

MOLTEN SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

NEWSLETTER No. 17

By Bill Scholes

SATURDAY 1st DECEMBER 2007

There were three hat tricks on Saturday; one from each Division. In the Premier, Dan Heron of Biggleswade Town notched three, Claudio Da Silva got three for Sport London e Benfica in Division One, and Aaron Lewis came up with three for The 61FC in Division Two.

PREMIER DIVISION ROUND UP

Biggleswade Town continue to top the table, and in a week where their main challengers have been playing each other, have extended their lead to four points. The Waders faced a difficult game at **Cockfosters**, but eventually ran out 4-2 winners. A disastrous five-minute spell for Cockfosters just before the break saw their 1-0 lead turn into a 1-3 deficit. Nick Nicou, on his first team debut, gave Cockfosters the lead after 21 minutes, before Biggleswade hit Cockfosters with a triple whammy, with two goals from Dan Heron and one from Jamie Steele. The second half produced an outstanding performance from the home side with Dan O'Connor getting one back after 52 minutes; the remainder of the half saw the Biggleswade goal lead a charmed life and the pressure was only taken off when Heron broke away to complete his hat trick in added on time. The next 6 teams in the table were all playing each other, with three potential games of the day. but the big winners were **Beaconsfield SYCOB** who won 4-1 away at **Brimdown Rovers** and in so doing moved up from 6th place to 3rd. The Rams went into an early two-goal lead through Michael Currie and Jack Jeffries, but Scott Atkinson reduced the deficit shortly afterwards. Just after the break, Stuart Swift made it 3-1, and Aaron Lennon completed the scoring with 5 minutes remaining to run out worthy winners. The other two games between the title challengers both ended in 1-1 draws, with **Chalfont St. Peter** restoring some pride in their draw with **Harefield United**, following their heavy defeat in the FA Vase recently. Gary Williams gave the Hares a 58th minute lead, but Bradley Bubb got the vital equaliser 9 minutes later. This point, along with the three gained from walloping Hertford Town 4-0 in the week, enabled the Saints to leap frog over their opponents and move up to 6th place, but still with two games in hand. Probably the biggest losers were **Hertford Town**, who not only gained just one point from their two games during the week, but also had a player dismissed for straight red cards in both of those games. Ryan Wade was the culprit against Chalfont, whilst Matt McArdle transgressed against **Hanwell Town** on Saturday. Leading goalscorer Kevin Cooper had put the Blues in front after 17 minutes, but livewire Charley Baverstock got the all-important equaliser after 55 minutes. The day's biggest win came at The Grass Roots Stadium where **Tring Athletic** eased to a 7-1 victory over visiting **Biggleswade United**. "The field seemed ploughed and the rain hammered down" was how the game was described in the Beds on Sunday. Lack of finishing proved fatal for Utd as early chanced came and went, but the home side made no such mistakes and went into a 3-0 lead at half time through Danny Gray, Vinny Gray and Chris Salmon. Phil Otum, Darren Caseman and Danny Gray with a penalty, increased the lead to six before Jake Goodship got Utd's consolation. There was still time for Utd to score another, but unfortunately it was at the wrong end. **Leverstock Green** registered their third straight win in the league in their 3-2 home win over **Holmer Green** although it took a late rally to overcome the spirited challenge of the struggling basement side. The home side were very much in control during a very wet first half, but with no end product to show for their endeavours, and it was against the run of play when Holmer took the lead through a well-struck shot from Tom Davies from just outside the penalty area. Just when it looked as though Leverstock might end up frustrated, their perseverance paid off when James Armstrong ran on to a flick from Mick Swaysland before poking the ball under the body of Holmer's keeper to bring the scores level. Five minutes later Armstrong fired past keeper Clark for his second to give Leverstock the lead, which sub Steve Hawes further increased with a few minutes remaining. However Holmer were not finished, and sub Luke Byrne crowned his debut with a fine strike in injury time to reduce the deficit. **Aylesbury Vale** travelled to **Kingsbury London Tigers**, and went behind to Edson Cata's 16th minute goal, before a Paul Talbot penalty evened up the score. Ricky Sinfield added a second just before half time, and then a third twenty minutes after the break, before Kyle Kilmartin completed the 4-1 victory with 8 minutes left. **Langford** came away from **St. Margaretsbury** with a 1-0 win and all three points

