

MOLTEN SPORTS
SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

NEWSLETTER No. 7
By Bill Scholes

Saturday 3 October 2009

Just the one hat trick this week, and that was from James Armstrong of Berkhamsted, who scored 4 in his team's 9-0 win over Caddington.

F.A. Carlsberg VASE – 1st ROUND PROPER

Seven SSMFL sides emerged triumphant from the 1st Round and will now join Chalfont St. Peter in Monday's draw for the 2nd Round. Three of the seven flying the SSMFL flag are from Division One, and all three put in excellent performances away from home against higher level opposition. Alan Kenny gave **Bedford** the lead in the 23rd minute against Essex Senior League table toppers **Burnham Ramblers**, but the home side equalised with 10 minutes left. With just two minutes left on the clock, Dave Kiddie scored the vital goal to ensure his club's continued progress. **Hoddesdon Town** were also up against Essex league opposition in **Witham Town**, and they also returned with a 2-1 victory, thanks to goals from Tony Neilson and Craig Hinton. **Hadley**, in their first season in the Vase, also made progress as they surprised Premier Division **Leverstock Green** with a battling performance to come away with a 1-0 win, courtesy of Tony Sabag's 27th minute goal. **Royston Town** put in a tough performance against more Essex League opponents, this time **Basildon United**, to emerge with 5-3 home win. Goals from Ross Collins, Luke Robins, Ryan Lockett, new signing Arron Fehmi and man of the match Lewis Endacott secured the hard earned victory. More Essex League opponents for **London Colney**, who needed a 70th minute penalty from Gary Simmonds to beat **Bethnal Green United** 2-1, and put them into the next round. Shaun Murphy gave the Blue Boys a 19th minute lead, but Bethnal Green equalised just before half time. There were two all SSMFL clashes and both resulted in a 2-1 scoreline (8 out of the 12 Vase clashes also had the same score!) – **Biggleswade United** made home advantage pay as they saw off **Kingsbury London Tigers** with goals from Luke Lincoln and Ross Kane, whilst goals from John Stephenson (p) and Jermain Hughes enabled **Brimsdown Rovers** to put paid to **Hillingdon Borough**. On the debit side, **Harefield United** took **Tiptree United** to extra time before succumbing to an 111th minute winner, whilst Mickey Nathan's 85th minute goal was not enough to save **Broxbourne Borough** from a 2-1 home defeat against **Stotfold**. Similarly, a very late goal from Mark Wright could not stop **Langford** from slipping to a 2-1 home defeat against **Wembley**, whilst two goals from ex Hillingdon Boro's Dave Lawrence gave **North Greenford United** a 2-1 win at **Cockfosters**, despite Nicky Stewart giving the home side a 19th minute lead. Finally **Dunstable Town** found **Halstead Town** too hot to handle, going down 3-0 away.

F.A.VASE – 2nd ROUND DRAW

Brimsdown Rovers	v London Colney
Chalfont St. Peter	v Peacehaven & Telscombe
Kirkley & Pakefield	v Biggleswade United
Needham Market	v Bedford
Stanway Rovers	v Hadley
Wellingborough Town	v Royston Town
Wembley	v Hoddesdon Town

PREMIER DIVISION

Chalfont St. Peter went to the top of the table for the first time since the early 2007/08 season after a hard fought but well merited 2-1 win at home to 7th placed **Tring Athletic**. The Saints started the stronger and it was no surprise when recent signing Lee Thompson stroked home after just 8 minutes. The strong winds and hard pitch made it difficult for either side to play their usual passing game but Tring competed for every ball and equalised after 16 minutes when, following a free kick from just outside the box, a fierce shot from Dave Whicker rocketed into the net giving Mark Oliver no chance in the Chalfont goal. The second half belonged to the Saints and Tring were indebted to much travelled glovesman Sam Masurek for keeping them in the game. He had no chance, however, in the 70th minute when Terrell Lewis burst through the Tring defence before squaring to Alan Hedley who shot home for the goal that took Chalfont to the top. **Colney Heath** recovered from their midweek drubbing by Chalfont to record a 4-0 win over **Hertford Town**, with goals from Ian Cooper (2), Kevin Ashwood and Dean Parratt. **Aylesbury** remain the only unbeaten side in the Division as they maintained their 100% away record with a 3-0 win at **Kentish Town**. Dean Brennan put Aylesbury on their way with a 3rd minute penalty, and the lead was quickly doubled 11 minutes later by Greg Williams. Town then held out until 5 minutes from the end before Mark Boyce added a third. Two goals from Trevor Golder and Lewis Field gave **Hatfield Town** a 2-1 win away at **Haringey Borough**, whilst **Hanwell Town**, who were down in the basement two weeks ago, recorded their third win on the bounce with 3-0 victory over **Welwyn Garden City**. Blaise O'Brien, with a double, and Chris Mills were the scorers. **St. Margaretsbury** moved away from the drop zone with 2-0 win at home to **Oxhey Jets**. The goals from Sam Crichton and Mark Draper enabled the Bury to move up 6 places, leaving Kentish Town holding bottom spot. It's very congested down in the basement, with only 4 points covering the bottom 12 clubs.

