

MOLTEN SPORTS
SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

NEWSLETTER No. 25
By Bill Scholes

Saturday 6th February 2010

Almost back to normal this Saturday, although there were 7 postponements. Let's hope for a totally completed programme at the weekend, although as I write this (on Wednesday morning) the white stuff is falling again!

Lots of Orange balls hit the numerous Onion bags on Saturday, but there was just the one hat trick....and that was by Tyler Hatherly of Wodson Park, who scored thrice in his club's 5-2 win over Padbury United.

PREMIER DIVISION

Yet another change at the top of the stairs as **Chalfont St. Peter**, after their 3-0 win over **Kentish Town**, reclaimed the No1 spot as Aylesbury lost at home. Charlie Strutton gave the Saints the lead in the 21st minute and a brace from Ray Walsh, one either side of half time, wrapped up the three points for the home side. Chalfont now lead the table by one point from Tring Athletic as previous leaders **Aylesbury** slipped back to third following their 2-1 home defeat – their third of the season - to **Kingsbury London Tigers**. Despite taking the lead through leading scorer Craig Henney after 15th minutes, Aylesbury could not hold on to this advantage as Kye Hendrix brought the Tigers level not long before half time. Edson Cata poured more woe on Aylesbury in the second half with his 71st winner. Also taking advantage of Aylesbury's slip up were **Tring Athletic** as they moved back up into second spot following their hard fought 1-0 win away at **Oxhey Jets**. On an extremely cold afternoon, the pitch at Boundary Park was in superb condition, and it really deserved a full 90 minutes of good football. Unfortunately it only got 45 minutes, which came in the first half. Both sides played good football, with chances coming at both ends, and the host's Lee Armitt probably having the best of them, but poor finishing let him down. The only goal of the game, three minutes before half time, was like watching a game from a time sadly long passed – Athletic's Tony Fields held the ball up on the right wing and released skipper Graham Hall down the line. Hall made progress to the corner flag and produced the sort of cross that would have had Dixie Dean, Tommy Lawton and Nat Lofthouse salivating, and Simon Ellis was given the easy job of heading powerfully past former Athletic keeper Sam Styles. Unfortunately the second half did not match the first as the game deteriorated into a flurry of bookings – primarily for offering the referee unwanted advice – and not helped by the Jets regularly falling foul of the Assistant Referee's offside flag as they pushed for the equaliser. The regular disruption for free kicks and substitutions did little to help the flow, but Tring dug deep to hang on to their precious lead and claim all three points. **Royston Town** finally fulfilled their first league fixture after 60 days of inactivity as they recorded a narrow 3-2 victory over an inform **Harefield United** side courtesy of

David Cain's injury time header. Harefield arrived on the back of seven straight victories and both teams tried to play fluent attacking football throughout the game despite the Garden Walk pitch not looking the greatest. It was first blood to the visitors as they took the lead after 21 minutes when Ben Cowen headed home a right wing cross. The half time Jaffas clearly invigorated the Crows as they were bang on level terms after just a minute – Lewis Endacott scoring a fine solo effort. New signing Russell Bull put the Crows in front after 70 minutes with a far post header, but it looked as though honours would be shared after Hares sub Keno Mapheia scored with just 4 minutes remaining. The winner came in the second minute of added on time when David Cain scored his first goal of the season with a back post header from an Arin Fehmi corner. The bottom three are beginning to be separated from the rest as **Hillingdon Borough** moved 9 points clear after their 3-2 win at home to **St. Margaretsbury**. Boro took a third minute lead through Aaron Lansiquot, but although Steve Barker equalised a minute later, the Boro moved into a two goal lead either side of half time, thanks to goals from Jamie DiGueisippi and Romero Pinto. Chris Bell pulled a late goal back for the Bury, but it was too late. Third from bottom **Haringey Borough** picked up a useful pointing their 3-3 draw away at **Langford**, after being 3-1 down at half time. Lloyd Opara was the Boro saviour with his second half brace. **Leverstock Green's** good run of form continued as they enjoyed their 5th win on the trot, beating **Hertford Town** 4-0 at home to consolidate their fifth place in the League. Two goals in the first half, from Dale Sears and Gary Connolly, and two more in the second from Simon Conway and Lee Johnson, saw the Greens to a comfortable win. **Hanwell Town** moved above Harefield into 7th place, following their 3-0 win at home to **Dunstable Town**. All three goals came in the first half – Charley Baverstock and Yassine Fehmi-Gill in the 22nd and 24th minutes respectively, with the third coming from Chris mills on the stroke of half time. Another side to climb above their opponents was **Biggleswade United**, who enjoyed a very useful 2-1 victory at home over **Hatfield Town**. Kerran Birch gave the hosts a very early lead, and they doubled their money a minute before half time through Emmanuel Langlais. Hatfield battled back in the second half and although Stuart McDermott reduced the deficit after 58 minutes, they just couldn't find the vital equaliser. A pair of goals from Jermain Hughes in the last 7 minutes of the game was enough to give **Brimsdown Rovers** a 2-0 win away at **Colney Heath**.

