



Boxing Day Monday 26th December 2011

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

A goal down after two minutes, the Blues could have few complaints in losing to the Stutes in this Boxing Day encounter at a breezy Woodside Park. In a match of few openings it was the visitors who had the edge on proceedings. The Cambridge side allowed Stortford little space to create many incisive moves although Histon's defence, when under pressure, looked vulnerable.

Rod Stringer kept the same squad that had won against Gloucester City and the starting eleven was the same as well. Having been very solid and kept a clean sheet in the West Country, the Blues found themselves a goal adrift in the 2nd minute. An attack towards the left flank finished with the ball being switched into the middle and Daniel Sparkes slipped the ball into the box where skipper OMER RIZA gave Jordan Archer no chance with a drive from 15 yards that found the corner of the net (0-1). Stortford defenders may have thought Riza got possession in an offside position as they hesitated for a second.

Stortford were mostly on the defensive for the next quarter of an hour or so. Jordan Archer held a low shot from Dan Holman and then in the 10th minute Sebastian Dunbar managed to get an important nick on the ball to stop Holman latching on to a Sparkes' cross that was going across the face of the goal. Soon afterwards, following a Sparkes' corner, Riza crossed into middle where Pelayo Gomez-Pico headed straight at Archer from close range.

Lewis Taaffe tried a long range effort that wasn't far off target and Stortford's first attempt at goal didn't arrive until the 19th minute. Junior Dadson was fouled on the left angle of the box and Merrick James-Lewis' free-kick curled over the bar at the near post. Back came Histon, though, in the 23rd minute and Sebastian Dunbar did well to block a goalbound drive from Sparkes after a corner hadn't properly been cleared.

The visitors almost doubled their lead in the 25th minute as another corner, taken by Sparkes on the right, was headed against the underside of the bar by Remy Clerima and Alli Abdullahi, on the goal-line, hooked the ball away. The Histon centre back was in action at the other end of the pitch a minute later. Scott Shulton, collecting the ball on the right side of the box played it into Alli Abdullahi and the Stortford midfielder's shot was blocked 10 yards from the line by Clerima.

Just after the half-hour mark Sebastian Dunbar was short with a back pass and although Jordan Archer manage to get a boot to the ball his clearance rebounded off the onrushing Daniel Sparkes and fortunately flew out for a goal-kick. The Blues had the better of exchanges after that escape and up to the break. When Junior Dadson was again fouled on the left angle of the area Scott Shulton took the free-kick this time and keeper Jorg Stadelmann flapped the ball away from under the bar. Then in the 34th minute a far post header from Scott Shulton went wide after a deep cross from the left by Sebastian Dunbar.

Half time: 0-1

With the wind picking up, play immediately after the break was fairly even although Dwight Gayle was almost on the end of a low Scott Shulton cross from the right. The Blues came their nearest to grabbing an equaliser in the 64th minute when Ritchie Jones played the ball up the right touchline for a pass meant for Scott Shulton. The midfielder was fouled but the ball ran through for Reece Prestedge to collect and cut in towards goal but the skipper's shot was parried away at the near post by Stadelmann.

Openings after that were few and far between with Stortford moves floundering at the edge of the box when individuals were guilty of holding on to the ball too long instead of releasing it earlier.

Stortford's defence after the break had given little away but six minutes from the end of normal time REMY CLERIMA, with a free header from 12 yards, beat Archer following a corner on the left from Omer Riza (0-2).

Jordan Archer had to be alert to keep out a long range effort from Lewis Taaffe in the 88th minute and then, in stoppage time, Taaffe was in the right place at the right time to prevent the Blues netting a consolation goal as he headed a Sean Francis header off the line after a Scott Shulton flag-kick.

Phil Anderson was yellow carded by Referee Ashvin Degnarain towards the end of the first half and there were also bookings for the Histon player-manager David Livermore and defender Danny Fitzsimons.

Full time: 0-2

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Jordan Archer; Ritchie Jones; Sebastian Dunbar (sub – Mitch Hahn 82 mins); Alli Abdullahi; Sean Francis; Phil Anderson; Scott Shulton; Merrick James-Lewis; Dwight Gayle; Reece Prestedge; Junior Dadson (sub – Daniel Subuola 62 mins)..

Unused substitutes: Sam Ives, Jack Jeffries and Bai Mass Lette Jallow.

HISTON: Jorg Stadelmann; Jay Dowie; Danny Fitzsimons; Pelayo Gomez-Pico; Remy Clerima; David Livermore; Lewis Taaffe; Jim Stevenson; Dan Holman; Omer Riza; Daniel Sparkes.

Unused substitutes: Harri Hawkins, Eugene Libertucci, Charlie Day, Matt Breeze and Calum Kitscha.

Attendance: 629