

MOLTEN SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE

NEWSLETTER No.40

By Bill Scholes

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The penultimate Saturday of the season saw the very exciting and close race for the Premier Division come to an end as Beaconsfield SYCOB finally secured the title. The battle for the Division One throne is still wide open, and looks like going right down to the wire. However, all should become clearer after the two crucial Tuesday night games.

Another Saturday with just the one hat trick, and that was scored by Darek Jozwiak of Bedford FC as he helped his team to victory over Harpenden Town.

PREMIER DIVISION ROUND UP

Congratulations to Beaconsfield SYCOB who were confirmed as Premier Division champions on Saturday when they beat Kingsbury London Tigers 2-0 at home, both goals coming in the first half. Craig O'Connor opened the scoring in the 4th minute and Stuart Swift got the second from the penalty spot. Immediately after the match, the League Chairman Pat Burns presented the Rams with the Championship Shield and a new cup.

Chalfont St. Peter, who had been in the top two or three since just before Christmas, confirmed the runners-up spot with a 1-0 win over visitors **Tring Athletic**. Although in theory Biggleswade Town could catch them, the Saints goal difference of + 26 should be enough to see them home! The pace of the home side's forwards caused the Tring back line problems, particularly in the first half, but, not for the first time this season, that final cross or pass was found wanting. Although Tring rested several players with an upcoming semi final in mind, there was little between the two teams, although Chalfont were well ahead in the offside stakes! The new Tring back four generally coped well with the pacy Chalfont forwards, but one moment of indecision allowed Ryan Welsh to escape and joyfully slot home. **Biggleswade Town** beat **London Colney** 2-0 with goals from Adam Beansaud and Bradley Harrison and will finish third, and now can look forward to next season at their brand new ground with anticipation. **Hertford Town** kept on track to secure the fourth spot as they won 2-1 at home to **Hanwell Town**. Kevin Cooper gave Hertford a dream start, scoring after just two minutes, but it was not long before Charlie Baverstock brought Hanwell back on level terms. The away side looked the more likely to score in the second half, but Lee Roberts snatched the winner for the Blues with just two minutes remaining. Cooper's goal was his 213th for the club, and he is chasing Dave Whitehead's all time record of 217. **Harefield United** kept up the pressure on Hertford as they came away from **Ruislip Manor** with a 1-0 win, courtesy of a Craig Totton penalty. **Langford** are on track for a top six finish as they beat early front runners **Brimdson Rovers** by a solitary goal from Luke Nicholls. At half time the score in a dour game between **Leverstock Green** and **Cockfosters** was 0-0, but Leverstock sprung into action in the second half with four goals from Anthony Page, Matt Wardle, James Armstrong, and Dale Sears. For 25 minutes it seemed as though **Holmer Green** would finish their disappointing season with a flourish as they raced into a two goal lead, thanks to Simon Williams and Alex McDonald, but visitors **Aylesbury Vale** had other ideas, and turned the game round with a brace from Luke Melisi and the winner from Keiron Schmidt. Another side who came from a two goal deficit away from home were **Welwyn Garden City**, who scored three times in the second half through Eric Gibbs and a brace from Craig Tompkins, to record a 3-2 victory over **Oxhey Jets**. Sam Worrall and Wayne Gladdy had given the Jets the first half lead. **Biggleswade United** won 2-1 away **Colney Heath**, thanks to a double from Simon Catmur, and an early goal from Loren Maxwell gave **St. Margaretsbury** a 1-0 win away at **Broxbourne Borough**.

DIVISION ONE ROUND UP

Approaching the last week of the season, the race for the title and for the all-important two promotion spots, continues to its nail biting finish. It is now down to just three clubs, separated by four points. Although not playing on Saturday, Kentish Town remain in top spot, four

points clear of their two rivals, but they only have one game remaining. Hoddesdon Town, in second place, have two games remaining, one of which is away to third placed Haringey Boro, who have three games left. What's more important – games in hand or points on the board? You pays your money and you takes your choice.

