

## MOLTEN SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

### CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER No. 20

*By Bill Scholes*

**SATURDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> DECEMBER 2007**

*'Tis the season to be merry and to make merry and Christmas came early for six players who scored hat tricks on Saturday, three in the Premier Division, two in Division One, and one in Division Two. Pride of place undoubtedly must go to Craig Hamilton of Royston Town who scored 6 goals – yes, a double hat trick – in their demolition of Winslow United. The hat trick heroes in the Premier were Robert Groves of Langford, Danny Ward of Broxbourne Borough and Matt Maskell of St. Margaretsbury. The other hat trick in Division One was by Martin Wells of Ampthill Town, with James McCarthy of AFC Dunstable completing the set.*

#### **PREMIER DIVISION ROUND UP**

The top 7 clubs are still closely grouped together, with only 8 points separating them. Biggleswade Town go into Christmas as the leaders, with a three-point advantage over second place Chalfont St. Peter, but the biggest movers were Harefield United, who move up into third place. **Biggleswade Town** struggled to overcome **Oxhey Jets** 2-1 at home, with all three goals coming in the last ten minutes. A Steve Noonan OG gave the Waders the lead in the 80<sup>th</sup> minute and Paul Reynolds made it two 6 minutes later, but with two minutes remaining Wayne Gladly pulled one back for the Jets to leave an uncomfortable last couple of minutes for the Waders. Second placed **Chalfont St. Peter** went into their home game with **Leverstock Green** on the back of a 13 match unbeaten run, but were only seconds from defeat when a dramatic, and hotly contested, last minute goal gave them a share of the points in a 2-2 draw. Chalfont started the brighter and their lively forwards were giving the Leverstock defence a difficult time, but the opening goal on 8 minutes was slightly fortuitous as an Adam Bunce shot took a deflection to loop over the head of keeper Milner. The early pressure did not turn into further goals as the Leverstock defence held firm and the visitors equalised in the 23<sup>rd</sup> minute when a header from Anthony Page looped over the Power-Simpson's head and, despite being cleared, was deemed to have crossed the line by the vigilant lino. Leverstock's bench were even happier just before the Jaffa break, when Allan Arthur hooked in a low cross from the left to put them 2-1 up. Surprisingly, Chalfont failed to really play to their strengths in the second half and the game seemed to be heading for yet another upset when a cross from the right caused panic in the box, and Toby Francis fired the resultant loose ball home to level the scores. A raised lino's flag briefly gave Leverstock hope but after consultation the referee allowed the goal to stand. Cue pandemonium as the Leverstock bench – no shrinking violets there – made their heated and vehement protests on the pitch at the final whistle. **Harefield United** and **Brimmsdown Rovers** swapped places in the division following the Hares 1-0 home win over their visitors. The game was decided by a Michael Livesey goal after 79 minutes, leaving the Rovers, who led the table at the beginning of November, down in 5<sup>th</sup> place. **Hanwell Town**, who have at least one game in hand over most of their rivals, recovered from their 4-0 defeat at Chalfont in midweek to ensure there were no surprises as they entertained **Ruislip Manor** and won 2-1, thanks to first half goals from Victor Osobu and Charley Baverstock. Manor came back in the second half, and last week's hero, Justin Bailey, scored their only goal in the 60<sup>th</sup> minute. **Beaconsfield SYCOB** were looking for three more points to continue their good run, but were always chasing the game at **Kingsbury London Tigers** and had to come from behind twice to secure a share of the spoils. Tigers took an early lead through Denilson Vicente, and the Rams had to wait until the 54<sup>th</sup> minute before Terry Gibbs brought them level. With 25 minutes left, Henry Emenike put the Tigers back in front, but an Adrian Sears goal for the Rams 10 minutes later ensured the 2-2 draw. An excellent all-round performance by **Langford** and Robert Groves, saw them emerge as convincing 3-0 winners over **Aylesbury Vale**, bringing them their fifth win in six league matches. Rob Groves set the ball rolling by converted a penalty on 14 minutes and

