

## MOLTEN SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE

### NEWSLETTER No.33

*By Bill Scholes*

SATURDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> MARCH 2008

#### Oh how I love to be in England now that Spring is here!

*Just the one hat trick to report in the wintry conditions, and that was from Ricky Clark of The 61 FC who scored the first three goals in his teams 5-0 win over Markyate.*

#### PREMIER DIVISION ROUND UP

Just 4 games played on Saturday. With the two leaders snowed off, **Biggleswade Town** were given the opportunity to go back to the top, which they duly took by beating **Hanwell Town** 2-1 at home. The Waders started strongly, and Dan Heron opened the scoring direct from a corner after 36 minutes, but Charlie Baverstock brought Hanwell back on level terms just 4 minutes later. Heron grabbed his second goal of the game, which turned out to be the vital winner, as he finished well after being put through by Keith Thomas. This win puts the Waders one point clear at the top, but they have now played three games more than their two closest rivals. Life wasn't quite so rosy for the other **Biggleswade** as **United** went down 5-0 at home to **Hertford Town**. The Blues went three goals ahead within the first half hour, through Matt McArdle, a Luke Jones own goal and Attila Korsoveczki, but then had to wait until the last two minutes before Ryan Wade and Matt Watts added a further two. Further south, **London Colney** gained another point, and nearly three, as they held **Harefield United** to a 1-1 draw at home. Colney took the lead through Danny Fitzgerald a few minutes before half time and then held out until 10 minutes to go when Lee Clark equalized and spared the Hares blushes. The only other game in the Premier also ended 1-1 – **Leverstock Green** leaving it until the very last minute before Matt Wardle cancelled out Adriano Gomes Marques' 55<sup>th</sup> minute opener for **Kingsbury London Tigers**.

#### DIVISION ONE ROUND UP

Again only 4 games played, but **Hoddesdon Town** followed up their midweek win over Harpenden with a last gasp 3-2 win over lowly **Sun Postal Sports** – a win which takes them three points clear at the top. It was level pegging at half time at one apiece – a Jason Sorial goal for Hoddesdon after 20 minutes being quickly followed a minute later by Darren Lancaster's equaliser. Andy Martin's 65<sup>th</sup> minute goal regained the lead for the Lilywhites but Lancaster again brought the scores level with just eight minutes left, and it left to sub Peter Ulatowski to head the all-important winner in the very last minute. **Royston Town's** trip to mid table **Amphill Town** seemed a problem match on paper and so it proved on the pitch as they dropped two valuable points in a 2-2 draw. On an afternoon that went from bright sunshine to snow blizzards and back again, those that braved the elements saw a good match. Amphill caught Royston napping in the first minute of the game and only a smart save from their keeper prevented Martin Wells from scoring. Royston responded with a free kick that just cleared the home crossbar and a close range effort from Craig Hammond that the keeper just saved with his legs. Whilst it was mainly Royston, they had the unnerving habit of losing concentration at key times and from one of these lapses, Amphill scored. A Stuart Reynolds corner kick saw Wells, unmarked, stoop to head the ball into the net at the near post on 35 minutes. Royston responded and managed to scramble the equaliser on 42 minutes when skipper Alan Reid scored from close range following a free kick. At the start of the second half, Royston were caught napping again as Wells broke clear and with just the keeper to beat he shot wide. Royston were now constantly pressing for the second goal but it was Amphill who scored. A free kick was not cleared and Stuart Reynolds turned to shoot past the keeper from 12 yards. It was now mostly Royston as they sought a second equaliser but the home defence held firm under the pressure. In the dying minutes Royston did see a shot hit the Amphill post but just when the game looked lost they scored. A corner on the left was

not properly cleared and substitute Gregg Jackson latched onto the ball to score from an acute angle right on full time to rescue a point. The battle of the Bedfords saw **Bedford Town Reserves** playing at home pick up a valuable three points against their very near-neighbours **Bedford FC**. Both sides started the game brightly and Travis Joseph gave the visitors the lead after 15 minutes with a neat left footed finish, but Amish Khinda, for the home side, found the back of the net on 25 minutes with a 20-yard free kick. Paul Draycott was brought down in the Bedford FC area on 72 minutes and John Guiney made no mistake from the penalty spot to make it 2-1 to the hosts, but Colin Reid equalized for Bedford FC. The away side equalised through substitute Colin Reid. With just five minutes left on the clock, Khinda curled a left footed shot from 20 yards into the top corner to wrap up the three points. **Winslow United** took the lead in their home game with **Arlesey Athletic**, thanks to Danny Job, but a brace from Adam Furness and two late goals from Steve Bannister and John Rowe sealed the 4-1 win for the away team.

