

MOLTEN SPORTS
SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

NEWSLETTER No. 16
By Bill Scholes

Saturday 5th December 2009

Due to a solar flare out over Milton Keynes, Bean Towers was deprived of email electricity over the weekend, the pigeons had all flown the coop and the usual superb flow of up-to-the-minute data was missing.... so apologies for some of the shortened match information.

A rather damp and soggy Saturday saw 7 postponements -6 due to the weather- and 4 hat tricks. Murat Karagul scored 4 for Broxbourne Boro, Lawrence Bunker was back with a bang with 3 for Pitstone & Ivinghoe, Chris Mapp scored thrice for The 61 FC and Rob Firth came up with three for Risboro Rangers.

F.A. Carlsberg VASE -3rd ROUND

Brimsdown Rovers overcame visitors **Newport Pagnell Town** deep into injury time, scoring the winner in the 92nd minute in a feisty encounter at Goldsdown Road. Brimsdown were quickest out of the blocks and had two early chances, including a spectacular 25yd free kick taken by skipper Jon Stevenson which was pushed around the post by the visiting custodian. However, in the 9th minute, Ricky Burbridge opened the scoring for Brimsdown with a well taken effort. Towards the end of the half it was the visitors who started to get on top and only some stalwart defending kept them at bay. I don't know what was said in the visitors' dressing room at half time, but they came out revitalised and equalised in the 47th minute. This was followed by another goal just three minutes later and Brimsdown were now on the back foot. A vociferous contingent from Newport Pagnell tried to encourage their team to better things, but failed to do so. This didn't last too long though and from a corner substitute Jermain Hughes climbed higher than everybody else to bullet home a header for the equaliser. This seemed to knock the stuffing out of the visitors and the game was end-to-end and with extra time looming, it was another substitute, this time Adam Moss, who rifled home the winner in the 93rd minute.

Nearly 300 spectators were at Garden Walk, to witness **Royston Town** reach the last 32 for the third time in the club's history as they overcame **Stanway Rovers** 2-1. It was not Royston's best performance of the season and at times it was very nervy and scrappy, but the final scoreline was the most important outcome. Stanway started superbly showing why they occupy fourth place in the Ridgeons Eastern Counties Premier Division and within three minutes a curling 25 yard effort thudded against Jordan Gibson's crossbar. Another two presentable chances narrowly missed and a free header from a corner went inches over before the deserved visiting opener came on ten minutes when a long throw bobbed around the six yard box before being prodded over the line from close range. The game however turned completely on its head with a two goal burst from the Crows within two minutes. Full back Lewis Endacott salvaged his team in the 35th minute with a spectacular burst into the box, evading three challenges before striking into the far corner from ten yards. Before Stanway could get themselves back in gear they were behind when

a move down the left ended with opposite full back Arin Fehmi bursting into the box and crossing superbly for Josh Bronti to head home from eight yards. The second half was far more even with both teams spurning further chances. Stanway probably had the better with two 25 yard free kicks bringing a save and a near miss and they did have the ball in the net midway though the half when a free kick was dropped by Gibson but the linesman flagged for a close offside call. With the clock running down and in the 95th minute Stanway mounted one last attack and the resulting corner was headed against the crossbar with vigorous appeals that it had crossed the line before being cleared but the full time whistle went leaving the young Crows jubilant and Stanway bitterly angry and disappointed with the officials.