DIVISION ONE

The top two in the division both won, thereby maintaining the status quo – have you got your tickets for their Autumn Tour yet? **Bedford Town Reserves** just got the better of **AFC Dunstable** in a 9 goal thriller, eventually running out 5-4 winners, despite going 3-1 down in the first 16 minutes. Nathan Peacock put Bedford in front after 4 minutes, but 3 quick goals from Ryan Quinn. Hayden Wills and Bernie Christie turned the game Dunstable's way. Peacock's second and a goal from Paul

Draycott brought the scores level at half time, and a goal apiece from Jermain Hall and Jermain Ivy put Bedford in the driving seat. With just 4 minutes remaining, Christie's second led to a nerve wracking last few minutes, but Bedford held on. **Holmer Green** are the only other club, apart from Aylesbury, to remain unbeaten in the League, and this record was never in doubt as they cruised to a 4-0 win away at bottom club **Brache Sparta CFC**. Two first half goals from Simon Williams and Dave Keenan put them on their way, but they were made to wait until the last 5 minutes before Tom Alabaster and Andy Goddard ensured that there would be no red faces. The local derby between close rivals and near neighbours **New Bradwell St. Peter** and **Stony Stratford Town** ended all square at 2-2. Adam Castagnetti got a brace for St. Peter whilst Sean Carr and Ricky Foster were on the scoresheet for Stony. **Sport London e Benfica** moved out of the bottom two with their first win of the season, beating **Ampthill Town** 2-1. Djibril Djalo gave SLB a two goal lead, but a Paul Munday penalty 15 minutes from the end gave Ampthill hope. **Buckingham Athletic** went behind to an early goal at **Sun Postal Sports**, but roared back to run out eventual 5-2 winners. A goal from Nathan Pooley 10 minutes from the end was enough to give **Kings Langley** all three points in their 3-2 over visitors **Amersham Town**. Dean Sinclair and Lee Borozniak gave Langley a two goal lead, but Kyle Anthony and Toby Akin pulled Amersham level before Pooley's late winner. The only 0-0 of the day was recorded at **Harpenden Town** where both they and their visitors **Tokington Manor** failed to trouble the scorer.

DIVISION TWO

Bit of a one sided game at **Caddington** where leaders **Berkhamsted** walloped the home side 9-0, helped by four goals from James Armstrong, and braces from Jon Davies and Tony Burnett. Second from top **Padbury United** entertained second bottom **Mursley United** at Springfields in this local North Bucks derby match and the final score of 4-2 in Padbury's favour belied the closeness of the game. Mursley defended against a gale of a wind in the first half and not surprisingly Padbury had most of the play in the Mursley half. The wind played a great part in the first Padbury goal as a speculative shot by Nick Hughes sailed high over the Mursley keeper and into the net on 12 minutes. Another goal followed soon after as Dan Nicholls scored from close range on 16 minutes to put Padbury further ahead. Padbury were dominant and had another two chances kicked off the Mursley goal line. However, Mursley tried to get back in the game and only a brave save by the home keeper and a shot that hit the Padbury bar kept them goalless at half time. Mursley looked a better team in the second half with the wind at their backs and they scored on 56 minutes with a route one goal. Ed Mills latched onto the long ball to lob the advancing keeper to score. Mursley looked the most likely to score now but a breakaway goal from Sean Soetan on 72 minutes extended the Padbury lead. But back came Mursley and a through ball found Jakub Kasprzyk to shoot the ball powerfully home on 77 minutes. With Mursley pushing for the equaliser, they failed to clear their lines and Chris Pittam turned a cross into his own net on 84 minutes to seal the match for Padbury. Had Mursley been a little braver and had more confidence, they could have got