Both Haringey and **Hoddesdon** won on Saturday, with the latter having perhaps the easier time with a 3-0 away to second from bottom **Winslow United**. Kevin Metivier gave the Lilywhites a one goal lead by half time, and Craig Hinton and Peter Ulatowski eased the nerves with two more goals in the second half. In their final game of the season, **Arlesey Athletic** hosted **Haringey Borough** on a day more suited to mid winter than spring. In a fast and furious first half, it was Arlesey that asked most of the questions and indeed they hit the Borough post in the first minute of the match. Little was seen of the Borough attack and their keeper was the busier of the two as he saved a one on one situation to keep the scores level at half time. The Borough manager must have been busy in the dressing room as Borough came out for the second half in a more determined mood. However, they missed a good chance when a forward headed over the crossbar on 65 minutes. The miss of the match was at the other end when Arlesey's Terry Lock somehow missed an open goal on 75 minutes. With time running out Borough mounted attack after attack and were finally rewarded when Scott Walters in the home goal missed a cross, the first he missed all afternoon, and allowed Mark Maher to head the ball into the net on 87 minutes. Arlesey tried to respond but Borough held on for an important win to maintain their promotion push. But as someone once said, it was a damn close run thing! Just a few points behind the three leaders, the clubs in 4th, 5th, and 6th place all won to evoke thoughts of what might have been. **Royston Town** got back to winning ways with a 4-1 win away at **Cranfield United** – two first half goals from Craig Hammond and Tom Galvin were followed by two in the second half from Greg Jackson and Luke Robbins, doubles from Adam Castagnetti and Darren Dykes helped **Stony Stratford** to a 5-0 home win against **Sun Postal Sports**, and Greg Tite's 84th minute goal gave **New Bradwell St. Peter** a 1-0 win at home to **Bedford Town Reserves**. A hat trick from Darek Jozwiak, which included a penalty, and a single from Jay Sattorusso helped **Bedford FC** to a 4-2 victory over **Harpenden Town**, whose goals came from Richard Taasse and Adam Smith. Christian Lester gave **Amptill Town** the lead in their game with **Brache Sparta**, who equalised through Lee Hayward, but Martin Wells popped up with the winner for the home side in the 63rd minute. In the days other game, an Edgar Sa Da Silva 79th minute goal rescued **Sport London e Benfica** from defeat against **Amersham Town**, who had led for most of the game with an early Roy Byron goal.

DIVISION TWO ROUND UP

Champions **Kings Langley** were grateful to a 25th minute goal from Simon Conway to record a 1-0 home win over **The 61 FC**, a result that leaves Dick Everett's side needing a win in their last game against Kent Athletic to leap frog over AFC Dunstable and secure third place. **Tring Corinthians** celebrated their last home game of the season with a last-gasp 3-2 win over **Kent Athletic** – Will Hatton and Charles Snoxell getting the two late, late goals. **Aston Clinton's** push for a top four spot suffered a setback as they lost 2-1 away at **Mursley United**, who took a first half lead with goals from Adam Caesar and Martin Shaw. Braike Cahill pulled one back early in the second half, but they could not find the equaliser. Lawrence Bunker was again on the score sheet for **Pitstone & Ivinghoe** as they came from two down to grab a 2-2 draw against **Risborough Rangers**. Pitstone's other goal came from a Mitch Hamilton penalty, whilst Danny Palmer and Dan Daly (an U-11 player of immense promise!) were on the score sheet for Risborough. The other game in the Division saw **Caddington** romp home 5-1 away to bottom club **Markyate** – no details provided.

No Cup ties this week, but there are a number of Semi finals and Finals upcoming in the next two weeks, and we wish the best of luck to all competing clubs. The Midweek edition of the Newsletter may be slightly delayed this week, as weather permitting I hope to be in my usual blue and white striped deckchair at Hove for the first home game of the season.

Many thanks to our contributors - please keep all news /views / items of interest coming to billsholes@hotmail.co.uk Bill Scholes 01494 713867