



Saturday 27th August 2011

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

Two second half goals – the first a penalty – gave the hosts victory over the Blues at the Liberty Way Stadium. Nuneaton just about deserved the points in an uninspiring match as they looked a little more incisive when attacking but it was a frustrating game for Manager Ian Walker and the travelling supporters alike as the Blues had chances to have taken at least a point back to Stortford.

Both the starting eleven and the squad of 16 were unchanged from that which played in the midweek success over Solihull Moors. Playing in their new alternative kit of yellow and black Stortford made a bright start and a Michael Bakare free-kick on the right in the second minute might have produced a goal but with the ball going across the face of the goal and narrowly past the far post no one was alert to attack the ball.

Boro keeper Neil Collett did well to cut out a difficult cross from the left from Phil Anderson in the 9th minute whilst, at the other end, Danny Glover was unable to keep a cross from Robbie Burns down and sent his shot from the edge of the box over the bar.

Scott Shulton and Ade Cole linked well on the right in the 22nd minute before the latter cut in from the corner flag but saw his low shot held by Collett at the near post. Shulton was the victim of a late tackle by defender Gareth Dean on the half-hour and the Nuneaton man was shown a yellow card by Referee Adrian Holmes.

Then another free-kick from Bakare from a similar position the one in the second minute produced the same result with the ball flying just wide of the far upright. At this stage Stortford had the edge but in the 37th minute the Warwickshire side put together their best attack of the half as skipper Mark Noon and Robbie Burns linked to put Lee Smith through but Nicky Eyre produced a fine save, diving to his left to keep out the striker's shot from 15 yards.

Two minutes later, following a quick break upfield, Ade Cole found Michael Bakare on the right but a good chance was wasted as Bakare cut in from the flank and placed his shot past the near post as Dwight Gayle waited unmarked in the middle with an open goal in front of him.

Just before the break Boro's Lee Smith weaved his way past several defenders in the inside right channel before shooting inches wide of the far angle of post and bar. Then, in time added on, Dwight Gayle seemed to be brought down in the box after receiving a pass from Shulton but play was waived on by Referee Holmes.

Half time: 0-0

Both sides were guilty of giving the ball away in midfield at the start of the second half but the hosts went close early on after the break with Richard Lavery heading over and Danny Glover shooting just wide. Alex Read, who had just replaced Dwight Gayle, almost got on the end of a Scott Shulton headed through ball before keeper Collett grabbed it. Shulton, himself, tried a 25 yard shot in the 64th minute that just cleared the bar.

It came as something of a surprise when the deadlock was broken in the 66th minute. Following an attack down the middle Lee Smith made his way to the edge of the box and went down under a tackle by Phil Anderson. A somewhat dubious penalty was given by Referee Holmes and DANNY GLOVER sent Nicky Eyre the wrong way from the spot-kick (1-0).

Stortford battled back to try and salvage something from the match and as the game entered its final stages could have grabbed an equaliser. In the 81st minute Nuneaton defender Mark Albrighton was caught in possession and Alex Read broke towards goal only to see keeper Neil Collett come quickly off his line to block a shot. Then, a minute later, another error this time allowed Michael Bakare the chance to break goalwards but the opening came to nothing as he was forced to the right of the goal and he went over under a challenge with no penalty given on this occasion.

The hosts doubled their lead in the 87th minute. A concerted attack ended with Lee Smith floating the ball over from the right towards the far post and LEE MOORE's downward header from 12 yards bounced over Nicky Eyre's dive and struck the inside of the far upright before finding the net (2-0).

The arrears were almost halved two minutes later as Scott Shulton's deep free-kick from the left was met by a thumping header from Connor Essam that hit the crossbar and rebounded to safety. Just before the final whistle Nicky Eyre saved well from Smith at the expense of a corner.

Full time: 2-0

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Nicky Eyre; Ritchie Jones; Phil Anderson; Scott Shulton; Mo Habu; Connor Essam; Ade Cole (sub - Dean Rance 64 mins); Reece Prestedge(sub – Mitch Hahn 75 mins) ; Dwight Gayle (sub – Alex Read 59 mins); Michael Bakare; Junior Dadson.

Unused substitutes: Alli Abdullahi and Bai Mass Lette Jallow.

NUNEATON TOWN: Neil Collett; Graham Ward; Aaron James (sub – Eddie Nisevic 50 mins); Mark Noon (sub - Sam Belcher 71 mins); Gareth Dean; Mark Albrighton (sub – Guy Hadland 84 mins); Robbie Burns; Richard Lavery; Danny Glover; Lee Smith; Lee Moore.

Unused substitutes: Adam Walker and James Armson.

Attendance: 645