

MOLTEN SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

NEWSLETTER No. 5

By Bill Scholes

Apologies for slight delay in getting this out, but I had a bit of a PC crash. I am now up and running again (more like stumbling really) and hopefully normal service will be resumed next week.

FA Carlsberg VASE

Saturday 8th September

Following last Saturday's games, 6 Spartan South Midlands sides chalked up victories, earned themselves a nice bit of money (£500) and progressed to the next round on 22nd September. The only side to win away from home was **Chalfont St. Peter**, who beat Wessex Division One side **Farnborough North End** 3-1. The Saints went 1-0 down after just 11 minutes, but two goals from Jerome Okimo and one from Terrell Lewis regained the lead before the half hour mark. **Biggleswade United** needed two goals from Luke Lincoln and Jake Goodship in extra time to beat **Rothwell Corinthians** 3-1, Robbie O'Dell having given them the lead in the first half, only for Corinthians to level just after half time. **Cockfosters** were 2-1 down at half time in their game against **Southend Manor**, but goals from Dan O'Connor and Nicky Stewart eventually saw them through. There was one all-South Midland tie, and that was at **Hoddesdon Town**, where the home side beat **Kentish Town** 2-0, thanks to Ross Price and Peter Ulatowski. **St. Margaretsbury** were given the best of starts in their game against **Northampton Spencer** by a Ben Herod goal after just one minute, and the same player doubled the score 51 minutes later. A third goal from Andy Birnie 6 minutes later seemed to have the tie done and dusted, but the visitors had other ideas, and two goals in the last 20 minutes had the Bury hanging on for a 3-2 win. **Royston Town** put their poor league form behind them to beat seaisiders **FC Clacton** 2-1, and that after going a goal down on 17 minutes. Lee Rogers equalised after half an hour, and Seb Ndom made the Crows day with the winner with just 8 minutes left. The disappointed clubs were **London Colney**, who lost 5-1 away at **Concord Rangers**, **Haringey Borough**, who lost 3-1 at home to **Harwich & Parkeston**, **Langford**, who went down 3-2 at home to **Stewart & Lloyds**, and **Aylesbury Vale** who succumbed to two extra time goals in their 3-1 defeat away at **Highworth Town**. This after Luke Melisi put them in front after just 10 minutes. On Sunday, **Arlesey Athletic** suffered a rather heavy 8-1 home defeat to **Stanway Rovers**.

CHALLENGE TROPHY FIRST ROUND - SATURDAY

This week is Challenge Trophy week, and last Saturday saw those clubs without lights, who were drawn at home, playing their First Round ties. Two Premier Division sides faced potential banana skin ties, but both emerged unscathed. **Colney Heath** left **Crawley Green** with a 3-0 win, thanks to goals from Scott Lacey, Jamie Hazel and Phil Jackson, whilst **Broxbourne Borough** had a 3-1 win at **Aston Clinton**, but needed a 90th minute penalty from Daryl Mitchell to finally put an end to a spirited home side resistance. However three Division Two sides did take the scalps of teams in the division above them – **The 61FC (Luton)** beat **Buckingham Athletic** 3-1, thanks to two goals from Iain Pink and one from Matt Tibbs, **Totternhoe** overcame **Bedford Town Reserves** by the same scoreline, Scott Covington, Ricky Finan and Declan Meenan being the heroes, whilst **Mursley United**, with goals from Stuart Homer and Martin Shaw, defeated **Sun Sports Postal** 2-1.

CHALLENGE TROPHY FIRST ROUND – MIDWEEK

Tuesday night saw 14 more Challenge Trophy games played, but no giant killing acts. **Haringey Borough** nearly overcame visitors **Welwyn Garden City**, but having held them to 2-2 draw after extra time, finally succumbed 8-9 on penalties. The match between **Leverstock Green** and **Sport London e Benfica** also went to penalties after the two sides were locked 3-3 at the end of 120 minutes, before Leverstock won the shoot out 6-5. There were two big wins for Premier Division sides – **Hertford Town** overwhelming **Winslow United** 9-0, helped by 4 goals from Kevin Cooper and three from Ryan Redford, whilst **Cockfosters** put seven past **Cranfield United** – a hat trick from Dave Pigden and a brace apiece from Dan O'Connor and Jon Moniatis. **Chalfont St. Peter**, although resting a few players, had a bit of a fright at home to Division Two **Risborough Rangers**, and it took a 90th minute goal from Ryan Welsh (his second of the night) to save Chalfont's blushes. **Ruislip Manor** put their ground troubles behind them as they travelled to **Hoddesdon Town** and came away with a 3-1 win. **Amersham Town** relinquished ground advantage in their tie with local rivals **Holmer Green** due to malfunctioning floodlights on one side of the ground i.e. lying flat, but although they put up a spirited performance, a last minute melee with seemingly all participants in the Holmer Green 6 yard box saw them just fail to force the tie into extra time, and go down 2-1.

