

## MOLTEN SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE NEWSLETTER No. 11

By *Bill Scholes*

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

*There were five hat tricks this weekend, but star billing must surely go to Ashley Taylor-Forbes, who scored all 5 of Brimsdown Rovers goals in their 5-3 win over Colney Heath. This followed his two goals on Wednesday night. There were three hat trick in Division One - by Jonathon Donoghue of Kentish Town, Darren Lancaster of Sun Sports Postal, and Alistair Shearer of Cranfield United whilst Junior George got 4 of Kent Athletic's 7 goals in their League Challenge Trophy win.*

### PREMIER DIVISION ROUND UP

With just over one quarter of the season gone, the race for the Premier Division title is beginning to hot up, with 5 clubs at the top all within three points of each other. It's all change at the top of the table this week, with **Biggleswade Town** reaching the pinnacle for the first time this season, and probably for the first time for many years. They achieved their lofty position by means of a 2-1 home win against **Hertford Town**, but they had to do it the hard way, going behind to a Kevin Cooper header after 25 minutes. Equilibrium was restored by a Neil Morgan header from a Bradley Harrison corner just before half time, and on the hour mark, Dan Heron took advantage of a poorly taken goal kick to put blast the ball past the Blues glovesman and put the Waders in front, a lead which they held until the final whistle. The home dressing room must have been a happy place when news filtered through that previous leaders **Harefield United** had surprisingly lost 1-0 at home to **Broxbourne Borough**, who had Danny Ward to thank for their 66<sup>th</sup> minute goal. This setback for the Hares dropped them down to 4<sup>th</sup> place, as **Hanwell Town** moved up into second place with two wins in 5 days. They followed their hard fought 1-0 away win against Cockfosters on Tuesday, with a slightly more comfortable 3-0 win away at **Welwyn Garden City**. Warren Williams gave Hanwell the lead just before half time, and Charley Baverstock followed with another shortly after the break, but they had to wait until the very last minute for the third goal from Victor Osobu. Following their defeat at Hertford Town last Saturday, **Brimsdown Rovers** have got their title challenge back on track with a midweek 3-2 win over Welwyn Garden City, including two from Ashley Taylor-Forbes, and a remarkable 5-3 away win at **Colney Heath**. With not quite 25 minutes played, Rovers found themselves two goals down, but fought back magnificently, with Ashley Taylor-Forbes amazingly topping his exploits on Tuesday by scoring all 5 goals for Rovers. **Beaconsfield SYCOB**, although achieving two wins in the week, remain in 5<sup>th</sup> place but are up with the leading pack. They followed their 5-1 home win over Ruislip Manor, with a hard earned 1-0 win away at **St. Margaretsbury**, the winner coming 7 minutes from time courtesy of Dan West. In 6<sup>th</sup> place is **Chalfont St. Peter** and, although a few points off the lead, they do have 3 games in hand and should they win those games, they could well go top. They followed up their 6-0 drubbing of Broxbourne Boro on Tuesday night with a relatively untroubled 4-0 home win over near neighbours **Holmer Green**. The visitors problems with scoring goals was again highlighted as Michael Power-Simpson in the Chalfont goal did not have a meaningful save to make, whereas the Saints lively forwards always looked dangerous. It was no surprise when they took an early lead with virtually their first attack, Terrell Lewis showing great skill down the bye line to leave two defenders trailing before crossing for Adam Bunce to slot home. Bradley Bubb and Lewis continued to trouble the Holmer rearguard with their pace and trickery, and on 35 minutes, Lewis burst through the middle to round keeper Clark and make it 2-0. Chalfont continued to dominate midfield and provide chances for their forwards, and from one of these Charlie Strutton, on as a sub for Lewis, was able to run on unchallenged and easily beat the keeper. Holmer were keeping the Referee busy with regular cautions for dissent, and there was late drama in the last 10 minutes or so, when Saints were awarded