DIVISION ONE

After 8 weeks of inactivity, **Holmer Green** reclaimed top spot after their 4-1 home win over **Bedford**. Jonny Mason got the Greens off to a flying start with a goal in two minutes but they were unable to add to their lead before Jason Layne brought the visitors level from the penalty spot on 35 minutes. In the second half, Andy Shed put Holmer back in front with his 12th goal of the season and Simon Williams quickly added another. Shed made it a personal double with Holmer's 50th league goal of the season late in the game. **Hadley** kept in touch with a good win at home against title contenders **Bedford Town Reserves**. Marcel Jones opened the scoring early on with a well taken goal but the visitors equalised through Tom Damon to make it 1-1 at the

break. Hadley restored their lead in the second half through Neil Robinson, before a Danny Gruar penalty sealed the win in the final minutes of the game after Jesse Reynolds was fouled in the box. **New Bradwell St Peter** entertained **Cranfield United** and ran out comfortable winners by 7 – 0 as they beat a youthful United side in front of a large crowd. Bradwell started well but the youngsters of Cranfield battled hard and the home team had to wait until the 17th minute before they scored when Gary Flynn shot home a right wing cross. Cranfield had only one chance as the home keeper fluffed his clearance, but the returning lob just cleared the crossbar. It looked like Cranfield would hold on until half time but three goals in less than ten minutes sealed the game for Bradwell. Firstly, top scorer Lee Coulter hit two goals on 38 and 40 minutes and then Flynn got his second by heading in a cross on 44 minutes. Whilst it was one-way traffic in the second half towards the Cranfield goal, they never gave up and Bradwell had to battle for whatever they got. An early goal on 50 minutes saw Greg Tite head home at the far post for goal number five. Cranfield had a couple of chances and only a great save from the home keeper kept them out. As the clock ran down, Cranfield tired and Tony Hill headed another cross into the net on 80 minutes and Adam Castagnetti completed the scoring with a long range shot on 88 minutes. To their credit, Cranfield battled away throughout the match but the recent leaving of their manager and some senior players has greatly contributed to their present plight near the foot of the table. **Cockfosters** took on bottom placed **Brache Sparta** at home and emerged with a 3-1 win. The game was played on a heavy pitch and took some time to get going and it took 22 minutes for the Reds to make their mark on the game when Andy Purcell curled a shot into the corner of the net. Brache quickly struck back with a well taken goal by Robert Skyers on 28 minutes but from then on it became one-way traffic as Cockfosters took full control. After 35 minutes, Billy Wingrove sent over a deep cross for Aaron Ewing to deftly play a cushioned volley across the face of the goal for Dean Barker to stoop to head home. Five minutes before the break, Rakim Richards strode forward into the box before firing home Cockfosters third. The second half offered little in the way of entertainment as the game drew towards its inevitable conclusion with no further goals. **Hoddesdon Town** overcame another heavy pitch away at **Buckingham Athletic** to secure their three points with a hard fought 1-0 win. In the 35th minute, a Lee Tombs cross from the right was headed onto the Athletic crossbar by Steve Cawley, and Tony Neilson reacted quickest to slot the rebound into the back of the net. Alex Stoyles gave **Stony Stratford Town** the lead after 23 minutes in their away game at **Harpenden Town**, but the hosts gained a share of the points as Joe Dixie equalised with just less than 15 minutes left. **Amersham Town** have dropped down perilously close to the relegation zone in recent months, but they scored twice in the first half at home to **Amphill Town**. Unfortunately, only Toby Francis's goal was in the opponents net - the other was an OG, and Christian Lester's goal for Amphill after 53 minutes enabled the visitors to go home with all 3 points.