#### DIVISION TWO ROUND UP

Presumably the pitches are better condition in Division Two, as 5 games escaped the weather! **Kings Langley** were once again restored to the top of the table with a three point lead as they won 4-2 at home to **Totternhoe**. Although Jack Johnson gave the leaders an early lead, Totternhoe scored two quick goals to lead 2-1 after just 15 minutes. However two penalties from Lee Burcham and a goal late on from Lewis Pritchard put them back in the driving seat for the title. **The 61FC** moved back up into fourth place with an eventual 5-0 drubbing of **Markyate**, with Ricky Clark scoring the day's only hat trick. Hayden Wills and Robert O'Sullivan contributed two late goals. **Pitstone & Ivinghoe** also scored five goals as they came away from **Old Bradwell United** with a 5-1 win. Lawrence Bunker was again on the score sheet with the opener after 35 minutes and, although Nicky Long equalised for the Milton Keynes side just before the break, Danny Ripley, Roy Henney, Mark Allan, and Mitch Hamilton added four more in the second half. **Caddington** beat **Aston Clinton** 1-0 with a single Gary Catling goal and **Mursley United** and **Risborough Rangers** shared the spoils in a 1-1 draw – Robbie Morgan's first half goal for the Rangers being cancelled out by Justin Giddings' equaliser.

#### DIVISION TWO - EASTER MONDAY

A large crowd of 79 braved the elements at **AFC Dunstable** on Monday lunchtime to see leaders **Kings Langley** extend their lead to 6 points by virtue of their 3-0 win over the second placed side, and virtually extinguish any lingering hopes that the home side had of lifting the title. An own goal put the away side on their way, Lee Pritchard doubled the lead right on half time and Simon Conway compounded the home side's misery with a goal just before the end. **The 61FC** kept up the pressure in the race for (almost certainly) second spot with a 2-1 win away at **Pitstone & Ivinghoe**. Jamie Irons gave the Luton side a cracking start with a goal after two minutes and, although Simon Jackson equalised for Pitstone after 14 minutes, Aaron Lewis scored the winner just before the break.

#### MOLTEN SPORTS TEAM OF THE MONTH –FEBRUARY

Congratulations to **Chalfont St. Peter** who deservedly won the Team of the Month award, winning all eight of their games played. A Molten Sports Golden Ball will be winging its way to them shortly.

#### MARCH

March is always the time of year when Chairmen, managers and players all seem to get twitchy. Chairmen think about changing managers, Managers think about changing players, particularly managers who are either gearing up for the final promotion push, or for that unwanted battle against relegation and players think about changing clubs – the reasons are numerous but almost certainly

“won’t win anything there,” “should win something there,” “might get some (more) money there.” March is also the last month of many local councils financial year, which inevitably leads to a sudden burst of activity on the road mending front. The big thing about budgets is that if you don’t use them up, they don’t get carried over to next year and often means that next year’s budget is reduced. Driving around over the last few weeks, I have definitely noticed a real increase in the number of roadworks and subsequent hold ups about, so be very aware over this last week or so that you don’t get caught up in hold ups, and arrive late for games, and probably get fined for late kick offs. Be warned.

### **OFF TO SUNNIER CLIMES – PART TWO**

In addition to Rowan Taylor from Cockfosters FC, congratulations are due to Andy Julius a defender with Brimsdown Rovers, who has also been selected to represent The Montserrat Football Association in their forthcoming World Cup Qualifier against Surinam. The game will be played on Wednesday 26th March 2008 in neutral Port of Spain (Trinidad) as Montserrat do not have a ground that meets World cup standards. As both Brimsdown and Cockfosters have had to release a player for International duty, presumably Phil Rolt (League Fixtures Secretary) will have to give both clubs a week off!

### **LEAGUE CHALLENGE TROPHY FINAL**

The Final of the League Challenge Trophy will be between **Chalfont St. Peter** and **Brimmsdown Rovers**, who narrowly defeated Holmer Green 2-1 in their recent Semi Final. Holmer certainly gave Brimsdown a run for their money and neutral observers were all of the opinion that Holmer were unlucky to lose. A date and venue for the Final has yet to be decided.

### **BERKS & BUCKS SENIOR TROPHY FINAL**

The final of the above competition will be played between **Beaconsfield SYCOB** and **Newport Pagnell Town** (United Counties League) on Wednesday 23 April. The venue is yet to be confirmed.

### **LEADING GOALSCORERS IN ALL COMPETITIONS – UP TO 22 MARCH**

Kevin Cooper of Hertford Town leads the race for the leading goalscorer title in all competitions, with 36 goals, but he is closely chased by Dan Heron of Biggleswade Town on 35 and Bradley Bubb of Chalfont St. Peter on 34. Three goals behind are Ashley Taylor-Forbes of Brimsdown Rovers and Sean Sonner, but of course the latter has now moved on to Northwood. Interestingly, exactly one half of Cooper’s goals have come in various cup competitions and it is Heron who is the leading hot shot in the League with 33 goals, six more than Taylor-Forbes.

It’s also very close in Division One, where Darren Dykes of Stony Stratford, with 29, has a one goal lead over Royston Town’s Craig Hammond. However all of Hammond’s goals have come in the League since joining Royston back in November and in this competition he is seven goals ahead of Stuart Reynolds from Ampthill Town. In all competitions, Reynolds is joined on 26 goals by Adam Furness of Arlesey Athletic and Ryan Wiffin of Winslow United.

In Division Two, one man is way out in front, in both the League and all competitions, and that is James McCarthy from AFC Dunstable with 32 in total, of which 28 were in the League. Ten goals behind in the League stakes is Gary Simpson of Totternhoe with 18, but he is pushed down to third place overall by Neil Roberts from Aston Clinton with 20 – only 11 however coming in League games. *Thanks to Bob Brown for the latest stats.*

**Many thanks to our contributors - please keep all news /views / items of interest coming to**

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