

**MOLTEN SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE  
LAST OF THE SEASON – 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 2008  
NEWSLETTER No.43**

*By Bill Scholes*

*Well, here we are at last – the end of another season. It has been one of the most exciting league seasons for a good few years, with both the Premier Division and Division One being the most open for some time. The lead in both Divisions changed hands with great regularity – even Mick Ewen’s betting colleagues in the Far East had difficulty in keeping up! Congratulations to all those clubs who emerged victorious and commiserations to those who just failed at the final hurdle. It was very pleasing to see that a number of clubs had their best ever seasons – with particular congratulations to Beaconsfield SYCOB and Kings Langley who both won their respective divisions, Divisional Cups and County Cups. Chalfont St. Peter topped off an excellent season by winning the Challenge Trophy to go with their runners up spot in the League and Premier Division Cup – being pipped on both occasions by Beaconsfield. Haringey Borough celebrated their centenary season by being promoted back to the Premier Division, as well as winning the Division One Cup, and Kentish Town, having only been in existence for 14 years, must have been pinching themselves as they also won promotion to the Premier Division by winning the Division One title.*

**SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLAND FOOTBALL LEAGUE CHALLENGE TROPHY  
Chalfont St. Peter 2 Brimsdown Rovers 0**

Chalfont ended their best season ever on a high as they won the prestigious League Challenge Trophy by beating Brimsdown Rovers 2-0 in the rearranged Final at London Colney. Both teams were without their star strikers (Bradley Bubb for Chalfont and Ashley Taylor-Forbes for Brimsdown) – both serving suspensions - and Chalfont suffered a further blow when Jerome Okimo pulled a hamstring in the pre match warm up and could take no part in the game. However this misfortune only served to lift Chalfont and, playing their 66<sup>th</sup> competitive match, they looked the hungrier of the two sides, and it was perhaps fate that Ryan Welch, who came into the side to replace Okimo, produced the perfect pass to put Charlie Strutton through for the first goal after 16 minutes. Chalfont continued to threaten down both flanks and, although Brimsdown looked dangerous on the break, the Chalfont back line, with skipper John Carroll back after missing several key games through injury, always looked solid. Chalfont were definitely on top in the second half, and it was no surprise when Terrell Lewis added the second to make sure that the winner’s medals went to Chalfont.

**PREMIER DIVISION CUP  
Beaconsfield SYCOB 2 Chalfont St. Peter 1**

Beaconsfield SYCOB made club history on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May when they completed their first ever “Treble” after defeating close rivals Chalfont St. Peter in the Premier Division Cup Final - played on a magnificent surface at Harefield United. The game itself was a contrast in styles between the power and aggression of Beaconsfield and the pace and skill of Chalfont. Beaconsfield quickly began to dominate the game and deservedly took the lead in the 21<sup>st</sup> minute after Oliver Godwin forced the ball home following a game of ping pong from a corner. Chalfont threatened only in flashes, and it looked like the Rams had sealed the victory just after half time when a defensive mix up allowed Godwin to head over the stranded keepers head. However Chalfont were not finished and began to come more into the game as their speedy forwards began to pressurize the slightly older Beaconsfield legs, and the Rams were indebted to keeper Nick Hart for a couple of tremendous saves to keep their lead intact. The pressure eventually paid, and following one of the best pieces of

football seen in the game, Terrell Lewis completed the move to bring Chalfont hope and set up a last frantic 15 minutes. However the Rams defence held firm to hold on for the historic victory.

**DIVISION ONE CUP  
Haringey Borough 2 Ampthill Town 1**

Haringey Borough concluded what they hope will be their only sojourn in Division One of the League by edging home 2-1 in a thrilling Divisional Cup Final with Ampthill Town. Melvin Thompson in the first half and Patrick Billong in the second half weighed in with the crucial strikes. Following on from last Saturdays clinching of promotion at the first attempt it was a wonderful way to bring the curtain down on what must be Borough's best ever season and to eradicate the bitter memory of relegation on the last day of 2006/07

**DIVISION TWO CUP  
Kings Langley 6, Mursley United 0**

In front of a goodly crowd of 162 at Tring Athletic, Kings Langley crowned an excellent season by completing the treble as they added the Divisional Cup to their League title and County Cup success. Following a cloudburst just before the kick off, mention must be made of the strenuous efforts of the Tring contingent to remove the surface water from the pitch – even Mick Ewen was spotted wielding a nifty fork – could be a second career beckoning? In truth the game was over as a contest within the first half hour as Kings Langley raced into a three goal lead with strikes from Ben Wilkie, Simon Conway and Lewis Pritchard, but Mursley never gave up and battled bravely to get on the score sheet. However Conway added his second just before half time, and completed his hat trick (the only one of the Finals) on the hour mark. In between, Lee Burchill added the fifth from the penalty spot. Conway was presented with the match ball, in appreciation of his achievement, at the end of the game, but Andy Passman, of Molten Sports, was seen afterwards asking for Conway’s address so that he could send him an invoice!

