

Saturday 4th Jan 2014

Bishop's Stortford FC Match Report



Dover Athletic FC



Bishop's Stortford FC



Dover Athletic 2 - 3 Bishop 's Stortford : HT 2 - 0 : Att 615

The Skril South

Two goals behind at the break, the Blues produced a stunning second half display at a rain-swept Crabble to clinch the points. Winning a Skril South contest on the road after being behind is almost becoming second nature to Stortford as the three previous victories have seen them come from behind to beat their opponents. Having pulled themselves level with Dover, the Blues winning goal six minutes from the end of normal time was scored by Brian Woodall, back for a second spell at Stortford. He continued his habit of last season whilst with the Blues by netting crucial late goals and ironically for Athletic he only completed a loan spell from Dagenham & Redbridge at the Crabble the previous weekend.

Rod Stringer rang the changes after the recent lack-lustre performances. As well as Brian Woodall coming into the attack to partner Liam Enver-Marum, there was a change between the sticks with Sam Cowler displacing Joe Wright whilst Cliff Akurang moved back to the centre of the defence. Also there was a return into the midfield for Anthony Church following his holiday in Australia. Jake Hall, a new signing from Boston United, was on the bench. Matt Johnson was making his 100th appearance for Stortford.

On a pitch that played surprisingly well considering the rain both sides made a tentative start. In the 5th minute a long, high ball upfield from Cliff Akurang caused problems for defender Tom Wynter and Brian Woodall managed a shot that was blocked by the legs of keeper Mitch Walker. Then, soon afterwards, Liam Enver-Marum tried a shot from the left edge of the box that drifted over the far angle of the goal.

The Whites looking stronger in midfield began to take the initiative and after Cliff Akurang had handled outside the box in the 21st minute James Rogers ' free-kick resulted in experienced striker Nathan Elder heading narrowly wide. The hosts took the lead in the 29th minute. A deflected centre from the left by Tom Murphy reached LIAM BELLAMY, who had his back to goal, towards the far side of the box and he turned quickly, 15 yards out, to hammer the ball low past the outstretched Sam Cowler who was diving to his right (1-0).

Whites ' stopper Mitch Walker flapped at an Anthony Church cross on the half-hour whilst Brian Woodall struck a first time effort just wide but up until the interval the Blues defence looked vulnerable to Athletic attacks. Rogers was high and wide from a half-chance before the lead was extended in the 33rd minute. A move down the centre finished with Chris Kinnear slipping the ball forward for TOM MURPHY running into the area to force past Sam Cowler with an angled shot into far bottom corner (2-0).

The Blues were close to being three behind a couple of minutes later as Nathan Elder found the net but fortunately for Stortford an offside decision was given. In the 39th minute Sean Francis grazed the top of the bar with a header from a Matt John-

son corner but Stortford lived perilously until the break. A great tackle from George Allen, who had a fine match, stopped Liam Bellamy ten yards from goal as the Dover man was about to pull the trigger and then Nathan Elder saw his effort kept out by Sam Cowler 's legs. Finally, in the 45th minute, a move involving Murphy, Elder and Rogers culminated with Chris Kinnear 's angled shot from the left beating Sam Cowler. However, the attempt lacked power and George Allen cleared the ball away from near the goal-line.

Half-time: 2-0

Stortford had the slope in their favour after the interval but still seemed to struggle early on after the restart with Elliott Charles pulling the ball back for Chris Kinnear to drive a 25 yard shot at goal that Sam Cowler saved at full length turning the ball round the post for a corner.

Rod Stringer made a double substitution in the 54th minute with newcomer Jake Hall replacing Harry Baker and Josh Fagbohun coming on for Liam Enver-Marum. The strong running of the two replacements seemed to reinvigorate the Blues and little was seen of the Whites as an attacking force after that point.

It took only three minutes for Stortford to pull a goal back. An attack down the left involving Reece Prestedge and Brian Woodall saw the ball switched inside where Jake Hall nudged it to Matt Johnson whose shot was parried out by Mitch Walker but only for ASHLEY MILLER to score easily from six yards (2-1).

The Blues could have been level a minute later when Walker saved from Anthony Church and Josh Fagbohun appeared to have an easy task to net the loose ball but defender Tom Wynter appeared from nowhere to make a great block of the substitute' s shot.

It was certainly the turn of the Dover goal to lead a charmed life and shortly afterwards Walker made a fine save to turn an Anthony Church shot over the bar. There was more pressure from Stortford until the 71st minute when the equaliser was scored. There would be questions asked about the Dover marking when a throw on the left from Matt Johnson was allowed to reach CLIFF AKURANG in space and Stortford 's leading Skriff South goalscorer drilled a 15 yard shot inside the near upright (2-2).

Stortford continued to have the edge and the winning goal came in the 84th minute following a move on the right that was initially begun by Josh Fagbohun and Jake Hall just inside their own half. Hall laid the ball on for George Allen to break and cross low into the box where BRIAN WOODALL, running in, clinically swept home past Walker from 10 yards (2-3).

Until the final whistle, which included four minutes of stoppage time, Athletic hardly mustered an attack and the Blues saw out time easily.

Referee Carl Fitch cautioned Jake Hall and Dover 's Chris Kinnear during the match.

Full time: 2-3

BISHOP 'S STORTFORD: Sam Cowler; Harry Baker (sub – Jake Hall 54 mins); Ashley Miller (sub – Callum McNaughton 71 mins); George Allen; Sean Francis; Cliff Akurang; Matt Johnson; Anthony Church; Brian Woodall; Liam Enver-Marum (sub – Josh Fagbohun 54 mins); Reece Prestedge.

Unused substitutes Nicky Symons and Andre Costa.

DOVER ATHLETIC: Mitch Walker; Richard Orlu; Tom Wynter; Chris Kinnear; Sean Raggett; Terrell Forbes; Liam Bellamy (sub – Barry Cogan 84 mins); James Rogers; Nathan Elder; Elliott Charles; Tom Murphy (sub – Michael Bakare 87 mins).

Unused substitutes: Michael Kamara, Ashley Carew and Lee Hook.