



Saturday 15th October 2011

BURNHAM 2, BISHOP'S STORTFORD 5
(FA CHALLENGE CUP – 3rd QUALIFYING ROUND)

An efficient display at The Gore set the Blues up for a comfortable victory over their Evo-Stik Southern League opponents and a “home” tie against Salisbury City in the last qualifying round. Two goals in the first ten minutes settled any nerves and although the hosts had almost as much possession of the ball as Stortford at times the pace and ability of the Blues going forward was too much for the Burnham defence.

Stortford's midfield of Reece Prestedge, Scott Shulton, Alli Abdullahi and Lewis Whiteley took an early grip on proceedings and controlled matters for the most part. The hosts looked promising in their attacks but the Stortford defence dealt well with most attacks and the returning Sean Francis had a particularly fine match in the heart of the back line.

Sean Francis was the only change to Ian Walker's starting eleven with Ritchie Jones reverting to the right back berth and Jack Jeffries dropping to the bench. Also on the bench was Junior Dadson who had recovered from his injury sustained at Canvey Island.

Although Jordan Archer had to stretch to take a cross under the bar from the right by Ben Gladwin early on, the Blues went ahead in the 6th minute. A corner on the right from Michael Bakare found Reece Prestedge some 30 yards out and centrally placed and when the Blues skipper headed the ball forward into the box SCOTT SHULTON, in space, netted from ten yards after his initial shot had been blocked by keeper Jim Reading (0-1).

Just four minutes later Stortford were two in front. Michael Bakare was fouled wide on the right and his deep free-kick to the far post was not taken by Reading and RITCHIE JONES was on hand to slip the ball into the net from close range (0-2).

Phil Anderson made a timely tackle in the 12th minute to stop Jordan Dowdican as the striker cut in towards goal from the right wing and then Bakare shot over the bar from the edge of the area after connecting with a Dwight Gayle long throw. There were near misses at both ends shortly afterwards as a Dowdican shot just cleared the bar and in the 18th minute, after good work from Scott Shulton, a low Bakare shot from 23 yards was saved by keeper Reading at the expense of a corner.

Dwight Gayle's long throws were causing the Burnham defence problems and when one was cleared only as far as Lewis Whiteley the midfielder had his shot beaten away by Reading. Less than a minute later a cross from Bakare found Scott Shulton but his shot was wide of the far post.

Burnham's Ashley Smith, chasing a long clearance, shot inches over Jordan Archer's bar on the half hour but Stortford always looked menacing when attacking and Bakare's free-kick hit the side netting from a free-kick after Whiteley was fouled on the right. Stortford's third goal, in the 36th minute, resulted from the first penalty awarded to them this campaign. An excellent through ball from Sebastian Dunbar down the inside left channel was collected by Michael Bakare and following a run into the box Stortford's leading striker went down under a challenge by keeper Reading and Referee Anthony Coggins awarded a spot-kick that DWIGHT GAYLE duly converted (0-3).

Gayle almost netted again in the 38th minute when he went through on for a one on one situation but Reading managed to block the youngster's shot. The hosts rallied shortly before the break and a free-kick from Ashley Smith was held by Archer and the Stortford keeper kept out a cross from Alex Duffy at the near post.

Half time: 0-3

Burnham's Dowdican' shot on the turn, five minutes after the interval, was held at the near post by Archer and then the hosts reduced the deficit in the 55th minute. Ali Abdullahi committed a foul on the left and when Ashley Smith's free-kick came over into the box it was cleared only as far as Ryan Bird who lobbed the ball back in and JORDAN DOWDICAN headed past Archer from 15 yards as the Stortford keeper advanced off his goal-line (1-3).

Stortford countered strongly following this reverse. Dunbar released Bakare to advance goalwards in the 59th minute but Reading blocked the shot away and then, five minutes later, Bakare was close with a drive. Substitute Ade Cole almost got on the scoresheet with a shot on the turn from the edge of the area that inched past keeper Reading's left upright.

The pressure told in the 66th minute as the Blues restored their three goal lead. A fine pass forward from inside his own half by Reece Prestedge fed MICHAEL BAKARE and the striker ran through to the edge of the box and lifted a shot over Reading and under the crossbar (1-4).

Following a free-kick from Ben Hurdell on the right Ryan Bird headed straight at Jordan Archer but the Blues went further ahead in the 74th minute. Michael Bakare and substitute Junior Dadson linked well on the left and BAKARE then cut inside to hammer a fierce 20 yard shot into the net via the far post (1-5).

The hosts pulled a goal back with eleven minutes remaining. An attack up their left flank concluded with a cross-cum-shot from the touchline by ASHLEY SMITH that beat Jordan Archer and nestled in the far corner of the net (2-5).

There could have been more goals the final whistle. Jordan Archer made a brilliant point blank save to turn a header from Alex Duffy over the bar after another free-kick from Ben Hurdell. At the other end Stortford's third substitute, Mitch Hahn, saw his 20 yard effort saved by Reading after good approach work by Bakare and Shulton and before the end Michael Bakare also had a shot saved by Reading who diverted the ball away for a corner.

Referee Anthony Coggins showed a yellow card to Sebastian Dunbar for a late tackle in the second half and there were bookings for Burnham's Jim Reading, Ben Hurdell, Ben Gladwin and Mitchell Woodward.

Full time: 2-5

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Jordan Archer; Ritchie Jones; Sebastian Dunbar; Ali Abdullahi (sub – Junior Dadson 59 mins); Sean Francis; Phil Anderson; Lewis Whiteley (sub – Ade Cole 59 mins); Reece Prestedge; Dwight Gayle (sub – Mitch Hahn 74 mins); Michael Bakare; Scott Shulton.
Unused substitutes: Daniel Subuola, Jack Jeffries and George Dawson.

BURNHAM: Jim Reading; Chris Robinson (sub – Hanif Boyle 74 mins); Ben Hurdell; Will Dunlop; Ryan Bird; Ben Gladwin (sub – Dave Reading 74 mins); Ashley Smith (sub - Kieran Webb 90 mins); Lee Togwell; Jordan Dowdican; Mitchell Woodward; Alex Duffy.
Unused substitutes: Matt Seedal, Bertie Squires-Adams, Karl Garstang and Jordan Eggleton.

Attendance: 182