a hotly disputed penalty, which Adam Louth converted to make the score 4-0. Two cautions followed, and the Holmer manager, who clearly disagreed with the decision, was asked to leave the dugout and was followed into the Referees book by the Assistant Manager at the end of the game. There were plenty of goals and excitement at Haywood Avenue, where **Aylesbury Vale** and local rivals **Tring Athletic** eventually shared the spoils in a keenly contested 3-3 draw. Vale took the lead after 8 minutes when a Billy Perry shot went in off the post, but Tring drew level 7 minutes later with a Paul Aldridge header from a free kick. No more goals before the break, but Tring took the lead shortly after the resumption when Chris Salmon did what it says on the tin and rose to head home. Back came Vale, and Steve Samson brought them level with a quarter of an hour left. Vale were now on top, and Billy Perry's 88<sup>th</sup> minute goal appeared to have won the game, but super sub Andy Humphreys did what he does best and headed a dramatic last minute equaliser. In a topsy-turvy game at **Kingsbury London Tigers**, the home side deservedly stormed to a 5-3 victory over visitors **Langford**, first going 2-0 up, and then 2-3 down. Tigers went into an early lead after Edson Cata side-footed home Denilson Vicente's cross, and the provider turned goalscorer after 27 minutes to make it 2-0. With the half time Jaffas beckoning, Jack Gregson scored two quick goals to bring the scores level at half time, and 7 minutes after the restart, Robert Groves scored a poacher's goal after good work from Andy Carter to put Langford ahead. However, the visitors then conceded two goals in four minutes, one from Sirak Beyene and the other from Cata, and Tigers sealed all three points with Vicente's second just before the end.

**Leverstock Green** returned from their visit to **Cockfosters** with all three points after a 3-2 win, but the home side could count themselves unlucky as they actually scored three goals – two in the opponents net, and one in their own! A blistering shot from Dan O'Connor after just 4 minutes gave the home side the lead, which they held until the 24<sup>th</sup> minute when Mickey Swaysland put away a penalty, given for a foul on himself. Cockfosters retook the lead after 35 minutes when Ben Penfold lobbed Green's custodian Milner. Leverstock drew level with about 20 minutes to go with an OG from Dan O'Connor, and another penalty, a few minutes later, gave sub Steve Flain the chance to convert from the spot. Cockfosters finished the game with only 10 men, as Steve Weldon was dismissed for two yellow card offences. **Ruislip Manor** made a strong second half recovery, with goals from Carl Hope, George Mapes, and Michael Walker, to beat visitors **Biggleswade United** 3-1, after going behind in the first half to a Zac Burke goal - the visitors finishing the game with 10 men, and **Oxhey Jets** inflicted further punishment on troubled bottom club **London Colney** with a 7-0 drubbing. Ian Holden, Wayne Gladdy and Luke Lloyd all scored a brace, with just the single from Lee Taylor.

### DIVISION ONE ROUND UP

Division One is turning out to be very competitive this season, and once again there are new leaders as Hoddesdon Town go top for the first time since they dropped into Division One at the end of the 2005/06 season. It's turned out to be an excellent week for **Hoddesdon** as on Tuesday night they turned over league leaders Haringey Borough 4-0 at home, and on Saturday they went away to second placed **Brache Sparta** and returned with a 4-2 win. Andy Martin opened the scoring for the Lilywhites after just 10 minutes, latching onto a pass from Matt Spiers to fire first time past the keeper, and Spiers was also the provider for Richard Howard's first goal after 25 minutes. The score remained 2-0 at half time and Brache reduced the deficit shortly after the break with a header from Lee Hayward. Seven minutes later, however, Hoddesdon were back in front when Peter Ulatowski was brought down in the area by the Brache custodian, and took the resultant penalty himself to restore the two-goal lead. Richard Howard, who has netted 4 times in three games on his return from Chesham United, scored the fourth after 67 minutes, again following a pass from the industrious Spiers. Brache did pull one back via a header from Darren Edwards, but it was all too late. Hoddesdon's rise to the top was helped by **Haringey's Boro's** 4-2 away defeat at **Kentish Town**, for whom Jonathon Donoghue scored a hat trick, and by **Bedford** losing to a very late goal at **New**

**Bradwell St Peter.** In the bright Autumn sunshine at the Recreation Ground, and watched by Management Committee member Bob Flight, third placed Bedford were looking to win this game. However, whilst they *should* have won comfortably, they lost out to a Bradwell injury time winner. Bedford dominated the first half and a combination of good keeping by young Tom Kennard in the Peters goal and some dire Bedford finishing saw the teams level at the break. The second half was mostly Bradwell and a fingertip save by the Bedford keeper pushed a goal-bound shot onto the bar and to safety. The game looked like heading for a draw until Bradwell won a corner and from the resulting kick and centre-back Brendan Quill rose unmarked to head the winner. Dejected Bedford left with nothing, although watching neutrals thought a draw would have been a fairer result.

