

Sat 12th Apr 2014

Bishop's Stortford FC Match Report



Basingstoke Town FC



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Basingstoke Town 0 - 0 Bishop 's Stortford : HT 0 - 0 : Att 200

The Skril South

When the two teams met at the ProKit UK Stadium in December the match produced an eight goal thriller but this spectacle at the Camrose was at the other end of the scale as the Blues fought out a drab encounter that had few highlights. With little at stake for either side this was very much an end of season contest. The conditions didn 't help with the game being played on a bobbly pitch and in a strongish wind and control of the ball was difficult for both outfits.

Injuries and suspensions again left Rod Stringer with a thin squad to select from. Ashley Miller and Jake Hall joined Anthony Church on the list of those suspended whilst George Allen was out due to an ankle injury inflicted in the Chelmsford match two days earlier. The good news was that Sean Francis was able to return to the starting eleven after his injury but even so Stortford were only able to name four substitutes.

The Dragons had the wind in their favour in the first period and had most of the possession in that time. An early cross into the box by the hosts ' Adam Green was mispunched by Joe Wright but the Blues ' stopper managed to retake the ball as it dropped from the sky.

There were few incidents of note until Callum McNaughton was adjudged to have handled the ball in a Stoke attack to concede a free-kick in the 18th minute. Louie Soares ' free-kick from 23 yards rebounded back to him and he struck a low shot that Wright, diving to his left, held.

A couple of minutes later a run by Nathan Smart up the right flank concluded with a cross to the near side of the area and former Blues striker Liam Enver-Marum turned the ball wide of the far upright.

Stoke 's Manny Williams and Louie Soares combined in the 37th minute but the latter pulled his shot wide from the edge of the box. Then briefly before the break Stortford came back to test the home side 's defence. Matt Johnson supplied the pass for Luke Milbourne to centre from the right and Brian Woodall nodded wide at the far post from 12 yards. In the next attack Cliff Akurang headed down at the edge of the box and Milbourne 's attempt from 18 yards was over the target.

Half time: 0-0

On the resumption it was Stortford 's turn to have the wind at their backs and they had the better of the proceedings up to the final whistle. Cliff Akurang headed over the bar following a cross from the right by Sam Cutler before Rod Stringer made a double substitution ten minutes into the half withdrawing Brian Woodall and Luke Milbourne and bringing on Harry Baker and Ryan Melaugh.

Clear cut openings remained very limited although Cliff Akurang headed narrowly over in the 71st minute following a Matt Johnson corner on the left. Thirteen minutes from time a fine pass from Michael Richens was fastened on to by Cliff Akurang and the striker drove an angled rising shot just over the bar.

The Hampshire side 's Manny Williams shot over the top from distance and Louie Soares ' searching ball in towards the six yard box was deflected away from danger as the home side exerted a little late pressure but it was the Blues that came the closest to snatching a win towards the end. With time running out skipper Reece Prestedge cut in from the left wing to shoot past the near post and then in the last minute of normal time when Akurang was fouled Michael Richens ' free-kick was deflected forward by Callum McNaughton and Akurang 's shot was just over the bar.

There was three minutes of stoppage time and during that period Cliff Akurang again featured when a long pass up the left from Johnny Herd was collected by the striker and his low angled shot was pushed out by sprawling keeper Louis Wells falling to his left. In the last attack of the match a throw on the left by Matt Johnson found its way to Josh Fagbohun who turned to hit the ball goalwards. There were some half hearted appeals for a penalty when the ball struck the shielding hands of the marking Basingstoke defender but no penalty was given.

Referee John O 'Brien brandished a yellow card to a player from each side for a deliberate handball offence during the match – Callum McNaughton for the Blues and Ross Adams for Basingstoke being the offenders.

Full time: 0-0

BISHOP 'S STORTFORD: Joe Wright; Michael Richens; Johnny Herd; Sean Francis; Callum McNaughton; Luke Milbourne (sub – Ryan Melaugh 55 mins (sub – Josh Fagbohun 86 mins)); Matt Johnson; Sam Cutler; Brian Woodall (sub – Harry Baker 55 mins); Cliff Akurang; Reece Prestedge.

Unused substitute: Sam Cowler.

BASINGSTOKE TOWN: Louis Wells; Robbie Rice; Adam Green; Andrew Jenkinson; Jay Gasson; Ross Adams; Nathan Smart; Shaun McAuley; Liam Enver-Marum (sub – Kezie Ibe 51 mins); Manny Williams; Louie Soares.

Unused substitutes: Robbie Williams, Wes Daly, Marcus Johnson-Schuster and Neil Barrett