Of the four semi finalists from last seasons Vase, just one - the holders Whitley Bay - are left. Glossop NE and Chalfont St. Peter both lost and Lowestoft Town have moved upwards, but their spirit lives on in **Kirkley and Pakefield** who proved far too strong for hosts **Hoddesdon Town**. Kirkley boasted a number of ex-Lowestoft players, including Russell Stock, their leading scorer for the last two seasons and the 4-0 scoreline was probably a fair reflection of the afternoons play. In Chris Henderson, Kirkley had the man of the match and his direct and skilful wing play frequently tormented the Lilywhites back line. Hoddesdon did create a few chances early on in the first half, but their finishing was wayward, be it with the foot or the head – before the visiting Royals took the lead. A lack of concentration by the Hoddesdon defence allowed a Kirkley short corner being whipped in and from four yards out Nathan Stone dived in to head the ball past Allan Buck. Nine minutes later, the Hoddesdon defence again were slow to react to a corner and Joe Jefford's deft header sent the ball looping over Allan Buck and into the back of the net to give a comfortable half time lead. Two minutes after half time the game was over as a contest and again it was a short corner that was Hoddesdon's undoing, the ball was played to Chris Henderson who cut into the penalty area and gave keeper Buck no chance from twelve yards. Now firmly in the driving seat, Kirkley notched a fourth goal in the sixty-fifth minute. Once again it was tormentor Chris Henderson who caused the damage, nipping down the left flank before riding a couple of challenges and rolling the ball into the goal area where Stone stabbed it home from two yards for his second of the game. In pretty awful conditions, Hoddesdon battled gamely on in the second half, with Tony Neilson threatening on occasions, but never quite delivering the final killer ball. Mention must be made of the referee, Adrian Gillett, (an SSMFL old boy) who had an excellent game, and was even applauded off the park at the end by the large contingent of Royal's supporters.

4th ROUND DRAW – SATURDAY JANUARY 2010

Both our successful sides have been blessed with another home draw in the next Round. **Royston Town** will be at home to Tipton Town from the Midland Alliance whilst **Brimsdown Rovers** will host Daventry, currently second in the United Counties League.

PREMIER DIVISION

Aylesbury and Tring Athletic remain locked together at the top of the table, after both scored four goals in relatively easy victories. **Aylesbury**, who have 3 games in hand on Tring, went to their FA Vase conquerors **Oxhey Jets** and returned with a 4-1 win, courtesy of two goals from Nathan Graham and one each from Gareth Price and Ross Lafayette.

Tring scored four second half goals (Tony Field, Mark Burfoot and Chris Salmon 2) without reply at home to **Hatfield Town**, who could not repeat last week's heroics. A point behind the two leaders is **Colney Heath** who despatched second from bottom **Haringey Borough** 3-0. With Chalfont St. Peter's game at Hillingdon Boro being postponed, **Broxbourne Borough** took advantage to overtake the Saints on goal difference by beating **Langford** 5-1 – Murat Karagul scoring four times. Another side to score four times was **Leverstock Green**, who beat **Kentish Town** 4-1 at home, whilst **Kingsbury London Tigers** just edged out **Hanwell Town** 3-2. In the division's remaining game, **Harefield United** beat **Hertford Town** 2-0, the Blues unable to give new manager Scott O'Donoghue a winning start.

DIVISION ONE

Although not in action on Saturday due to a dispute over their County Cup game, leaders **Holmer Green** extended their lead at the top to 7 points thanks to a 1-0 midweek win away at New Bradwell St. Peter. This was their third 1-0 victory in 5 games, and apart from these three, they have also won five other games by a single goal margin. **Hadley** missed the opportunity to close the gap at the top as they went down 1-0 away at **London Colney**, and they have now been pipped into third place, on goal difference, by **Bedford Town Reserves** who shared the points in a 1-1 draw against very close neighbours **Bedford. Ampthill Town** hosted rivals **Kings Langley** on a wet afternoon and the home team just edged the three points in an enjoyable end-to-end game – a single goal being decisive. The visitors had the better of the first half and should really have gone ahead on several occasions, but a combination of good goalkeeping and some wayward finishing ensured that Langley ended the half without a goal. Ampthill only had one real first half chance when a forward was through on goal, but he screwed his shot well wide. The second half saw the home team improve their performance and an early shot just went wide. The crucial goal came on 57 minutes when Langley failed to clear a free kick and Stuart Reynolds scored from close range to put Ampthill into the lead. This goal prompted Langley into a response and they were almost camped in the Ampthill half of the pitch for the remainder of the match. However, they missed a great chance to equalise when a forward put the ball over the bar from close in. The Ampthill keeper made several important saves to keep Langley out, but in truth they never really had a clear cut chance in the final quarter of the game. Thus Ampthill held on for a valuable and perhaps an unlikely win with Langley rueing their missed first half chances. A 1-0 victory was clearly the order of the day as both **AFC Dunstable v Cranfield United** and **Harpenden Town v Brache Sparta**, also recorded the same result. The only other game played was also decided by a single goal, but this time **Cockfosters** beat **Sun Postal Sports** by 2-1.

