

MOLTEN SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE

NEWSLETTER No.38

By Bill Scholes

SATURDAY 12th APRIL 2008

Just the one hat trick man on Saturday and that was Kevin Cooper of Hertford Town who scored all three in his team's 3-0 win over Holmer Green.

PREMIER DIVISION ROUND UP

Finally, with just two weeks left to the end of the season, the race for the title, and that vital promotion spot, is beginning to sort itself out and Beaconsfield SYCOB must now be clear favourites, having established a four point lead over second placed Chalfont St. Peter, with just three games left.

The biggest game of the day took place at Bedford FC (temporary home of **Biggleswade Town**) where the Waders entertained **Beaconsfield SYCOB**. Nothing short of a win would have been good enough for the home side to maintain their title challenge, but shorn of three key players it was always going to be an uphill battle. A strong gusting wind blowing down the pitch was not conducive to a great game of football, with the ball spending as much time in the air as on the ground. Beaconsfield took the lead on 20 minutes when the bustling Craig O'Connor made good ground down the right, and rifled a fierce shot between the Waders keeper and his near post. Biggleswade, with the wind behind them, created chances, but their shooting was way off key. Stuart Swift, finishing well at the far post, doubled the Rams lead after 57 minutes, but the game came to life in the last few minutes when Biggleswade were awarded a penalty for handball. Amid a flurry of yellow cards, Keith Thomas coolly converted the spot kick to set up a frantic finish, but Beaconsfield held on. With just three games left, the title is now theirs to lose. **Chalfont St. Peter** moved up into second spot with a 3-1 win away at **Aylesbury Vale**, who took the lead through Luke Melisi, only for Toby Francis to equalise just before half time. It was not until the last 5 minutes that the Saints secured the win, with goals from Jerome Okimo and Ryan Welsh. Looking to secure that fourth place is **Hertford Town**, who secured a comfortable 3-0 win over **Holmer Green**, and have opened a four point gap over Harefield United. All three of Hertford's goals came from Kevin Cooper, who by all accounts also missed a hat trick! **Harefield** surprisingly lost at home to **Cockfosters** who produced a battling performance to earn a 2-1 win. Aaron Ewing put Cockfosters in front after 51 minutes with a stunning curling shot from 20 yards. The Cockfosters goal survived a few scares until Harefield eventually equalised after 70 minutes through Jamie Houlston. Although not on top, Cockfosters created the better scoring opportunities and Jon Moniatis grabbed the winner with ten minutes remaining. **Langford** won their local derby with **Biggleswade United** and in so doing completed the double over United. The home side were the first to score when Robbie O'Dell headed over the Reds advancing keeper Steve Young on 10 minutes, but two goals in the space of a few minutes before half time saw Rob Groves equalise from the spot, and then Gary Walker finish off a superb move to see the Reds go into the interval ahead. Wes Byrne made it 3 - 1 for the visitors after 65 minutes, before United pulled one back from a Robbie Odell penalty. There was drama and late goals at **Tring Athletic** where the home side went to a narrow 3-2 defeat by local rivals **Leverstock Green**. The home side had to play for about an hour with 10 men after David Wicker had been dismissed for two yellows, but took an early lead through Andy Humphries. Allan Arthur levelled the scores just before half time, but the 10 men regained the lead with Humphries second of the afternoon with 8 minutes left. However three minutes later, Frankie Jowle brought Green back level again, and two minutes later Arthur got his second to win the game. Already relegated **London Colney** scored a rare away win (at home) to **Kingsbury London Tigers** and returned with a 2-1 victory - goal scorers were Cain Davey and Danny Fitzgerald. **Ruislip Manor** lost to a Greg Deacon goal away at **Colney Heath**, a result which means they cannot now catch third from bottom Holmer Green, and will therefore finish in the other relegation spot. The 10 point deduction imposed on

Broxbourne Borough meant they have just slipped into the bottom half of the table, but they put their worries behind them as they beat **Oxhey Jets 3-1**, with a brace from Danny Ward and one from Jamie Davies. **Welwyn Garden City** drew 2-2 at home with visitors **St. Margaretsbury**, and the game between **Hanwell Town** and **Brimsdown Rovers** finished goal less.

DIVISION ONE ROUND UP

Its nail biting time at the top of Division One, with three clubs all in with a shout of claiming those valuable two promotion places. **Kentish Town** are currently in the driving seat after Monday night's game, with a lead of 4 points over **Haringey Borough** and 5 over **Hoddesdon Town**. However they have played 2 games more than their two rivals who have to play each other next week.

