

Saturday 26th Oct 2013

Bishop's Stortford FC Match Report



Forest Green Rovers FC



Bishop's Stortford FC



FGR 0 - 1 Bishop 's Stortford : HT 0 - 0 : Att 789

The FA Cup 4th Round Qualifying

Skipper Reece Prestedge 's strike seven minutes after the break at The New Lawn knocked out the Skril Premier side and booked the Blues a place in the 1st Round Proper of the FA Cup for the second successive season. There wasn 't a great deal between the two sides in this tie but Stortford 's battling qualities shone throughout the match and in particular in a tense final ten minutes or so.

The two stars of the show were the two goalkeepers with the hosts ' Sam Russell making a double save from Reece Prestedge and Anthony Church near the midway point of the first half as well as other stops to keep the Blues down to one goal whilst Joe Wright, with his impressive speed off his line, made several important saves during the game.

Amazingly this victory in Gloucestershire stretched Stortford' s unbeaten away record in the FA Cup to eight matches over the last three seasons – seven of which have been victories. Statistically, in respect of Rod Stringer, this was the Manager' s 50th win out of 99 competitive matches so far during his tenure of office.

As Cliff Akurang was not fully fit, for the first time in almost a month the Blues ' boss had to make a change to his starting line-up and brought Nicky Symons into the side. On the bench was newly signed striker Josh Fagbohun. Stortford were soon out of their blocks and an early corner on the right from Reece Prestedge was glanced across goal by George Allen and Sean Francis ' lunging effort towards the back post was cleared away close to the line by defender Paul Green.

Rovers began to settle but in the 16th minute following a flag-kick on the left from Matt Johnson the ball fell to Reece Prestedge, close to the edge of the box, who struck a powerful volley that Russell, at full stretch, turned away for another corner. Five minutes later the Rovers ' stopper then did well to keep out a 25 yard drive from Prestedge and then when the bouncing loose ball fell to Anthony Church the midfielder 's angled shot resulted in another excellent save by Russell.

Joe Wright was called into action soon afterwards as he moved smartly to fly kick the ball away as striker Magno Vieira chased a through pass and, although Russell had to reach high to hold on to a deflected effort by Kyle Vassell at the other end, the Stortford keeper was again alert in the 34th minute to punch clear inside the angle of the box when Jamie Turley threatened.

The final ten minutes of the first half saw Stortford come under some pressure. In the 36th minute Joe Wright scrambled away an angled low effort from striker Danny Wright and then four minutes later, when Vieira put Yan Klukowski clear in the inside right channel, the Blues ' keeper sped off his line to block and the ball rebounded off the Rover 's player for a goal-kick.

Possibly Wright 's best save of the tie came with two minutes remaining of normal time at the end of the first half when Vieira, after receiving a misplaced pass from Nicky Symons, this time sent Danny Wright on a run at goal and, after working his way into a shooting position, he was denied by his namesake who produced an instinctive left handed save low down to divert the ball out for a corner.

Half-time: 0-0

The winning goal for the Blues came in the 52nd minute following a Matt Johnson corner on the left. The centre was initially headed high into the air by a combination of heads but Sean Francis reacted quickest as the ball dropped and nodded it forward to REECE PRESTEDGE who swivelled to volley left footed firmly past Russell from eight yards (0-1).

A few minutes later Johnson found Kyle Vassell cutting in from the left flank and the Blues ' number nine angled shot flew inches past the far upright. However, in the 56th minute there was a moment of anxiety for Stortford fans as Rovers ' Marcus Kelly played Magno Vieira in on a diagonal run into the box where he went to earth as Joe Wright plunged at his feet and the ball ran loose. The Rovers fans called for a penalty but Referee Paul Rees rightly ignored those appeals.

The hosts, who showed considerable skill on the ball, pressed again around the hour mark and following a corner from Yan Klukowski on the left, the ball dropped to substitute Matthew Barnes-Homer who saw his close range shot cleared away to safety near the line by a combination of Joe Wright, Johnny Herd and George Allen.

A headed back pass from Callum McNaughton almost allowed Barnes-Homer to strike in the 63rd minute but after Joe Wright had deflected one shot to the side the follow up from an acute angle by the substitute was high and wide. Stortford nearly extended their lead in the 65th minute as Kyle Vassell made tracks for goal after receiving the ball from Nicky Symons but his drive from 20 yards range was well parried away by Sam Russell.

A cross by Paul Green from the right flew past the face of the Blues ' goal in the 72nd minute and then three minutes later Ashley Miller produced a timely tackle in the box to stop substitute Steve Brogan advancing towards goal after he had received the ball from Danny Wright. There was more danger in the 77th minute as another Green centre was glanced into Brogan 's path and the substitute 's 15 yard shot went wide of Joe Wright 's left upright by two feet.

With the time running down, Kyle Vassell was working tirelessly up front and following a 25 yard attempt that was close over the Rovers ' bar he later, in the 87th minute, cut in from the left to shoot low at goal but Sam Russell made a near post save. Matthew Barnes-Homer, with a 15 yard shot was wide of the target and then in the first of five stoppage time minutes Rovers ' last threat saw Yan Klukowski 's corner headed straight at Joe Wright by Al Bangura. The final whistle was the cue for the Blues squad to go over and celebrate with the fans on an excellent victory. The only yellow card shown in the tie by Referee Rees fell the way of Sean Francis for a first half challenge on Rovers ' Marcus Kelly.

Full time: 0-1

BISHOP 'S STORTFORD: Joe Wright; Ashley Miller; Johnny Herd; George Allen; Sean Francis; Callum McNaughton; Matt Johnson; Anthony Church; Kyle Vassell (sub - Cliff Akurang 90 + 3 mins); Nicky Symons; Reece Prestedge.

Unused substitutes: Kyle Asante, Harry Baker, Luke Milbourne, Ben Adams, Josh Fagbohun and Sam Cowler.

FOREST GREEN ROVERS; Sam Russell; Paul Green; Chris Stokes; Al Bangura; Jamie Turley; Marcus Kelly; Anthony Barry (sub - Steve Brogan 66 mins); Yan Klukowski; Ed Asafu-Adjaye; Danny Wright (sub - Reece Styche 78 mins); Magno Vieira (sub - Matthew Barnes-Homer 59 mins)

Unused substitutes: Jared Hodgkiss, Omar Koroma and Adam McHugh.