something out of this match. Congratulations to both teams and the match officials for providing such an entertaining game in very difficult weather conditions. **Aston Clinton** kept up the pressure on the leaders in third spot, beating **Totternhoe** 4-1 at home with goals from Aaron Usmani (2), Kyle Kilmartin and Jeremy Robinson. Glen Sizer replied for the visitors. Although 5 points behind Berko, they do have 2 games in hand, as do 4th placed **Pitstone & Ivinghoe**, but their cause was not helped by a 4-3 defeat away at **Bucks Student Union**. For once the Students were awake early and got off to great start with a couple of goals from Vinnie Gilbert inside the first 5 minutes. Before the half hour mark had been reached, Pitstone had pulled themselves level with goals from Mark Drover and Mitch Hamilton, but a further two goal salvo from Steve McQueen and Alex Hesmer (!) restored the Students two goal lead just before half time. After the 6 goal fest in the first half, the second was much quieter, and although Hamilton scored his second, the Students held on for only their third win of the season. **Tring Corinthians** are in 5th place following their 2-0 away win at **Risborough Rangers**, Steve Lewis and Lee Herring on target, whilst **Wodson Park** won 2-1 away at **Bletchley Town**, thanks to goals from Robbie Freeman and Joe Collins. Lee Jones scored a late consolation for Bletchley. Goals from Jim Parrish, Ken Woodland and Nathan Ashe enabled **MK Wanderers** to record their third win of the campaign with a 3-1 victory away at **Kent Athletic**, for whom Craig Hawkes replied, and **Old Bradwell United** and **The 61 FC** fought out a 2-2 draw. The Luton side twice took the lead through Darius Piechota and Oliver Goundry, but Martin Wells and Fraser Nicol equalised on both occasions.

GRAHAM POLL BOOK SIGNING

With nothing else to do now on a Saturday, Graham Poll has written a new book that includes views on many major incidents in football and the biggest rows in world football and a special book signing will take place at Tring Bookshop - Corbetts, 81 High Street on Saturday 10th October at 10:30am. It's your chance to get Graham Poll's name in your book!

JOHN NETTLETON LIFTS THE CLARET JUG

Bedfordshire referee John Nettleton, from Barton-le-Clay, is the first holder of the magnificent Carl Couzens Memorial Jug. Carl was keen golfer and the trophy is a replica of the Claret Jug presented each year to the winner of The Open Golf Championship. The Association of Spartan South Midland League Referees Association's September meeting turned into an emotional evening as Carl's parents, Ian and Anita, handed over the trophy to John, an official whom the committee felt had done so much to uphold the standards set by Carl during his rise through the ranks of the Spartan South Midlands League. The award was due to have been made at the AGM last May but John had been on holiday and the presentation had to be held back for several months. It had been a tightly-held secret but the sustained applause indicated the committee's choice had been a very popular one. They had been anxious to ensure that the award went not just to a highly respected referee but to one who helped and monitored younger colleagues who will be the top officials of tomorrow.

John, they felt, was always prepared to go that extra mile in everything he had undertaken. In other words, he was an 'unsung hero'. Carl's parents Ian and Anita had driven south from Hitchin and insisted in staying the whole evening, listening to the Association business and the excellent presentation by our speaker, Football League referee, Mike Russell, from St Albans. On behalf of the Association, Eric Harrison and Peter Hazel handed over a flowering begonia plant in ceramic pot to Anita and another for Carl's sister Nicola who was unable to be present but has expressed her wish to come to next year's presentation. Ian Couzens was presented with a box of golf balls. Association members were in the forefront of raising over £3,500 for asthma research conducted by the Imperial College in London and had received a letter of thanks from Mr Fan Chung, the college's Professor of Respiratory Medicine. Carl succumbed to the disease last year just three weeks short of his 37th birthday.

DOES THIS SOUND AT ALL FAMILIAR?

Thanks to Les Crabtree – Harpenden secretary – for the following snippet....

Radio 5 were asking for sports anecdotes the other day and an anonymous secretary rang in and relayed the following : “ I ran a Sunday club as player / secretary - the players had no idea of the admin involved but when match day came along they were invariably late so it was a panic until all were present. After the game they would throw their kit into the middle of the dressing room and leave it. After they left I would collect the kit - turn it the right way round and clean the dressing room before popping home to plead with my wife to wash it for me. By the time I got to the pub and they were on their 3rd pint -they would ask where I had been - not waiting for the answer and then disappear as I tried collecting subs and fines. Having had enough and realising we were about to play our local rivals I arranged a transfer, signing all the paperwork and rushing it round by hand. The following Sunday they were left a message saying meet in the dressing room 9.45. When they got there - the kit was muddy and thrown in the middle of the room. As I was nowhere to be seen they sat there bemused until the referee urged them to get changed. As I heard the door slam I ran out from the next dressing room with the opposition kit on and they were gob smacked. Worse was to follow when I scored within a minute of kick off - you can imagine the rest!

All items of news / tittle-tattle etc to

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