PREMIER DIVISION ROUND UP

This week the FA Vase and Challenge Trophy competitions dominated Saturday's games, with only 5 league games played. Aylesbury Vale remain top, in spite of not playing, but 4 of their nearest challengers all took the opportunity to close the gap. **Brimmsdown Rovers** followed up their mid week 4-1 win over erstwhile leaders Chalfont St. Peter with a 3-0 away victory at **Oxhey Jets**, to make it 3 wins on the bounce, and move into second place. All 3 goals came in the second half. One point behind, but with 2 games in hand, are **Biggleswade Town**, who looked impressive in their 2-0 away win at **Hanwell Town**. Manager Chris Nunn, who joined half way through last season, is putting together a very useful squad, recruiting well from his old stamping grounds around Newmarket and Histon, and one of the new recruits, Dan Heron, scored both the goals, one in each half. An entertaining afternoon for the neutral, with both sets of supporters in the stand being equally, and vociferously, convinced that the men in black were totally against their respective sides! **Harefield United** moved up to 4th, with a 2-0 win at home to **Tring Athletic** in spite of having to play the last 60 minutes with only 10 men, whilst by far the biggest crowd of the day (149) saw **Hertford Town** see off local rivals **Welwyn Garden City** by the odd goal in five. With just 15 minutes left on the clock, Town were holding a 3 goal lead, thanks to the dynamic duo of Kevin Cooper and Ryan Redford (twice), but the Citizens staged a dramatic comeback with strikes from McTay and Briggs, but could not quite force the equaliser. **Holmer Green** moved up 8 places from the bottom of the table with their first win of the season over **Kingsbury London Tigers**. The visitors took the lead after 15 minutes, but goals from Simon Williams and Sammy Grace sealed all three points. For the second week running, Ruislip Manor's home game was postponed due to an unfit pitch, and the League Committee have now closed the ground until such time as remedial action has been taken to bring the pitch back to an acceptable playing standard. The FA has endorsed the League's action.

DIVISION ONE ROUND UP

Again only 5 games played, and **Bedford** regained top spot with a 2-1 home win to **Cheshunt Reserves**. James Lally opened the scoring for Bedford although Ryan Dear equalised right on the stroke of half time for the Ambers, Chris Huckle popped up with the winner in the 77th

minute. **Stony Stratford** was knocked off top spot following their 1-3 home defeat at the hands of resurgent **Amersham Town**. Reon Thomas and Jude Eboji put Amersham 3-0 up, and Keith Williams scored a consolation for Stony deep into added on time .A brace from Darren Edwards saw **Brache Sparta** defeat **Cranfield United** 2-0 away, whilst **New Bradwell St Peter** won 2-0 at home to **Sport London e Benfica**. The remaining game saw **Winslow United** and **Amphill Town** share the points in a 1-1 draw, both goals coming in the last 7 minutes.

DIVISION TWO ROUND UP

There were three games only in this division. **Kings Langley** took over at the top, following their 2-0 win away at **Pitstone & Ivinghoe**, with a goal from Andrew Cracknell, and an OG. **Kent Athletic** moved up to second place with a comprehensive 7-1 win away to pointless **Old Bradwell Utd** - Kyremeh scoring the only hat trick of the day. **Padbury United**, also pointless, were beaten 5-0 at home to **Risboro Rangers**, for whom Robbie Morgan and Mike Aldridge scored two apiece.

FA CUP PREVIEW

This Saturday sees our remaining 5 sides left in the FA Cup in action, with 4 having home draws. Beaconsfield SYCOB and Broxbourne Boro both face teams from the BGB Southern League Premier Division - Beaconsfield take on Chippenham Town, who are currently second in that league, whilst Broxbourne Borough host Bedford Town. Welwyn Garden City also face stiff opposition in Billericay Town from the Ryman Premier Division. Hertford Town welcome another Step 5 club – ex Spartan South Midland League champions Barkingside, who now ply their trade in the Essex Senior League. The only club to need the telephone number of a coach company are Chalfont St. Peter, who travel to Sandhurst Town from the Combined Counties League – also a Step 5 League.

We wish all 5 clubs the very best of luck

A NICE LITTLE EARNER!

Haringey Borough are seeking tenders for the fire damage to their main stand sustained in March this year. Anyone working for a contractor who might be interested in quoting for such a job should contact the Haringey Club Secretary John Bacon on 01707 873187 for access to survey. The job is probably in the 30/50K range.

SNIPPETS

Kentish Town continue to upgrade their new home at Barnet Copthall Stadium, thanks to the generosity of Barclays Premier League Arsenal. The Gunners had earlier donated a set of goalposts for use at the Stadium, and last week the club's charitable trust handed over a cheque for £1,500 to pay for portable dug outs. Kentish Town secretary Cliff Rhodes was delighted. He said " The big clubs often get criticised for not helping their poor neighbours, but Arsenal have been more than generous and we are hoping to work closely with them on community projects"

All news, items of interest, gossip etc gratefully received.

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