despite the hosts dominating for most of the game. The winner came early in the second half with Jack Gregson stabbing in the rebound after the Bury keeper had saved well from Mark Wright. **Broxbourne Borough** visited **Oxhey Jets** and returned with a 2-1 win, Danny Ward scoring the winner in the 65th minute. Earlier, Paul Danslow had given the Jets a 22nd minute lead, only for Gasminid Dauti to equalise just before half time. **Ruislip Manor** failed to cut the gap between themselves and third from bottom Holmer Green as they went down 2-4 at home to **Welwyn Garden City**. Darren Goldstone put the Manor in front only for an OG and a Michael Bakare strike to give the Citizens a 2-1 lead at the break. Dan Griggs made it 3-1 just after Jaffa time, only for Goldstone to reduce the deficit 8 minutes later. Griggs second, half way through the second half, made it safe for Welwyn. In the past, a local derby between **Colney Heath** and **London Colney** would have been a hotbed of passion and commitment, and that just from the spectators, but Saturday's game was more like a pre season friendly. The constant revolving doors for both players and management at London Colney probably had a great deal to do with the lack of intensity, and with the largest crowd of the day (95), suitably dampened and quietened by the monsoon conditions, the game was played out in comparative silence. A goalkeeping error allowed Jake Parratt to scramble home Heath's opening goal after 22 minutes and the home side made sure of the points in the second half when a London Colney defender attempted to put a Heath attacker into orbit around the earth. Unluckily for the Colney defender in blue, he was in the penalty area – luckily for the Heath attacker he missed the booster. New signing Martyn Standen scored from the resultant penalty and it was his threat up front that was the only real difference between the two sides. This result keeps London Colney rooted to the bottom of the table, whilst Colney Heath have put some daylight between themselves and Holmer Green.

DIVISION ONE ROUND UP

For a change, the top 5 places remain un-changed after Saturday's games, although of the 5, only **Sport London e Benfica** played and won. They were away to **Bedford FC**, and came away with a resounding 5-0 win. Claudio Da Siva got a hat trick but, although his first came after 13 minutes, they had to wait until the last 18 minutes for the final four goals. **Cheshunt Reserves** moved up one place to 6th following their 5-3, home win over second from bottom **Sun Postal Sports**. Cheshunt were three goals to the good at half time, thanks to a brace from George Gregoriou and one from Tim Obi, and added a fourth from Jimmy Martin early in the second half, before Andrew Avis pulled one back for Sun. Glen Geddes added the fifth for the Reserves side, before Darren Lancaster and Luke Reid scored two late goals for Sun. The top of the table clash between **Haringey Borough** and **Hoddesdon Town** was postponed due to a waterlogged pitch, as was the game between the two **Athletics, Kent and Arlesey**. Elsewhere, there was a comfortable 3-0 win for **Ampthill Town** against **Bedford Town Reserves**. Ampthill went ahead on 15 minutes after Bedford's Peter Thompson was dismissed for handball on the line. Stuart Reynolds converted and Robin Tucker doubled Ampthill's lead on the hour mark. Reynolds picked himself up to convert from the spot again after being fouled. **Royston Town** and **Cranfield United** fought out a 0-0 draw, but the point gained by Royston was enough to lift them off the bottom, and send Winslow Utd to the foot of the stairs. A spirited comeback by **Winslow United**, from 2-0 down away at close neighbours **Buckingham Athletic**, was not quite enough as they unfortunately conceded a last minute own goal to leave their visitors 3-2 winners. Scott Latham and Andrew Hammond had given Buckingham their two-goal lead, before Ryan Wiffin scored twice in three minutes with just two minutes left. The own goal, from Gareth Robbins, came one minute later.

