

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2011

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 4, WATFORD 1  
(HERTFORDSHIRE SENIOR CHALLENGE CUP – 1<sup>ST</sup> ROUND)

The Blues progressed into the next round of the County Cup with a comfortable victory over the Championship side at Woodside Park. The visitors fielded a team comprising first and second year scholars who normally play in the Hornets' Academy side but they looked sharper than Stortford in the opening twenty minutes during which time they took the lead. From then on the Blues took control in an entertaining match and goals from Daniel Subuola, Reece Prestedge and a Dwight Gayle brace saw them through.

Ian Walker's squad saw few changes that had shared the points with Gainsborough Trinity at the weekend. Jordan Archer, though, had a rib injury and George Dawson, last season's reserve team keeper, took his place between the sticks to make his first team debut. Also making his debut was 17 year old Matt Gill who came on as a substitute in the 58<sup>th</sup> minute for Dawson. Gill had impressed in goal in the Blues' FA Youth Cup run this campaign and he impressed again against Watford giving a confident performance and making several fine saves in the later stages of the match.

George Dawson was the centre of the action in the 4<sup>th</sup> minute when he picked up a back pass ten yards off his line from one of his own defenders. Fortunately, the resultant free-kick was blocked and cleared. However, the Blues fell behind in the 16<sup>th</sup> minute when SEAN MURRAY gained possession of the ball towards the right touchline and took it on a few paces before striking a shot over Dawson into the far top corner from nearly 35 yards (0-1).

The Blues had made an indifferent start but their first threat to the Hornets' goal in the 22<sup>nd</sup> minute saw Sean Francis head a Sebastian Dunbar corner just over the bar. Stortford now began to get much more into an attacking rhythm and Lewis Whiteley went close after cutting in from the right flank. Then, in the 32<sup>nd</sup> minute the scores were back on level terms. Scott Shulton, on the right and just inside the Watford half, struck a great crossfield pass that found DANIEL SUBUOLA and the striker advanced towards goal. Jack Bonham, the Watford keeper, stopped the striker's first shot but when the ball ran loose Subuola followed up to net (1-1).

Just four minutes later and the Blues were ahead. Another Dunbar flag kick on the right was nodded goalwards by Paco Craig and REECE PRESTEDGE was left with the simple task of tapping in from close range. This was the skipper's first goal this season (2-1).

Then, in the 42<sup>nd</sup> minute the lead was extended with an excellent goal. Daniel Subuola was fouled midway inside the Watford half and towards the left flank. He quickly took the free-kick himself playing the ball inside to Scott Shulton who in turn found DWIGHT GAYLE on the edge of the box. The on loan striker from Dagenham & Redbridge struck a low drive that hit the base of keeper Bonham's left hand upright before ricocheting into the opposite corner of the net (3-1).

Half time: 3-1

Paco Craig went close soon after the restart but the visitors were having the edge on possession in the period after the break and goalscorer Murray had a deflected shot held low down by Dawson. Murray was very prominent at this stage and a 20 yarder from him was narrowly wide followed by a volley just off target.

Matt Gill was in action almost as soon as he came on between the posts and in the 62<sup>nd</sup> minute he saved an effort from Austin Eaton diving to his right and turning the ball behind for a corner. The youngster made an even better save in the 74<sup>th</sup> minute after Kameron English crossed for Hornets' substitute Dereece Gardner to shoot at goal and the keeper somehow turned the ball over the bar.

Paco Craig released Dwight Gayle in the 75<sup>th</sup> minute to go through on goal but keeper Jack Bonham saved his shot and the Watford custodian also twice denied Blues' substitute Steffan Gaisie from scoring with good saves.

Stortford finished the match strongly and netted their fourth and final goal in the last minute. DWIGHT GAYLE was fouled just outside the penalty area by substitute Brandon Horner and the young striker, himself, directed the resultant free-kick into the bottom right hand corner of the net (4-1).

Stortford must now visit Berkhamsted in the next round of the Senior Challenge Cup on a date to be decided in December.

Full time: 4-1

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: George Dawson (sub – Matt Gill 58 mins); Ritchie Jones; Sebastian Dunbar (sub – Steffan Gaisie 83 mins); Lewis Whiteley; Sean Francis; Jack Jeffries; Paco Craig; Reece Prestedge (sub – Junior Dadson 58 mins); Dwight Gayle; Scott Shulton; Daniel Subuola  
Unused substitutes: Alli Abdullahi and Mitch Hahn.

WATFORD: Jack Bonham; Chimdi Akunbuine (sub – Luke O’Nien 46 mins; Kyle Connolly; Austin Eaton (sub – Dereece Gardner 70 mins); Tommie Hoban; Aaron Tumwa; Kameron English; Sean Murray; Morgan Ferrier; Connor Smith; Michael Kalu (sub – Brandon Horner 46 mins).  
Unused substitutes: Jordan Willmore and Jack Westlake.

Attendance: 112