

Sat 15th Mar 2014

Bishop's Stortford FC Match Report



Eastleigh FC



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Eastleigh 4 - 2 Bishop 's Stortford : HT 2 - 1 : Att 601

The Skril South

With striker Ben Wright hitting a hat-trick, the Spitfires moved to the top of the Skril South table above Bromley with this victory over the Blues at the Silverlake Stadium. From Stortford's aspect this was another frustrating match for boss Rod Stringer who again saw his side reduced to ten men very early in the contest and whereas three weeks previously there had been a happy outcome at Concord Rangers the reverse was true in this match.

Jordan Brown was shown a red card by Referee Stephen Ross for a high challenge on the hosts' Dan Spence after 17 minutes when Stortford were already a goal behind. The task to get anything from the match was virtually impossible from that point although they did level twice before Eastleigh pulled away with two goals before the end.

The starting eleven for Stortford showed Harry Baker making a rare start and with Ashley Miller switching to the right back position Michael Richens moved into midfield. Cliff Akurang began the match as a lone striker. However, the starting formation didn't last long once Jordan Brown had been dismissed. The hosts' skipper was former Stortford favourite Glen Southam who was the mastermind behind many of Eastleigh attacks.

The Hampshire side looked to take the game to Stortford from the off and forced a corner in the first minute with Joe Lumley holding Stuart Fleetwood's flag-kick under the bar. Harry Baker got into the action in the 7th minute when he fired a flashing drive inches wide of keeper Ross Flitney's right hand upright after seven minutes.

Glen Southam was predictably involved in the approach-work to Eastleigh's opening goal in the 11th minute. The ball went out to the left flank where Michael Green took it forward before delivering a low centre in towards the near post and as Callum McNaughton slipped CRAIG McALLISTER smartly nipped in to divert it past Joe Lumley (1-0).

Almost immediately McNaughton had to leave the field with blood coming down the side of his head from his bandage. It was whilst the central defender was off the pitch that Jordan Brown was dismissed after going for a 50/50 ball with the Spitfires' Dan Spence by the touchline on Stortford's left flank.

Rod Stringer's re-organisation saw George Allen replacing Harry Baker and Michael Richens dropped into the back-line with Ashley Miller switching back to the left side of defence.

Ben Wright lifted the ball over the bar from a good position inside the area in the 23rd minute and then Stortford equalised a minute later after Cliff Akurang was fouled ten yards inside the Eastleigh half. Callum McNaughton, by now back on the pitch, got up extremely well to connect with Matt Johnson's free-kick and head on into the area and with the Spitfires' defence

absent ANTHONY CHURCH flicked the ball wide of a stationary Ross Flitney (1-1).

The scores remained level until the 31st minute when a move down the middle caught the Blues' defence short and when McAllister slipped the ball on to BEN WRIGHT and the striker placed it low past Joe Lumley (2-1).

Eastleigh had most of the possession against Stortford's ten men up to the break but there were no further chances to score at either end.

Half-time: 2-1

Callum McNaughton did not return after the break and there was further re-organisation with Jake Hall coming on as his replacement.

Within the first three minutes of the restart Stortford were close to an equaliser as good work by Reece Prestedge and Cliff Akurang ended with the latter firing in a deflected angled effort that stopper Flitney held low at his near post.

But they didn't have long to wait for the leveller. A deep punt upfield by Joe Lumley in the 53rd minute was flicked on by Matt Johnson near the half-way line which Cliff Akurang chased until he was sent flying just inside the angle of the box by the oncoming Flitney. The keeper was shown a yellow card and a penalty awarded. REECE PRESTEDGE gave Flitney no chance with the spot-kick drilling the ball into bottom right-hand corner (2-2).

However, the home side retook the lead four minutes. In an attack that started with Glen Southam appearing to foul Reece Prestedge the ball found its way to the right flank via Stuart Fleetwood to Dan Spence who pulled the ball back to the middle and BEN WRIGHT found the far corner with a first time 15 yard shot (3-2).

Brian Woodall replaced Cliff Akurang up front in the 64th minute and shortly afterwards a long throw into the box from Matt Johnson caused problems for Flitney but the ball was cleared.

Eastleigh extended their lead in the 72nd minute as Southam sent Stuart Fleetwood past Michael Richens on the left and BEN WRIGHT was able to convert the centre from close range at the back post (4-2). Wright almost claimed a fourth goal a minute later when he unleashed a volley that struck Joe Lumley's legs following substitute Jai Reason's cross from the right.

Before the end a Michael Richens' drive was close to the target whilst Ashley Miller found the net with an offside goal in the 82nd minute. Eastleigh, though, had most of the play until the final whistle and three minutes before the end another cross from Fleetwood was held by Joe Lumley on the goal-line.

Anthony Church was shown a yellow card by Referee Stephen Ross just before the final whistle

Full time: 4-2

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Joe Lumley; Ashley Miller; Jordan Brown; Michael Richens; Sean Francis; Callum McNaughton (sub – Jake Hall 46 mins); Matt Johnson; Anthony Church; Cliff Akurang (sub – Brian Woodall 64 mins); Harry Baker (sub – George Allen 21 mins) Reece Prestedge.

Unused substitutes: Liam Enver-Marum and Ryan Melaugh.

EASTLEIGH: Ross Flitney; Dan Spence; Michael Green; Ben Strevens; Dean Beckwith; Chris Dillon; Reece Connolly (sub – Jai Reason 64 mins); Glen Southam; Craig McAllister; Ben Wright (sub – Yemi Odubade 76 mins); Stuart Fleetwood.

Unused substitutes: James Collins, Chris Todd and Lewis Noice.