DIVISION TWO

Five was the magic number in this division, with 5 sides each scoring 5 goals. Top of the pile was the clash between two sides in the bottom half of the table – **Caddington** entertained visitors **Mursley United** and the game resulted in a highly entertaining 5-5 draw. **Kent Athletic** recorded their first league victory of this campaign, beating **Totternhoe** 5-2, whilst **Risborough Rangers** ran up an identical scoreline in their home win over **Bletchley Town**. **MK Wanderers** kept up the pattern with a 5-0 win away at

Tring Corinthians but **Bucks Students Union** just failed to make a clean sweep of the fives, only beating **Old Bradwell United** 4-1, but the game's total did equal five!

THE DON SMITH 2010 QUIZ (PROCEEDS TO ASTHMA RESEARCH)

The 41st annual Don Smith quiz will take place at the Kents Club, Tenby Drive, Luton, on **Thursday 7 January 2010 at 19:45**. Don was a Bedfordshire referee whose death at an early age was the start of a 40-year relationship between the South Beds Referees' Association and the Smith family. Through his brother Brian, our League President, the Smith family remain keen supporters of the event and Brian will be presenting the trophies to the victorious team on the night. The competition is a fifty question football quiz between teams of three. There are four rounds of ten questions and a picture quiz with a buffet in the middle. The theme is 'Back to School' and more about that will be revealed on the evening although I'm told Mick Ewen is desperately hoping it's got something to do with blue knickers and gymslips. There is no entry fee although the South Beds RA would like us to put our hands in our pockets for the raffle, the proceeds of which will go to the Imperial College Trust asthma research unit in further memory of referee Carl Couzens who died last year. Entry forms are not required but to help plan the evening's buffet it would help to know if you are planning to participate. Please email the names of your team and members to john.nettleton@ntlworld.com

WHATS ON THE AIRWAVES

Clive Cook from Hanwell Town has written in recommending the excellent BBC Non league football show which airs on the radio on BBC London every Monday between 9-10pm and, of particular interest to Terry Gilmore and others of the modern generation, is also available on podcast. It is about all things Non league and although it does concentrate on the higher parts of the NL pyramid it deals with all those issues familiar to those involved in non-league football. For my money the website does not do it justice and it may be of interest to anyone involved in the SSMFL <http://www.bbc.co.uk/london/radio/nonleague/>
If you are worried that the above is southern based, don't panic. For those of you based in the northern parts of our region, you can now tune in to Biggles FM Radio who will be having their Christmas Broadcasts on Saturdays 5 till 7, from 29th November 2009 up to and including Christmas Eve. Mr Bean will be emailing results to the station, and they will be read out. Email the results to me asap on Saturdays and I will read them out. If you have any other news you wish to broadcast please send that to the studio or telephone Martin Humberstone on 01767 260111 The web site is <http://www.bigglesfm.co.uk/> and again of interest to Terry Gilmore and like minded techies, you can listen in on the internet

NEW WEBSITE FOR BERKHAMSTED FC

Even more info to take in. Berkhamsted FC now have a new site up and running, so for all up to date news from the top of Division Two, you can tune in to:- <http://thecomrades.wordpress.com>

FOR SALE: Terry Gilmore's Fax Machine – apparently he can't get Top of the Pops, You Tube, or Face Book on it.

All news, views, items of interest etc to Bill Scholes: billscholes@hotmail.co.uk