DIVISION TWO ROUND UP

With **Crawley Green's** game against **Tring Corinthians** falling foul of the weather, there were just three games left in the Division. The place to be was obviously at **Padbury United** where 6 spectators were treated to 8 goals. If all 6 were Padbury fans, they would have been disappointed, as visitors **The 61 FC** scored seven of them. Aaron Lewis was their hat trick hero, with the other four coming from Ricky Clark, Mathew Tibbs, Hayden Wills and Shane Harnett. Padbury's lone reply came from Daniel Toon. **Mursley United** moved up to third place with a 1-0 win away at **Old Bradwell United**, thanks to a Kit Bamber goal, and in the other game, Adrian Fontenelle's goal for **Caddington** was enough to see them to 1-0 win over **Totternhoe**.

DIVISION TWO CUP – SECOND ROUND

League leaders **Kings Langley** eased into the next round with a 3-0 win away at **Risborough Rangers**, goals coming from Lewis Pritchard and a brace from Simon Conway. Also joining them, are **Kent Athletic**, who needed a last-minute goal from Steve Atkinson to see them through against **AFC Dunstable**. Nathan Miller had put Athletic into a first half lead, which was quickly cancelled out after the break by Gareth Seeley.

BERKS & BUCKS INTERMEDIATE CUP- THIRD ROUND

The only SSMFL team to progress into the 4th Round were **Stony Stratford Town**, who defeated fellow SSMFL side **Aston Clinton** 5-3. The game was level pegging 2-2 at half time, but three second half goals secured the win for Stony Stratford. Division two side **Pitstone & Ivinghoe** endured cruel heartbreak as they went down 5-3 in a penalty shoot-out to **PB (MK)** after being level at 3-3 after extra time. **New Bradwell St. Peter** made the short trip to East Street to play **Olney Town** of the UCL Division One. With the sides fairly even, the game hinged on an offside decision not given, which allowed Olney's Steve Foster through to score on 36 minutes. The need for three officials at this level is a must as the match cannot always rely on Club linesmen. The second half saw Peters draw level as Lee Coulter latched on to a long ball to outpace the defenders to score on 55 minutes. Olney stormed back and only a goal-line clearance by Brendan Quill kept the teams level. However, this was a short reprieve as a defensive slip allowed Scott Wrighting through to score on 65 minutes. Peters tried to get back into the match and only a fine save from the home keeper denied a certain goal. With Peters pushing up, they were caught several times on the break but Olney wasted every chance to put the game safe. However, Peters just could not find that little extra to draw level and Olney ran out worthy winners in the end.

MYSTIC MICK STRIKES AGAIN!!

For his night out on Tuesday last, Mick Ewen, in his role as referees' secretary, wandered over to Cockfosters to watch their league game with Ruislip Manor. Joined by fellow officers, Eric Harrison and Tony Forrester, Mick had his usual pre match entertainment, which was a couple of pints of Greene King IPA and his quota of cigarettes. After his appointing of an extra official at Brimsdown, who had to replace an injured official after an hour, his correct score prediction at Biggleswade Town and also the fact that Pompey would beat Newcastle for the first time in 49 years he was at it again.

We all know the reason Mick was really there, yes you've guessed it; his crystal ball was working overtime yet again. The poor officials must have been worried when they saw Mick there, because they immediately thought, who was going to get injured tonight? Mick knew, because poor Martin De La Fuente pulled his groin muscle early into the game and lo and behold, Mick was ready, willing, although not really able to take over at half time. Mick had to toss a coin with Eric Harrison and lost, mainly because Harrison had a two-headed piece and Mick called tails.

Although Mick didn't really want to go opposite the dugouts, mainly because he knew he'd get some stick from his fellow management committee members, referee Mark Mellor thought it was the best place for him; a case of out of sight, out of mind. At the end of the second half, it was a puffing, coughing official who joined his two colleagues in the centre of the pitch, or was it Mick Ewen?

The best comment of the night was made by the injured Martin De La Fuente who told Mick as he came off the pitch, that he "looked very snug in his borrowed kit," the kit of course belonging to Martin. Whilst the secretary of Cockfosters was trying to organise tea for the three officials, Mick was more worried about reviving himself with another pint of IPA. Needless to say the IPA won.