DIVISION TWO

Berkhamsted moved three points clear of nearest challengers Aston Clinton following their 2-0 win at home to **Pitstone & Ivinghoe**. They left it late however as there was just 5 minutes left before Adam Mead gave the hosts the lead, and I suppose it was always on the cards that Lawrence Bunker would provide the killer blow, right on the stroke of 90 minutes, against his old club. **Aston Clinton** went down 3-1 away at **MK Wanderers** who moved into the top five for the first time. Mathew Old and Daniel Dykes put Wanderers two up before John Bentley reduced the deficit just before the break, but Dean Torto made the game safe with the third five minutes from the end. The battle between 3rd and 4th ended with **Wodson Park** leapfrogging their visitors **Padbury United** after their 5-2 victory. Tyler Hatherly scored three and Joe Collins two for the home side, whilst relied on an OG and a Lee White strike. The **Kent Athletic** revival continues and they move off the bottom for the first time this season following their 2-1 win away at **Tring Corinthians**. Danny Sutherland scored twice for Kent, and Will Hutton was on target for Corrie. **Bucks Student Union** never recovered from going three down in 20 minutes (a brace from Lee Jones and one from Steve Keane) against **Bletchley Town** although Steve McQueen did pull one back shortly afterwards. **Mursley United** moved out of the bottom three after their 3-1 win at home to **Totternhoe**. Ed Mills gave Mursley an early lead but Totternhoe responded well with two goals from Gary Capehorn and James McCarthy before half time. The second half, however, belonged to Mursley and two goals inside the last twenty minutes from Martin Shaw and Chris Broderick sealed the valuable win for the home side.

BEDS SENIOR TROPHY – QUARTER FINALS

Both games were all SSMFL affairs, and both saw the Division One sides see off their opponents from Division Two, and both games resulted in a 3-1 scoreline. **The 61FC** relinquished their hold on the Trophy as they went down 3-1 away at **Crawley Green**, whilst **AFC Dunstable** also made home advantage count as they defeated **Caddington** by the same scoreline. As luck would have it, both the winners have been drawn against each other in the Semi Finals – Potton Utd and AFC Kempston Rovers will dispute the other Semi.

LUCKY B.....

Referee's Assessor Michael Coventry drew his own winning number TWICE in the Hillingdon Boro raffle!!!! Bet they don't ask him again.

PLAYER MOVEMENT

Recent Aylesbury loan signing Ross Lafayette, who scored 4 goals in 6 games, has moved on to Zamaretto League Division One Midlands high-flyers Burnham who have signed him on a dual registration with Wealdstone. Formerly with Barton Rovers, Beaconsfield SYCOB and Chesham United, Lafayette joined Aylesbury United from their then landlords Chesham United in March 2009 but looked to be following the exodus to neighbours Aylesbury in pre-season, but despite training at

Haywood Road, he opted for football at a higher level with Ryman League Premier Division Wealdstone where his chances were limited.

Aylesbury manager Mark Eaton moved swiftly to replace Lafayette, as he signed inveterate Hellenic and Southern League traveller Jason Costelloe from Didcot Town.

RIP - JOHN MORGAN

Sad news from Craig Renfrew – General Secretary of AFC Dunstable

AFC Dunstable is sad to report the passing away of their Reserve Team Manager John Morgan at the young age of 38. John had been in hospital for many months but we all thought he would make a full recovery but it was not to be. He only went in to have his appendix removed but complications set in. John had only been with the club since the summer and had settled in really well. He came to the rescue of AFC Dunstable Reserves, as we were left in bit of a pickle when our previous manager left and took many players with him to his new club. John brought over his Waterhall Stars players from Milton Keynes who was all Under 18's. Many of the players still play for the team. John worked extremely hard for the club as it paid off with the success he was experiencing with the Reserves after promotion. John will be greatly missed and is survived by wife Claire, children Luke, Mitchell and Lily.

