in amongst the goals were **Risborough Rangers**, who defeated their near neighbours **Aston Clinton** 5-0 at home, and in the days other game, **Padbury United** beat **Markyate** 2-0, thanks to a goal in each half from Dan Rathery.

MOLTEN SPORTS TEAMS OF THE MONTH – MARCH

Congratulations to the three winners of team(s) of the Month for March.

Premier Division: Biggleswade Town
Division One: Royston Town
Division Two: Hadley

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