On Saturday, two very, very late goals, from Lee Scott and Thomas Kanaris' salvaged a point for **Kentish Town** in a 2-2 draw away at **Bedford Town Reserves**, Stacey Field putting the home side into a two goal lead. On Monday, **Kentish** took all three points as they beat **Amptill Town** 3-1 at Barnet Copthall Stadium, but again they had to come from behind, as Michael Owens gave the away side a first half lead. However Eddie Nazary brought Kentish back level just after the break, and Lee Scott added to his impressive scoring record with two more to seal the win. **Haringey Borough** beat **Cheshunt Reserves** 2-0 with a goal in each half from Leon Rolle and Karl Lewis, whilst **Hoddesdon Town** overcame fourth place **Stony Stratford Town** by 3-1. Andy Martin's free kick gave the Lilywhites a first half the lead, but that only lasted for two minutes of the second half, as a Darren Dykes penalty brought Stony back level. With 12 minutes remaining, Peter Ulatowski slotted home a Ritchie Howard pass to give Hoddesdon the lead and Howard wrapped up proceedings with his second just before the end. **Royston Town** could only manage a 0-0 draw away at **Buckingham Athletic**, and **New Bradwell St. Peter** walloped **Winslow United** 7-0, helped by a brace each from Lee Coulter and Greg Tite. **Amptill Town** returned from their trip to **Amersham Town** with a 3-2 victory under their belt, their goals coming from Stuart Reynolds, Michael Owens and Leo Masala. Adamson Ajayi and Jude Eboji replied for Amersham. The sun was obviously out at **Brache Sparta** as the spectators flocked back – well, another 4 did - to see the home side draw 2-2 with **Sporting London e Benfica**. Brache went into an early two goal lead through Edwin Leslie and Ben Smith, but Bruno Mondlane reduced the deficit just before the break, and Albert De Matos 72nd strike ensured that it ended all square. **Cranfield United** made a good fist of trying to avoid the wooden spoon by beating **Arlesey Athletic** 4-2, but they need to win their last game, and hope Winslow lose their last two games to do so. Honours were even in the basement battle between **Harpenden Town** and **Sun Postal Sports**, as the game finished in a 2-2 draw.

DIVISION TWO ROUND UP

Congratulations to **Kings Langley** who were confirmed as League champions with their 3-0 win over **Markyate** at home in front of a crowd of 60. All three goals came in the first half, from Lewis Pritchard, Lee Burcham and Paul Gash. In the battle for second spot, **Crawley Green** gained a point in their 0-0 draw with challengers **The 61 FC**, but still need two points to be sure of the second promotional place. **AFC Dunstable** have completed their fixtures, and although in third place now, could conceivably drop back to 6th if other results go against them. The local derby between **Tring Corinthians** and **Pitstone & Ivinghoe** finished in a 1-1 draw – Chris West giving Corries the lead with Lawrence Bunker equalising for Pitstone. **Aston Clinton** beat **Old Bradwell United** 2-0 to remain in 5th place, whilst **Totternhoe** and **Padbury United** drew 2 a piece, and Kent **Athletic** won 1-0 away at **Risborough Rangers** with a goal from Danny Sutherland. The two re election spots are filled by Markyate and Old Bradwell Utd.

REFEREES APPOINTMENTS

Another feather in the SSMFL Referees cap is that of Rob Mackay, promoted last year to level 3, has been appointed as an assistant by the FA in the National League Systems Final. The game is between the Midland Combination and the Southern Amateur League, to be played at Coventry City on Sat 3 May. More drinks for Mr. Ewen!

Reserve Challenge Trophy Final: Cockfosters V Colney Heath

The above Final will now be played at Brimsdown Rovers , on Wed 7th May

Referee: Peter Hern Assistant Referees: Steven Pordes and Geoff Lewis

4th Official. Stewart Beardon

THE ASSESSOR STRIKES BACK! - MISUNDERSTOOD LAW

By Mike Coventry

At a SSMFL Premier Division match last Saturday, a player was dismissed in circumstances that left his team-mates aggrieved. The logic behind the send-off was nicely quantified in the following, written by Len Randall (a Level 3 assessor) for the April edition of *The Chiltern Referee*.

“An often misunderstood interpretation of Law relates to a tackle in which the offender actually plays the ball first but does so in such a manner that the referee judges it to be reckless, with the use of excessive force, or even serious foul play. “I played the ball!” is no excuse; it is an offence and the culprit has to be punished with a caution or even a sending-off, if appropriate.”

As I write this, the sun is out, the hail storms have receded, my Wisden 2008 Almanac has thudded through the letter box, and I'm off to watch the County Champions start the defence of their title at the Rose Bowl against Mick Ewen's WarnelessShire. It was a bit parky at Lords last week, but summer is almost here!

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

billscholes@hotmail.co.uk

Bill Scholes

01494 713867