**RESERVE DIVISION CHALLENGE TROPHY  
Cockfosters 2, Colney Heath 1**

Jamie Brandon's goal 30 seconds from the end of normal time settled an absorbing Final that could quite easily have gone either way. Cockfosters had barely had a kick before Brandon gave the Reds the lead after 33 minutes. At times both goals led a charmed life but resolute defending and a bit of luck kept Colney Heath at bay until the 84th minute when Dan Cornock equalised for Colney. With extra-time looming, Brandon spectacularly volleyed home Andreas's free kick to lift the trophy for Cockfosters.

**BERKS & BUCKS SENIOR TROPHY FINAL  
Beaconsfield SYCOB 1, Newport Pagnell 0**

Beaconsfield won their second Trophy inside five days on when they added the Berks & Bucks Senior Trophy to the League Championship they won five days earlier to complete a double. SYCOB made the trip to Aylesbury Vale to take on Newport Pagnell Town in the Final but in truth the match never really lived up to expectations and was not a classic, but nevertheless Beaconsfield, without five regulars who were cup tied, dug in and ground out a result against their opponents from the United Counties League. A Stuart Swift penalty in the 61<sup>st</sup> minute was the difference between the sides a result of probably the best move of the match when Anthony Wright put Michael Currie through and as he surged into the box he was brought down for the penalty. Swift netted yet again from the spot for his 24<sup>th</sup> goal of the season.

**HERTS CHARITY CUP FINAL  
Tring Athletic 1, Welwyn Garden City 0**

Tring Athletic won the Herts Charity Shield for the third time in eight years with a 1-0 victory over Welwyn Garden City in driving rain at The Herts FA County Ground, Letchworth. A stooping near

post header from Mark Burfoot just after the interval was enough to return the shield to Tring, having won previously at the same venue in 2000 and 2002.

### **NORTH BEDS CHARITY CUP FINAL**

#### **Langford 1, Biggleswade Town 0**

Langford lifted the centenary North Beds Charity Cup on home soil last Friday. The Reds defeated local rivals Biggleswade Town in front of a bumper crowd of 275 in the final at Forde Park. Paul Donald netted the only goal in a game of few chances, seeing home a corner shortly before half time.

### **ESSEX THAMESIDE CHALLENGE TROPHY FINAL**

#### **Brimsdown Rovers 2, Canvey Island 1**

Brimsdown Rovers warmed up for their League challenge Trophy final with a 2-1 win over illustrious opponents Canvey Island. The Islanders took the lead after 15 minutes but Eric Manangu brought Rovers level with just 10 minutes remaining, thus ensuring extra time. The game remained deadlocked until 5 minutes from the end when that man Manangu popped up again for his second, and the decisive Cup winning goal.

### **CRAWLEY GREEN STRIKER STARS AT WEMBLEY**

What a day for Crawley Green's first team striker, Danny Watson. Following terrific displays for his country Danny was selected in the England U-18's Schools squad to face the 'Auld Enemy' Scotland and this at the home of football - Wembley. The date was Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April. Disappointingly for the 100 club members who travelled to the match, Danny did not start the match. But his first dream moment came at 4.24pm. England was 1-0 up but not playing convincingly when Danny was thrust into the action to spice up the forward line. Dream moment two, ten minutes later when, following a corner, Danny thrashed the ball past Scottish goalkeeper, Connor O'Boyle, to virtually seal the match. Danny certainly livened the game up with his all-action display and nearly added to his tally with a shot late in the game. A superb performance by the young star, in a magnificent setting and thoroughly enjoyed by all his friends and supporters. Danny was; the first player from Crawley to represent his country, the first player from Crawley to play at the new Wembley and the first player from Crawley to score at Wembley.

### **REPORT ON THE NEW NATIONAL REFEREES ASSESSOR SCHEME**

*By Tony Weight*

*SSMFL Referee Assessor Co-ordinator*

Now we are at the end of another playing season, it is a good time to review the first year of the new National Supply League Assessment Scheme. The FA introduced the scheme in August 2007 for all Supply Leagues. Previously, only Level 4 referee was assessed. Now all three officials are.