**Stony Stratford** were unable to make any headway on the leading pack, as their game against Royston was postponed due to a waterlogged pitch. Elsewhere there were goals aplenty as **Cranfield United** moved off the bottom and, indeed, out of the bottom three, with a tremendous 6-3 win away to **Winslow United**. It was 2-2 at half time, and 3-3 after an hour, but Cranfield ran in a further three goals in the last 30 minutes. **Sport London e Benfica** and **Sun Postal Sports** shared 8 goals between them in their 4-4 draw, Darren Lancaster netting a hat trick for Sun Postal, whilst **Arlesey Athletic** just edged out **Amersham Town** 3-2, all the goals coming in the first half. **Buckingham Athletic** scored a good 3-0 win away at **Bedford Town Reserves**, whilst **Amphill Town** sent **Harpden Town** to the foot of the stairs with a 1-0 win at home.

#### DIVISION TWO ROUND UP

**Kings Langley** maintained top spot with a 3-2 win at home to mid table **Mursley United**, courtesy of goals from Gary Clark, Simon Conway and Ben Walker, whilst Justin Giddings and Will Smith replied for Mursley. **AFC Dunstable** moved up into second place, scoring all 7 goals in their 6-1 win at home to **Caddington**. The 7<sup>th</sup> was of course an own goal! **Crawley Green** also moved up a place, to third, with a 3-2 win at home to **Totternhoe**, but were thankful to Jason Young for a last minute goal which sealed all three points. Elsewhere, last week's 7 goal hero, Neil Roberts, could only manage just the one as **Aston Clinton** came away from their short trip to near neighbours **Pitstone & Ivinghoe** with a 3-1 win, whilst **The 61 FC** and **Risborough Rangers** fought out a 1-1 draw. Risboro got off to flying start when Robbie Morgan netted after just two minutes, but Aaron Brown equalised on the hour mark. **Kent Athletic**, who were in second place last week, dropped back to fourth, because they were engaged in a Second Round Challenge Trophy match against **Padbury United**. The game went with form as Kent ran out 7-1 winners, with Junior George responsible for four of the goals.

#### MOLTEN TEAM OF THE MONTH -SEPTEMBER 2007

Congratulations to **Brimsdown Rovers** for winning the Team of the Month for September. They will be presented with their Molten Golden Ball shortly, probably at their next home game. They were the only team throughout all 3 Divisions with a 100% record – played 7, won 7. By a strange coincidence, it is exactly 12 months ago that Brimsdown won the September 2006 award. Golden Balls or what!

#### BIGGLESWADE UNITED LAUNCH

Biggleswade United will be officially announcing the new concept of football club ownership – MYBUFC.com - at 2pm at their home game this Saturday with Beaconsfield SYCOB (kick off 3pm). The club will be holding a BBQ during the afternoon and at half time the local MP, Alistair Burt, will cut a celebratory cake to mark the event. All signed up members are welcome to attend.

#### IF CARLSBERG MADE REFEREES THEY WOULD PROBABLY BE THE BEST REFEREES IN THE WORLD!

#### LOCK UP YOUR DAUGHTERS – THE VIKINGS ARE COMING!!

As part of a reciprocal agreement between North Herts Referees Society and the Danish Copenhagen County Referees Society to promote exchange visits of referees between the two societies and local leagues, 3 Danish referees will be officiating this coming Saturday at the **Kent Athletic v Crawley Green** game. A Danish Referees Liaison Officer will accompany the referees. This idea was gathered from the experience of officiating at The Dana Cup, an international youth tournament in Denmark, where many English and Danish officials have participated for the last 20 years and become dear friends. This year 23 English referees (and one Mad Jock!) attended, with the majority of officials coming from the Spartan South Midlands League.

The two societies will assure that the referees that are coming over are of a high standard and officiate on this level of football (if not a higher standard). There will be an experienced referee who will act as a liaison officer between the Danish referees and the host Society (NHRS). It will give the SSMFL a profile in Denmark as well as in the National Referees Association via their joint magazine with the FA. Local press have been invited to the game to take photos, thus helping to raise the profile of the League. The scheme has the full approval of the Referees Association of England as well as the Hertfordshire Football Association.

Last month on 29<sup>th</sup> September, four referees (3 +Carl Couzens!) went over to Copenhagen to referee a Copenhagen County League game between Bronshoej BK and Dragoer BK. The 3 match officials were Geoff Lewis, Rob Smith and Chris Scott, with Carl acting as Liaison Officer – I suppose years of drinking Carlsberg qualifies him! The home ground of Broshoej BK looked from the pictures to be a super stadium – it was an exciting game that finished 4-3, and included a sending off and a deciding penalty in the very last minute.

The Chairman of the North Herts Society, Perry Gascoine, would like to express his grateful thanks to the SSMFL for providing the fixture for this weekend and hopes that this can become a regular occurrence.

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