

## MOLTEN SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE NEWSLETTER No. 10

By **Bill Scholes**

*For the second week running there were no hat tricks in the League, but an amazing goal scoring deluge at Aston Clinton in the Division Two Cup saw Neil Roberts score two hat tricks in his seven goals, with a further four goal burst coming from team mate Tony Mendicino. By contrast, Danny Sullivan of Kent Athletic just managed a normal hat trick in his team's 9-1 demolition of Wilshampstead in the Beds Senior Trophy.*

*Top attendance of the day was at the early kick off at Hertford Town, where the crowd of 88 was just 5 more than that at Tring Athletic. Elsewhere... attendances seemed generally lower, perhaps affected by the other game going on at Wembley in the afternoon, and it did seem slightly surprising that only two clubs, Hertford Town and Aston Clinton, brought their kick off times forward.*

### PREMIER DIVISION ROUND UP – SATURDAY 13<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER

The first game to kick off in the Premier was at **Hertford Town** where **Brimmsdown Rovers** were the visitors, but the game ended in controversy, with a 3-2 win to Hertford and with two red cards for the visitors in the dying minutes. Hertford had the better of the early play, with back from injury Kevin Cooper looking lively, but the visitors did look dangerous when they went forward. Rovers took the lead after 30 minutes when the tall and impressive Gavin Taylor forced home a rebound from a corner. Back came Hertford and equalised when the wall blocked a fierce free kick from Louis Lancaster but Phil Goss latched onto the loose ball to stab home. Shortly before half time Ryan Redford put the Blues in front, shooting home from close in. Brimmsdown posed much more of a threat in the second half, particularly when player manager Mervin Abraham brought himself on, but they went even further behind when their keeper made a real horlicks of a clearance to leave Redford with an empty net. Rovers were given a lifeline with just a minute or so of normal time left, when a rash tackle by Ross Taylor resulted in a penalty, which Taylor coolly converted. It was now all Brimmsdown, with Hertford hanging on desperately and Rovers thought they had equalised when Taylor leapt to head a free kick powerfully into the net, only for the referee to disallow for an infringement. Danny Bleach didn't agree with the decision, and received a straight red card, and the same punishment was handed out to Tan Tezel a minute or so later at the end of the game. Leaders **Harefield United** maintained their top spot with a hard fought 2-1 win at home to **Leverstock Green**. The visitors, who were some pundits early season tip for a top 3 finish, have now gone 6 league games without a win, but put up a brave fight before going down to late second half goal. Green opened the scoring with a Mickey Swaysland penalty, with just over 20 minutes gone, but the Hares came back with a penalty of their own from Ben Hammond just before the half hour mark. The score remained 1-1 until 12 minutes from the end, when Adam Willis latched on to a long through ball to slide past Graham Milner for the winner. **Biggleswade Town** maintained their challenge, and their second spot, with a 2-0 home victory over **Kingsbury London Tigers**, with a goal in the first half from Dan Heron and one from Scott Field in the second. **Hanwell Town** moved up into third place with a 3-1 home win over mid table **Holmer Green**. At half time, the game was fairly evenly poised at 1-1, Charlie Baverstock for Hanwell and Steven Groves for Holmer being the scorers, but two goals in three minutes just after half time- the first from Jake Jenkins and the second being an OG from Adam Chaumeton (not his first of the season, I understand) put Hanwell in the ascendancy. Another side recovering from a slightly patchy start is **Beaconsfield SYCOB**, who starred in an 8-goal bonanza at **Broxbourne Borough V&E**, defeating the home side by 5-3. Boro actually took the lead after just 4 minutes through Gasmind Dauti, but goals from Ben Swift and Michael Currie right on half time gave the Rams a 2-1 lead. Equality was immediately restored after the Jaffa break, when Darren Spinks brought Boro back level, but then goals from Currie, Tom Crouch and Adrian Sears put SYCOB strongly in the driving seat, and all that was left was for Saf Pivano to notch a last minute consolation goal for the Boro. There were also a feast of goals at **St.**

