

Tuesday 9th September 2014

CONCORD RANGERS 3, BISHOP'S STORTFORD 3
(VANARAMA CONFERENCE SOUTH)

The Blues shared the points and six goals with the Rangers on Canvey Island after a fast paced thriller of a match that could have gone either way but Rod Stringer will have been disappointed as at one time before the break Stortford had built up a two goal lead.

Both sides played at a hectic pace for the whole 90 minutes at the Aspect Arena and, with plenty of goals, any neutrals in the crowd were well pleased with the entertainment.

Stortford's starting line-up showed a couple of changes to that beaten at the weekend by Basingstoke with Joe Tabiri returning to the midfield in place of Spencer McCall who dropped to the substitutes bench while George Sykes started up front instead of Mikel Suarez who hadn't shaken off the effects of the "dead leg" he suffered in the first half against Basingstoke. Meanwhile the Beachboys included former Blues Steve Cawley, Steve King, Jack Lampe and Sam Collins in their ranks.

Cawley, for the hosts, was well off target with an early volley and it was Stortford who took an early lead in the third minute from the spot. Sheldon Sellears collected the ball on the left and tormented Rangers' defenders on that flank before being fouled by Alex Woodyard running into the box. Although scuffing his shot from the resulting penalty **GEORGE SYKES** beat keeper Jamie Butler sending him the wrong way (0-1).

The hosts retaliated straightaway and after the Blues defence had failed to clear an attack a Steve Cawley deflected shot was held low down by Joe Wright and shortly afterwards the Blues stopper had to react quickly to hold the ball at Sam Collins' feet when the midfielder had collected a Cawley pass into the box in the 8th minute.

Although Stortford had a good spell of pressure around the midway point of the first half with Joe Tabiri going close the hosts looked dangerous when they attacked. Striker Jordan Chiedozie's free-kick in the 19th minute from the left was held by Wright at his near upright and Lewis Taaffe headed over when well placed.

Cawley continued to be the main basis for instrumenting the Concord attacks and when he found Chiedozie running into the box ten minutes from the break the Rangers number nine struck a fierce first time shot at goal that Joe Wright saved well beating the ball away.

The Blues produced the perfect answer in the 40th minute when their lead was doubled. Ashley Miller, close to the half-way line found **SHELDON SELLEARS** with a fine pass and when the midfielder cut inside from the left he finished with a great effort from at least 25 yards that flew over Butler in the Concord goal and under the bar (0-2).

Once again after conceding the hosts retaliated strongly. A snap shot from Chiedozie through a number of players was saved by Wright a minute later but in their next attack in the 42nd minute Rangers reduced Blues' lead. Alex Woodyard cross from the right reached **STEVE CAWLEY** whose shot hit the bar but when he received the ball back in front of goal seconds later he slotted into the net from close range (1-2).

Half time: 1-2

There was little to choose between the sides on the restart although the Blues went close in the 55th minute as an attack up the left involving Anthony Church and Sheldon Sellears ended with Rod Young firing in an acute angled attempt that Jamie Butler held low at his near post.

However, the Beachboys then hit two goals in eight minutes to take the lead. In the 63rd minute, after a long build-up on the right, Lewis Taaffe crossed strongly into the box and **JORDAN CHIEDOZIE** powered a header into the top corner from eight yards to equalise (2-2).

Anthony Church saw his free-kick in the 67th minute parried down under the bar by Butler before Chiedozie, in the 70th minute, headed in his second goal of the night. After Stortford had failed to clear a free-kick another cross from the right was whipped in, this time by Alex Woodyard, and **CHIEDOZIE** climbed to head in from close range. Wright did manage to get a hand on the ball but could help it into the roof of the net (3-2).

Stortford upped their tempo to fight back and equalise in the 76th minute. **ROD YOUNG**, through a lot of hard work and effort, managed to fasten on to an excellent through pass down the middle from Ryan Auger and despite being under pressure somehow managed direct the ball past the advancing Butler and into the net (3-3).

Minutes later the Blues were close getting a winner when Sheldon Sellears and Rod Young linked on the left and the latter crossed towards the near upright where Ryan Auger had a shot turned aside by Butler.

Rangers had the slight edge in the closing minutes and in the final minute of normal time Steve Cawley's drive from outside the area was inches wide.

There was five minutes of added time but there were no further alarms for either side.

Both number nines were shown yellow cards by Referee Chris Pollard in the contest – Rod Young for Stortford and Jordan Chiedozie for Concord.

Full time: 3-3

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Joe Wright; Ashley Miller; Johnny Herd; Joe Tabiri; George Allen; Danny Fitzsimons; Sheldon Sellears; Anthony Church; Rod Young; George Sykes (sub – Ryan Melaugh 84 mins); Ryan Auger (sub – Spencer McCall 84 mins).

Unused substitutes: Harry Baker, Phil Anderson and Sam Baxter.

CONCORD RANGERS: Jamie Butler; Alex Woodyard; Danny Glozier; Gary Ogilvie; Steve King; Jack Lampe; Lewis Taaffe (sub – Joe Gardner 72 mins); James White; Jordan Chiedozie (sub – Tony Stokes 84 mins); Sam Collins; Steve Cawley.

Unused substitutes: Cheye Alexander, Jacob Cleaver and Roman Michael Percil.

Attendance: 247