made it 2-0 on 43 minutes after a mix up in the home defence. Groves completed his hat trick with a stunning 25-yard volley on 75 minutes and then for good measure hit the bar in the last minute. **Hertford Town** had a relatively easy 5-1 victory at home to **Biggleswade United** – the only surprise being that Kevin Cooper failed to score and Ryan Redford only got one. The Blues were 3-0 up at half time, thanks to Phil Goss and a brace from Dave Hunt, and Redford and Lee Roberts extended the lead even further in the second period, before Craig Rydeheard scored Utd's consolation. **Cockfosters**, weakened by injury and illness, were well beaten, 4-0 away at **St. Margaretsbury**. A quick-fire hat trick from Matt Maskell around the half hour mark put the game beyond Cockfosters and Ben Herod added a fourth in the second half. No change at the foot of the table as all of the three sides below Cockfosters lost. **London Colney** entertained **Broxbourne Borough** and, although they held their visitors to 1-1 after 49 minutes, a Danny Ward hat trick helped Boro to a 5-2 victory. **Holmer Green's** losing run in the league continued as they lost 2-0 away to **Tring Athletic**. Vinnie Iannone gave the home side the lead just before the Jaffas and a Trevor Gibbs penalty on the hour mark wrapped up the scoring. **Colney Heath** are starting to distance themselves from the relegation scrap as they won 2-0 at home to **Welwyn Garden City**, Greg Deacon scoring both goals.

#### **DIVISION ONE ROUND UP**

No change in the top two places, with **Haringey Borough** just edging a point clear of Kentish Town, who did not play. It took a last-gasp equaliser from Chimba Obeiei to salvage a point for Haringey as they drew 3-3 away at **Buckingham Athletic**. Boro were leading 2-1 on the hour mark, but Buckingham fought their way back into the lead before the dramatic equaliser deep into added on time. As mentioned last week, **Royston Town** are having a real renaissance and the 8-0 home win over second from bottom club **Winslow United** made it 5 wins on the trot and moved them into the top half of the table for the first time. Perhaps the Sexy Santa helped, but recent signing Craig Hamilton surely made his way into the record books with a double hat trick that must have helped to repay the transfer fee! Carl Edwards opened the floodgates in the first minute and the other scorer was Luke Robins. The bottom club, **Sun Postal Sports**, were also on the end of a bit of a tonking, going down 7-1 away at **Ampthill Town**, for whom Martin Wells scored a hat trick. Late in the game there were two red cards, one for each side, after a fight broke out following a bad tackle. **Hoddesdon Town** moved back up into third place with their 3-2 win at home to **Sport London e Benfica**, with a couple from Peter Ulatowski and one from Andy Martin. Claudio Da Silva scored both of Benfica's goals. A series of defensive mix-ups left **Arlesey Athletic** and **Stony Stratford Town** level with two goals apiece. The home side went one up in the 12th minute through Adam Furness and increased their advantage with a James Diplock own goal just two minutes later. Stony reduced the lead after intercepting a sloppy pass by Arlesey in the 20th minute. After the break Matthew Gibson equalised for Town when the opposing keeper and centre-half both scrambled unsuccessfully for the ball. It left Gibson in front of an empty net and he did not squander the chance. **Bedford FC** comfortably controlled their game against **Cheshunt Reserves**, dictating from start to finish and running out 2-0 winners with goals from Mike Kirby and Jason Layne. The visitors at **Cranfield United** were nearby **Bedford Town Reserves** and the first half was entertaining, if lacking in goalmouth action, and the no score at half time said it all. Things were much better in the second half and Cranfield had the balance of the early play but failed to make the threatened break through. Bedford gradually got back into the game but to the watching faithful it looked all over a no score draw. However, one lapse of concentration did for Cranfield as a last minute free kick from Mark Allen found it's way around the wall, past keeper Simon Dent and into the bottom corner of the net. After their early pace setting, **Brache Sparta** have dropped back to around the half way mark and they again went down, this time to a 4-0 defeat at home to **New Bradwell St. Peter**, for whom Greg Tite got a couple, with Dave Cole and Lee Coulter also on the score sheet. **Harpenden Town** are also slowly making their way away from the bottom of the table, and they came back from **Amersham Town** with a 2-1 victory. Ben Dawes gave Town an 8<sup>th</sup> minute lead, which was cancelled out by Adamson Ajayi's 43<sup>rd</sup> minute penalty, but with just four minutes remaining, Dawes again popped up with the vital winner.

## DIVISION TWO ROUND UP

Again no change in the top two placings. Leaders **Kings Langley** won 2-1 at home to **Caddington** with goals from Craig Preston and Lewis Pritchard – Daniel Edwards replying for the visitors with a penalty. **Crawley Green** won 5-1 away at **Totternhoe** after falling behind to a third minute Michael Solomon goal, and relied on five different scorers. **AFC Dunstable** moved up into third place with a 4-2 away win at **Tring Corinthians**. Four goals in the first 13 minutes saw Dunstable 3-1 up, but then the goals dried up until the last 18 minutes when both sides managed one apiece. Cup specialists **The 61FC** moved ominously up to fourth with a 2-1 win at home to **Mursley United** and have four games in hand on the leaders. They were two up inside 20 minutes through Robert O’Sullivan and Jay Dunnington, but Craig Ralph pulled one back for Mursley just before the break. **Padbury United** won 4-1 at bottom club **Markyate**, thanks to two goals from Steve Keane and one each from Tyrone Dear and Anthony Land, with Markyate’s sole reply coming from Andrew Taylor. **Pitstone & Ivinghoe** had a good 3-1 win at home to **Old Bradwell United**, although they left it to the last couple of minutes to score the all important last two goals, whilst the all west Buckinghamshire local derby between **Aston Clinton** and **Risborough Rangers** ended all square at 1-1.