**Margaretsbury**, where the home side put more pressure on visitors **Colney Heath** with, in the end, an emphatic 5-1 win. Interestingly, Colney took the lead through Jamie Hazel in the 18<sup>th</sup> minute, and held it until well into the last quarter of the game, when they were sunk by 5 goals in 19 minutes. Gutted, or what! Ben Herod started the Saints goal fest in the 73<sup>rd</sup> minute, and was followed, in swift succession, by Steve Barker, Ricky Light, Matt Gaskell, and Light again. **Chalfont St. Peter** are having a tremendous run of success in the various Cup competitions, but need to transfer this form into league wins if they are to challenge for honours. On Saturday, they came up against **Tring Athletic**, who are going through a resurgence, and who came out 2-1 winners in a thrilling game. Chalfont's Terrell Lewis gave Saints the lead after 21 minutes when he beat the offside trap to run on and coolly slot home, but Tring equalised when recent signing Mark Burfoot was the recipient of a great pass from Trevor Gibbs to clip past the keeper for a debut goal. Fittingly Tring's winner came from the fit again Andy Humphreys, who only needed 9 minutes from coming on as sub to slot home from close range. **Welwyn Garden City** were always in front in their home game with **Cockfosters**, but it took a last minute goal from David Parkinson to seal the welcome 3-2 victory. The Citizens took the lead after 25 minutes through Matt Wardle, but Cockfosters were clearly missing their leading goal scorer Jon Moniatis as numerous chances across the box went begging. The visitors did get back into the game just after half time with a screamer from Nick Page, but Welwyn regained the lead with a hotly disputed did it / didn't it cross the line effort – whole ball, over the line, was the verdict from the excellently placed lino. By now Cockfosters were in the ascendancy and it was no surprise when Rob Moules swept home the equaliser from within the 6 yard box, but with a minute left, Welwyn's Parkinson broke away and delivered a low shot from just inside the box across the keeper, to deny Cockfosters their deserved share of the spoils. Down at the foot of the table, **Ruislip Manor** were back home again after their pitch problems but, unfortunately, could not celebrate with a win against **London Colney** and went down 1-0 to an Adam Smith goal. This win saw the Blue Boys move off the bottom of the table to be replaced by the Manor. **Aylesbury Vale's** up and down season continued as they lost 1-0 away at **Langford** to a second half Keiran Oguhan goal and finally, **Biggleswade United** and **Oxhey Jets** both failed to disturb the back of the net in their 0-0 draw at Second Meadow.

### DIVISION ONE ROUND UP

League leaders **Haringey Borough** were held to 1-1 draw at home to **Stony Stratford Town**, both goals coming in the last quarter of the game. Chima Obiji opened the scoring for Boro, but Barry Bellhouse came up with the equaliser just before the end. The point gained enables Boro to stay top, just, on goal difference, from **Brache Sparta** who took the opportunity to draw level on points with a 2-1 away win at **Buckingham Athletic**. This was another late, late show, with all the goals coming in the last quarter of an hour. Mark Brown opened the scoring for Brache on 75 minutes, and Dean Whitaker made it two five minutes later. The home side responded immediately with a goal from Andy Hammond, but the Brache defence held out. Although not playing, Bedford remain third, but **Hoddesdon Town** moved quietly up into fourth place with a 2-0 home win against **Bedford Town Reserves** - again both goals coming in the last 6 minutes, from Richard Howard and Craig Hinton respectively. Although tasting FA Vase success, **Amptill Town** are languishing in the bottom half of the table, but although they tool a bit of time to get going, they eventually ran in five goals away to bottom club **Cranfield United**. On the scoresheet for Amptill were Keith Snaylam, Christian Lester, Craig Townsend and Michael Owens, who scored two. Cranfield's sole reply came from Mark Keogh, although strictly speaking it wasn't actually a reply as it was the first goal of the game. **Harpenden Town** and **Royston Town** clashed last week in the FA Vase, and a quirk of the fixture list pitted the two rivals together again, this time at Harpenden. The home side must have been thinking that revenge is sweet as they were 2-0 up after 24 minutes, through Chris Johns and Ben Dawes, but the Crows bounced back with a brace from hot shot Graham Tibbals and one from David Macnamara to take a 3-2 lead. Dawes, however, had other ideas and with just two minutes left, came up with the valued equaliser. **Kentish Town** came away from **Sun Postal Sports** with a 3-2 win,

courtesy of two goals from Jonathon Donoghue and one from Lee Scott, whilst **Amersham Town** stopped a run of two consecutive defeats with a 3-1 win over **Winslow United**. Jude Eboji opened the scoring for Town, Mark Whittaker replied for Winslow, Eboji put Town back in front and Alan Nash-Barker completed their scoring with 5 minutes left. Elsewhere, **Cheshunt Reserves** drew 0-0 at home to **New Bradwell St. Peter**.