As most of you will already know, 5 of our referees achieved promotion to Level 3, Messrs Mackey, Mellor, O'Donnell, Flanagan and Serrano; a fantastic achievement, bringing great credit to our League. In total we completed 235 assessments during the 2007-2008 promotion season out of 260 that were planned. This amounts to 51% of total matches refereed by Level 4s on the Premier Division. The FA wants 50% coverage of matches, so we have achieved that target. All Level 4 referees had at least 6 and some 7 assessments, all of which were reported by different assessors.

My grateful thanks go to all the assessors on the League and to all the Level 4 Referees for their co-operation and commitment. Also, a big vote of thanks to all the Premier Division clubs who looked after the assessors. This is much appreciated. Many thanks also to the assistant referees who were out with the Level 4s on the Premier League games. I know that your experience and advice has been a great help to the Level 4s.

We also completed 366 assessments on assistant referees. I hope that all those receiving a report found them helpful and gave them some pointers for further improvement as an assistant referee. There is no doubt that the standard of assistant referees on the League is very high and this is borne out by the marks given to assistants by assessors. A mark of 70 is described as good and the standard

expected. The average mark for assistants is well over this and quite close to the 80 mark which is defined as very good. Still, there is always room for improvement, so I hope all of the 120 of you who received a report got some benefit from it.

If anyone has any comments about the assessment scheme, please do contact me and have a chat or send an e-mail. I am always on the lookout for new assessors, so if you fancy combining this with your league official duties please let me know. The League has been very supportive of the scheme and together we can continue to improve it and raise the standards of performance even higher.

Have a great close season and I look forward to meeting up with you when the new season starts on Saturday August 9<sup>th</sup> 2008.

We in the Spartan South Midland League are extremely lucky to have such an excellent Refereeing Administration Team (RATS?) as we do, and all our clubs should be indebted (even some through gritted teeth) to Mick Ewen-Referees Secretary, Tony Weight- Referee Assessor Co-ordinator, and both Mike Taylor and Bill Hamilton, who are Chairman and Treasurer respectively of the very active SSMFL Referees Association. The successes that our referees have had this season, both in promotions and prestige appointments, is tantamount to all their hard work and effort over the season – lists of promotions etc can be found on the excellent Association's website [www.flagandwhistle.co.uk](http://www.flagandwhistle.co.uk). Well worth a visit, if only to read the velvety words of Mike Taylor - the old Silver Fox himself, and the slightly more down-to-earth tones of Mick Ewen – the SSMFL's answer to Simon Cowell!

### **WHAT ODDS WOULD YOU HAVE GIVEN ON.....**

At the start of the season, London Colney (Premier Division) and Haringey Borough (Division One) played a pre-season challenge match as part of the celebrations to honour both clubs centenary season. At the end of the season, it now appears highly likely that the clubs will swap positions, as Haringey are promoted and London Colney is relegated. What would Mystic Mick have said about that?

### **THE NEW SEASON.....WOT, ALREADY!**

The various FA Non league committees have been busy meeting this week to sort out who will be playing where next season, but because there are still reservations over the continuing existence of certain clubs higher up the system, nothing can yet be guaranteed. However we can certainly congratulate Beaconsfield on their promotion into the Southern League –Div South & West. Interesting factoid is that this will be their 6<sup>th</sup> different League in as many seasons – let's hope that Club Secretary Robin Woolman's Sat Nav is fully operational! Sadly, Beaconsfield will miss out on a prospective local derby with Marlow, who have been moved across into the Midland Division – still, does mean they won't have to go to Truro! Taking the place of Beaconsfield, and relegated from the Southern league Midland Division, is Berkhamsted town, and we hope they have a happy and enjoyable stay here in the SSMFL.

Well, that's about it for the season. Thanks for letting me into your mail box, (post box in Terry Gilmore's case) and many thanks to everyone who has contributed reports and items of interest, both factual and humorous, throughout the season, and unreserved apologies to anyone I may have upset – apart from Essex Man. **Undoubtedly there will numerous managerial changes during the pre season – there always are – so please keep me posted of any changes either within your club, or those that you know about, and I will try and pull it altogether at the start of the season.** Let's hope for a better summer than last year - my blue and white striped deckchair awaits at Hove.

Finally, a word of advice to all referees out there – if you wish to get plum fixtures next season, get a part time job as a Tour manager for Billy Joe Shaver.

**Don't forget, all items of interest, please send to [billscholes@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:billscholes@hotmail.co.uk)**

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