The SSMFL Committee were pleased to receive the following report from Referee Paul Evenden, match referee at the game between AFC Dunstable Reserves and Royston Town Reserves: *'Very good game. Pleasure to referee AFC Dunstable players were superb considering the difficult circumstances they were under with their manager unfortunately passing away the previous day. We had a minute's silence before the game which was superbly adhered to by Royston Town as well. I would be grateful if you could pass this comment on to the SSMFL committee and the powers that be at Royston. Thank you.'*

MIDWEEK TUESDAY 9th FEBRUARY 2010

Premier Division: It is status quo (great band) at the top of the table as the four top teams all won. Leaders **Chalfont St. Peter**, the League's leading goalscorers, increased their already healthy Goal Difference up to 42 as they triumphed 3-0 away at **Hanwell Town**. Danny Hughes and Ben Stack gave the Saints a two goal lead at half time, and Charlie Strutton added the third with just fewer 20 minutes left. A second half brace of goals from Graham Hall earned **Tring Athletic** a hard fought 3-2 win at home to gallant **Biggleswade United**. A Chris Salmon goal after just 1 minute got Athletic off to the best possible start, only for Andre Maltai to pull Utd level on 25 minutes. Graham Hall put Athletic back in front 20 minutes after the break, but back came Utd again with an equaliser from Ross Kane. Cue Hall to the rescue as he scored his second a minute later to secure the valuable win. It was unlucky 13 for **Leverstock Green** as their unbeaten league run ended at 12 games with a 1-0 defeat at home to third placed **Aylesbury**. The decisive goal came in the 11th minute as Sam Swannell followed up a strong run and shot from Jason Costello to net the rebound after keeper Carl Tasker parried the shot... **Colney Heath**, in fourth place, left it late to overcome bottom club **Welwyn Garden City** – Paul Armstrong's 77th minute strike sealing the

points. After two disappointing away performances Hertford **Town** recorded a second successive home victory against higher-placed league opposition as they overcame **Harefield United** 4-2. The Blues went 2-0 up inside ten minutes, through Pablo Ardiles and Jason Coughlan, but the Hares soon reduced the deficit following Craig Totton's free kick. Kemo Mathela brought Harefield back level shortly after half time but a Kevin Cooper brace in the last 10 minutes ensured the victory. There was still time for Harefield's skipper Tom Kirk to see red following two yellow cards.

Division One: London Colney moved up into fourth place after their 2-0 win at home to struggling **Sport London e Benfica**. Both goals came in the second period – the first from Russell Gallagher and the second from a Gary Simmons penalty. **Amersham Town** ended their recent four match losing run with a much needed 2-0 win away at **Stony Stratford Town**. Again both goals came in the second half – Ben Gray netting the first and James Gumbs the second. Two ex players came back to haunt **Cockfosters** as they went down 3-2 at home to **Hoddesdon Town**. Dean Barker opened the scoring for Cockfosters after 16 minutes but by half-time Hoddesdon led through goals from former 'red' Luke Smith on 30 minutes and Craig Hinton two minutes later. The hosts thought they had secured the draw when Paul Wood levelled with thirteen minutes left, but another 'old boy', Damien Thomas popped up with the winner with 8 minutes left on the clock

League Challenge Trophy –Quarter Final: An OG and a goal from Murat Karagul secured the last Semi Final spot for **Broxbourne Borough** as they survived a second half fight back from Div One side **Kings Langley** to run out 2-1 winners. Boro now face a home tie in the Semi's against Aston Clinton, whilst London Colney and Brimsdown Rovers will meet to determine the other finalist.

Beds Senior Cup – 2nd Round: No further progress for **Langford** in their Senior County Cup as they went down 5-0 at home to **Leighton Town**.

Finally, we wish the very best of luck to **Royston Town** on Saturday as they take on Wroxham in their bid to reach the last 8 of the FA Vase. Should they succeed, they will face the trip to another Eastern Counties side, Needham Market. Coincidentally, Chalfont St. Peter also faced Needham Market at the same stage last season, and the Crows must be hoping for a similar outcome.

As always, please send in any news, views, items of interest etc - to Bill Scholes: billscholes@hotmail.co.uk