### **DIVISION TWO CUP – FIRST ROUND**

The 23 spectators who got up early to watch the 12.30 kick off at **Aston Clinton** were treated to a remarkable match of 18, yes 18, goals, of which 17 were scored by the home side. The luckless visitors were **Markyate**, whose biological clocks had possibly not attuned themselves to the early kick off, although they started the game quite well, being level at one each after 3 minutes. However, it all went downhill from then on, with Neil Roberts scoring 7 of his side's first 9 goals after just 39 minutes. He obviously lost form after that, and Tony Mendicino stepped in with another 4. Not to be outdone, Aaron Usmani and Shaun Walker got a brace each, whilst James Horwood and Marcus White could only manage one each. There were also goals aplenty in the other three ties. **Kings Langley** beat **Pitstone & Ivinghoe** 5-2, with goals from Lewis Pritchard (2), Gary Clark (pen), Richard Harvey and Simon Conway, whilst Tom Elliott and Nick Ryan were on target for Pitstone. Two goals from Martin Shaw, plus singles from Stuart Homer and Craig Ralph, helped **Mursley United** to a 4-1 away win at **Totternhoe** and **Risborough Rangers** needed extra time to finally see off the challenge of **Padbury United** by 4-2. Robbie Morgan and Joel Read put Risboro two up in the first half hour, but Padbury hit back through Ian Fraser and Matt Marsden to force the extra 30 minutes, but another from Morgan and one from Ollie Walker saw Risboro through to the next round.

### **SNIPPETS**

*It is not uncommon at Welwyn Garden City for low flying aircraft to add interest to a game of football. At a recent Premier Division game, one of the linos (sorry, assistant referees!) was heard to remark how nice it was for Welwyn to have arranged a flying display for the watching League Committee Members. It was pointed out to the Mad Scot on the line, nicely, that the aircraft had probably mistaken his rigorous flag waving for instructions to land – he was so successful that at one stage there were 2 Cessna's, a Piper Apache and an Aeronca circling the ground awaiting instructions, whilst slightly higher two Boeing 707's and an Airbus could be seen patiently stacking as they waited their turn!*

### **RUISLIP MANOR**

Ruislip Manor's ground at Grosvenor Vale is now open for business again. A delegation from the SSMFL and the Middlesex FA visited the ground last week and were very impressed with the renovation work that had been carried out. An outside contractor was employed to undertake the work, which included sand infilling, de-weeding and levelling, and they will continue to maintain the ground during the season. Manor's first game on the new surface took place last Saturday, but unfortunately they were unable to celebrate with a win.

### **BIGGLESWADE UNITED**

The recent PR activity surrounding the decision of Biggleswade Utd to put themselves up for sale on the internet reached the national newspapers, and an article appeared a couple of weeks ago in the Daily Mirror.

### **BROXBOURNE BOROUGH HOST ESTONIA**

Club Chairman Peter Harris was understandably chuffed last weekend when Broxbourne played host to the Estonian national team last Friday morning, prior to their European Championship Qualifying game with England on Saturday. The Estonian team, who were staying at a local Hertfordshire hotel, made use of the excellent Broxbourne pitch, which was voted the best in the Spartan South Midlands League last year. Chairman Harris said "We received a call from FA Headquarters in Soho Square asking if the Estonian side could use our Goffs Lane facilities. We were delighted to help. The Estonian party arrived about 10.00am and went into a 45 minute warm up routine. They posed for a group photograph, and presented mementoes."

Mind you, with the Wembley pitch not yet back to its peak, the Estonians may have been better off going to .....(your choice, you fill in the blanks)

### **FORMER ROYSTON MANAGER SEES FA VASE VICTORY**

Former Royston Town manager William Arbon returned to Garden Walk two weeks ago to witness the Crows beat Harpenden Town in the FA Vase. He was also selected to play for Royston, in 1955, and came to the match complete with a 1955 match ticket that featured Saturday's opponents. William, who played outside-left said: "When I found the ticket between Royston and Harpenden, I thought I should really come down and see how they're getting on. "I played against Harpenden a long time ago - and the game has changed a lot since then. We didn't have a bad team either!" William played for Royston for a number of seasons before he became the club's manager in 1966. He said: "I was manager for two years, and in that time we won the Division One title, which I think was possibly the first.

### **Bill Scholes**

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