### MOVING MOMENTS

*A Report from Referee Bill Hamilton*

The recent match at “Windsor” between **Risborough Rangers** and Division Two leaders **Kings Langley** was a credit to the League – highly competitive yet with as near impeccable behaviour on the field of play as anyone is ever likely to encounter. It was my good fortune that BBC Football Focus selected this match to feature me in my 50<sup>th</sup> season as a referee. But I thought that you would want to know that a one minute silence was observed before kick off in memory of Risboro goalkeeper, Jason Travers, who died recently of cancer, aged just 25. It came as a great shock to the whole community as Jason had been a particularly fit and engaging young man and a well-known postman in the town. His entire family turned up to the game to pay their respects .....a very moving occasion.

### FA CHARTER COMMUNITY CLUB STATUS

Congratulations are due to two of our clubs who have recently achieved the much sought after FA Community Club accreditation. In Bedfordshire, **AFC Dunstable**, who received their award just in time for Christmas, are one of only 7 clubs in the County to hold the award. In Buckinghamshire, **Holmer Green** achieved this status level last month, and coincidentally are one of only 7 clubs in Berks & Bucks to receive the award. As well as their senior teams, both clubs run a multitude of Minors sides, with both Girls/Ladies and Vets/Old Boys being catered for. In addition, AFC Dunstable also have a disabled section.

The FA Charter Standard Scheme is a core component of The FA Football Development programme. The scheme establishes minimum standards for football development and acts as a quality assurance mechanism recognising well run clubs. As a benchmark for quality, it will improve the playing experience for all.

### MOLTEN SPORTS TEAM OF THE MONTH – NOVEMBER

Congratulations to **Kings Langley** who were voted Team of the Month for November and are now the proud recipient of a Golden Molten ball presented recently by League president **Brian Smith**.

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

**A VERY MERRY XMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL PLAYING AND NON PLAYING MEMBERS OF THE SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE AND TO ALL OUR READERS and especially all wives, girlfriends, husbands, boyfriends, mistresses, in-betweens, SSMFL Committee members, club chairmen, club chairwomen, right backs, left backs, left footers, right footed left backs, left footed right backs, hat trick heroes, Cliff Bennett and the Rebel Rousers, chunky midfielders, hunky midfielders, the flat back four, the fat back four, sports editors, the sports media, FA officials, County FA officials, league officials, Riders of the Purple Sage, general secretaries, The Eagles, match secretaries, fixture secretaries, registration secretaries, treasurers, Emmylou Harris, officials with email, officials without email (who won't read this until the hard copy is published) referees secretaries, ex-referees secretaries, programme editors, The fabulous FleeRekkers, groundsmen, happy groundsmen (not many), miserable groundsmen (lots), Munchkins, Penny Lancaster's legs, train spotters, ground hoppers, Anoraks, Sounds Incorporated, midfield destroyers, destroyed midfielders, The Flying Burrito Brothers, all referees, referees with myopia, referees with gloves, referees from north of the border, referees who work in advertising, young referees, referees who have progressed to higher levels, ex referees, Alan Bunbury, plump referees, even plumper lino's, who ate all the pies referees, all Seagulls supporters, culinary chefs, Sexy Santas, tea makers, cake makers, hot pies and roast potato makers, Paul Scholes, midfielders with legs, midfielders with no legs, players with ear rings, players with nose rings, referees assessors, assessors with dogs, assessors with sticks (white), Alex Ferguson, physios, match sponsors, match ball sponsors, club sponsors, player sponsors, Jerry Lee Lewis, lager louts, cool dudes, snappy dressers, all Sussex CCC supporters, Paul Daniels, Old Bankers, young bankers, Chuck Berry, Bar stewards, Bar maids, friendly bar maids, lovely bar maids, Italian team managers, quiet managers, not so quiet managers, very noisy managers, ex managers, coaches, coaches with badges, coaches with I Spy badges, coaches with Blue Peter badges, coach drivers, Debbie McGee, all contributors to the newsletter, supportive supporters, supporters with attitude, and all supporters of Non League Football.**

**Enjoy the festive season**