



Tuesday 25th October 2011

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 0, CORBY TOWN 2
(BLUE SQUARE BET NORTH)

The Blues suffered a second successive loss after a goal in each half set visitors Corby Town on course for maximum points at Woodside Park. The Steelmen therefore completed a league double over Stortford. The Northamptonshire side deserved their victory and showed why they are pushing for at least for a play-off place with an efficient performance. However, Stortford had opportunities, particularly early in the second half, to put the Steelmen under pressure and at that stage went close to scoring.

The trouble with the Blues was that they weren't able to build consistent pressure of their own on the visitors defence during the match. Stortford's pressure was only intermittent largely because the Corby midfield was, for the most part, in control of proceedings.

As expected, Ian Walker's line-up included skipper Reece Prestedge returning from suspension and Paco Craig in the centre of defence alongside Phil Anderson because of Sean Francis' groin strain. Also, up front Daniel Subuola partnered Dwight Gayle.

The visitors made a good start and dictated the play in the opening minutes. Big striker Matt Rhead tried an early 25 yard shot on the turn that just cleared Jordan Archer's bar. In the early stages the Blues rare attacks posed some threat to a slightly shaky looking Corby defence. In the 6th minute Scott Shulton found Dwight Gayle running through the middle but unfortunately the ball wouldn't drop quickly early enough for the striker and he could only steer it into the arms of keeper Chris Mackenzie from 18 yards.

Phil Anderson made a good blocking tackle to deny Rhead as the Corby number nine made for goal and then, in the 11th minute, a Shulton pass again found Dwight Gayle whose low 20 yard shot forced a good save from Mackenzie falling to his right.

There was then a spell of play when Blues keeper Jordan Archer saw a fair amount of action. Rhead's looping back header following a long throw from Paul Mayo was held under the bar by Archer and then, shortly afterwards, he made an excellent save tipping a James Ozmen close range header over the bar.

Corby's Rhead headed just over from an Andy Hall free-kick but, at the other end a Scott Shulton corner on the left struck the base of the near post. Archer was again in action in the 19th minute as Rhead's back header sent Nick Rogan clear down the middle and the Blues keeper saved the situation with a fine block at the expense of a corner.

The Steelmen went a goal up in the 25th minute. Midfielder James Ozmen made a surging run in the middle before challenges from the Stortford defence saw the ball run loose to the left and NICK ROGAN, from a possibly offside position, slid the ball from an acute angle low and wide of Archer into the far corner of the net (0-1).

The visitors continued in a positive vein and in the 35th minute Archer parried down a fierce shot from Andy Hall and then Ozmen drove narrowly wide from the edge of the area. Again there was another instance of the Blues worrying the Corby defence in the 38th minute when a long ball from Reece Prestedge almost resulted in Dwight Gayle turning the ball past keeper Mackenzie into an unguarded net.

In the 43rd minute Paul Mayo struck a powerful shot from 25 yards on the left past Archer's far upright and the last action of the half saw Rhead's angled low effort held by the Stortford keeper at the near post.

Half time: 0-1

Apart from a misjudgement by Jordan Archer when dealing with a Corby free-kick Stortford made a confident start to the second half and on two occasions in a matter of minutes could have levelled the scores. In the 56th minute, following an excellent move on the right when Dwight Gayle and Ritchie Jones linked, Scott Shulton gained possession inside the box and crossed to Lewis Whiteley who miscued his shot narrowly wide of the far post from close range. Two minutes later Whiteley was the provider as he finished a run on the left flank with a cross to the far post and Daniel Subuola's header agonisingly went across the face of the goal and a foot wide of the far upright.

A Dwight Gayle speculative 25 yarder was over the bar with twenty minutes left but the visitors also went close to extending their lead. Sebastian Dunbar had to produce a great tackle to stop Andy Hall as the midfielder broke forward after Scott Shulton was caught in possession in midfield. Then in the 74th minute after Matt Rhead's shot was deflected close past a post, Phil Gulliver's header from Andy Hall's resultant corner beat Archer but was headed off the line by Sebastian Dunbar.

Jordan Archer tipped an Andy Hall free-kick over the bar but the Steelmen doubled their lead shortly afterwards in the 78th minute. A concerted attack ended with Paco Craig being adjudged by Referee Steve Ross to have fouled Matt Rhead just inside the box. RHEAD, himself, took the penalty and netted (0-2).

Ian Walker immediately made a triple substitution with Ade Cole, Junior Dadson and Mitch Hahn replacing Lewis Whiteley, Alli Abdullahi and Dwight Gayle but the Blues were unable to reduce the arrears in the remaining time.

Referee Ross booked Paco Craig during the match and also showed yellow cards to Corby's Steve Towers and Phil Gulliver.

Full time: 0-2

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Jordan Archer; Ritchie Jones; Sebastian Dunbar; Alli Abdullahi (sub – Junior Dadson 79 mins); Paco Craig; Phil Anderson; Lewis Whiteley (sub – Ade Cole 79 mins); Reece Prestedge; Dwight Gayle (sub – Mitch Hahn 79 mins); Scott Shulton; Daniel Subuola.
Unused substitutes: Bai Mass Lette Jallow and Jack Jeffries.

CORBY TOWN: Chris Mackenzie; Delroy Gordon; Paul Mayo; Callum Reynolds; Phil Gulliver; James Ozmen; Andy Hall; Steve Towers; Matt Rhead; Nick Rogan (sub – Jean-Sylvain Dossou 90 + 1 mins); Jordan Smith (sub – Jordan Spruce 90 + 3 mins).
Unused substitutes: Tom Land, Sam Ives and Luke Fairlamb.

Attendance: 313