The match assessor present told Mick that he "did what he needed to do," which pleased a knackered Referees' Secretary. Mick's views on the matter, "I don't recommend doing a line on two pints and 5 fags." All his officials please take note. Apparently, levers had to be used to help Mick out of bed the following morning and he is still suffering.

So when you see Mick at your game be concerned, is something going to happen to the match officials. Beware as Mick informs me he will now carry his kit in his car wherever he goes. Does he know something we don't?

LEADING GOALSCORERS – ALL COMPETITIONS UP TO 24th NOVEMBER 07

With nearly half the season gone, there are a number of contenders vying for the leading goalscorer title in the Premier Division. Currently at the top is Kevin Cooper of Hertford Town with 23 goals, whilst last years top scorer Ryan Redford, also of Hertford, is just three behind in third place. Splitting this dynamic duo is Sean Sonner of Harefield Utd with 22 goals. Biggleswade Town's Dan Heron, a newcomer to the Premier Division this season, already has 18 goals to his credit, the same number as Ashley Taylor-Forbes of Brimsdown Rovers. Chalfont St. Peter's front two of Bradley Bubb and Terrell Lewis are hot on the leaders heels with 17 and 16 respectively, whilst Mickey Swaysland, who finished fourth last year with Ruislip Manor, has also notched 16 for his new employers Leverstock Green.

In Division One, Adam Furness of Arlesey Athletic leads the way with 18 goals, just ahead of Jonathan Donoghue of Kentish Town (16) and Ryan Wiffin (15) of Winslow Utd – how come they're bottom! Alistair Shearer of Cranfield Utd has 13, the same number as Darren Dykes of Stony Stratford Town with Ampthill Town's Stuart Reynolds, who was leading scorer in this division last year, just behind on 12.

Neil Roberts of Aston Clinton is the leading hot shot in Division Two with 19 goals , thanks to a massive 7 in one game, with last years top man James McCarthy from AFC Dunstable in second place with 15. Just behind is Joynul Hoque of Tring Corinthians with 12 goals, whilst Felix Kyermeh of Kent Athletic and Danny Watson of Crawley Green both have 11.

Please note, the above includes all competitions and will therefore differ from the table published in the Bulletin

MOLTEN FOOTBALLS SPECIAL XMAS OFFER

Balls, Balls, and even more Balls Those lovely people at Molten Sports have a special Xmas Offer on Match Balls running throughout December. Buy 3 FVA 5000A Vantaggio Match Balls, and get a fourth absolutely FREE. To take advantage of this excellent money saving offer, get in touch with Andy Passman at Molten Sports – 01525 404274 - NOW

GISSA JOB!

Gordon Boateng, who led Brimsdown Rovers to promotion to the Premier Division last season, has now left his post as assistant-manager at Ryman League Premier Division club Harlow Town. The former Brimsdown Rovers boss said: "I got on well with everyone at Harlow but the bottom line is that at this particular stage in my career I missed the hands-on managerial involvement. "I am taking stock of opportunities offered to me and am pondering a challenging position already on the table, but will consider all options at this moment in time

TITTLE-TATTLE

One of the League's elder statesmen, Eric (Paul Daniels) Harrison is making a bid for Magician of the Year. He claims to have received his hard copy of the League Bulletin through the post...in Luton... around 11.30 am on Monday morning – almost before Jim Bean had time to post it! Do you believe him, or do we have another Mystic Mick in our midst? Answers please on the back of a used postage stamp to: Harry Potter's Dad, Land of the Fairies, Never, Never Land. By the way, Eric is looking for a new assistant - a la Debbie McGee - as Terry Gilmore is fed up with carrying all those rabbits around in his jacket on a Saturday!!

FA VASE

Its FA Vase this Saturday, and we would like to wish the three clubs representing our League all the very best in their quest to reach the 4th Round. **Ampthill Town** are at home to VCD Athletic from the Kent league, **Harefield United** are away to Ipswich Wanderers from the Eastern Counties League, and **Brimsdwn Rovers** travel down to Sussex League side Crowborough Athletic.

Many thanks to our contributors - please keep all news / views / items of interest coming to billscholes@hotmail.co.uk Bill Scholes