

Tue 1st Apr 2014

Bishop's Stortford FC Match Report



Bishop's Stortford FC



Eastleigh FC



Bishop 's Stortford 2 – 2 Eastleigh : HT 2 - 1 : Att 268

The Skril South

A much improved display from the Blues saw them take a point from a very entertaining contest at the ProKit UK Stadium with the Skril South leaders. Stortford were in fact two ahead just after the half hour and then the Hampshire side came back to level on the hour but the hosts went so close to winning all the points before the final whistle with Sean Francis unlucky not to score.

Rod Stringer made some changes to the side that had lost at Gosport at the weekend with Reece Prestedge, Michael Richens and Ryan Melaugh returning to the starting eleven. Richens, Melaugh along with Rod Young injected some real pace into the side whilst Anthony Church playing more forward in midfield worked very hard throughout the ninety minutes.

The Spitfires made a bright start in the opening minutes but the Blues forced the first corner of the game in the 4th minute and scored following it. Matt Johnson 's flag kick on the left found its way to the far side where Ryan Melaugh set the ball forward for Rod Young to cross to the rear post where REECE PRESTEDGE launched himself to head into the net for his tenth Skril South goal of the campaign (1-0).

The visitors came straight back a minute later and Ben Wright, who had scored a hat-trick against Stortford just over a fortnight ago, closed on goal but Joe Wright kept out the striker 's shot and when the ball ran loose Ashley Miller did well to clear the danger.

Stortford, however, with Young prominent with his pace made some menacing attacks especially down the left flank. At the other end Joe Wright was in action again holding a shot from Daniel Wishart in the 18th minute and then ten minutes later George Allen cleared the danger at the expense of a corner when Dan Spence cut in from the right after being supplied with a pass from Ben Wright.

The Blues doubled their lead in the 32nd minute with an excellent goal. Eastleigh 's defence was caught out by a long pass over their defence by Johnny Herd that ROD YOUNG fastened on to and the on loan player from Norwich City cleverly lobbed the ball over the oncoming keeper Ross Flitney and into the net from 30 yards (2-0).

The lead was cut five minutes later by the Spitfires from a free-kick. George Allen fouled Craig McAllister 25 yards out and BEN WRIGHT 's effort went over the defensive wall and beat Joe Wright diving high to his right (2-1).

Up to the break Eastleigh had the better of the exchanges and in added time Ben Wright switched play out to the left where Daniel Wishart advanced on goal but Joe Wright blocked and deflected the ball away to safety.

Half time: 2-1

Eastleigh continued to go on the offensive on the resumption and eight minutes after the interval Joe Wright had to punch away Jai Reason ' s free-kick but in doing so as well as clearing the danger the Stortford stopper also knocked out Sean Francis who fortunately recovered after treatment.

Only three minutes later the Blues ' centre back was up the other end almost netting a third goal for his side. Reece Prestedge ' s corner from the right to the far upright saw Francis ' two headers in quick succession cleared off the line by Dan Spence and Ben Wright.

It seemed, though, as if the tide was turning in Eastleigh ' s favour on the hour when they equalised. A corner on the left, taken by Jai Reason, was met by skipper BEN STREVEVS with a glancing header at the near post and the ball entered the net at the far side (2-2).

Stortford responded well to the setback and play became very much end-to-end action. The visitors, who brought on former Blues ' favourite Glen Southam into the action with twenty minutes left, went close when another substitute Reece Connolly sent a flying header goalwards that just cleared the bar following a corner. Then in the 83rd minute Joe Wright held on to a close range effort from a third substitute Will Evans after another Reason free-kick.

It was the hosts who finished the stronger, however, and in the stoppage time added at the conclusion of the game it was Stortford who almost clinched all the points in the third minute of added time. Matt Johnson made ground up the right wing before whipping a great cross into the near side of the box. Sean Francis got up to send a glancing header seemingly bound for just inside the back upright but the ball drifted inches wide for a goal-kick.

The only yellow cards shown by Referee Lee Betts were late on to the Blues ' Callum McNaughton and Michael Richens.

Full time: 2-2

BISHOP ' S STORTFORD: Joe Wright; Ashley Miller; Johnny Herd; George Allen; Sean Francis; Michael Richens (sub – Harry Baker 86 mins); Matt Johnson; Anthony Church; Rod Young (sub – Brian Woodall 80 mins); Ryan Melaugh (sub – Callum McNaughton 75 mins); Reece Prestedge.

Unused substitutes: Josh Fagbohun and Rohdell Gordon

EASTLEIGH: Ross Flitney; Dan Spence; Michael Green; Jamie Collins (sub – Glen Southam 71 mins); Chris Dillon (sub – Will Evans 46 mins); Chris Todd; Jai Reason; Ben Strevens; Craig McAllister; Ben Wright (sub – Reece Connolly 65 mins); Daniel Wishart.

Unused substitutes: Yemi Odubade and Lewis Noice