

Wednesday 17th September 2014

WEST HAM UNITED (BLUES) 3 BISHOP'S STORTFORD 2
(FOOTBALL CONFERENCE YOUTH ALLIANCE – ESSEX/HERTS
DIVISION)

The Blues' trip to West Ham United's 3G pitch at Beckton proved to be a big disappointment. Having taken a one goal lead into the break they paid for being second best after the interval and returned home empty handed.

On a very bouncy pitch the play was a little scrappy at the start. Jack Isherwood's early free-kick was held by Hammers' keeper Lee Fenton whilst the hosts had an opportunity to go ahead after seven minutes when striker Kyle Nelson was through but shot over the top.

For Stortford, who began to get some control on proceedings, Ben Smith hit the top of the bar with a shot-cum-cross from wide on the right in the 11th minute and Isherwood finished off a good move with a shot saved by Fenton after twenty minutes. Very soon afterwards the keeper made an even better save from Isherwood, who had played for Essex Senior Leaguers Stansted the previous evening, when he turned a close range header over the bar following a Smith free-kick.

Stortford's opening goal arrived in the 26th minute. Taking the ball out of defence Aaron Thomas played a through pass for **JACK ISHERWOOD** to chase and steer low past Fenton (0-1). A header from the Blues' goalscorer was just wide of the mark on the half hour following a Mason Naylor free-kick and then Thomas was close to adding to the score when he saw Fenton save his shot after he had worked hard to get into a shooting position.

Three minutes before the break Bryn Thorpe missed out when his close range downhead header at the back post from Naylor's corner bounced over the target.

Half time: 0-1

Although Ben James went close after a promising move early after the restart Stortford failed to settle and gradually lost their way whilst the hosts having made some changes at half time looked more positive and aggressive.

GIDEON THOMAS missed a chance for the Hammers in the 59th minute when through on goal slipping the ball wide of an upright but it was Thomas who levelled the scores in the 66th minute heading a deep cross from the right into the net at the back post (1-1).

The hosts' James Cullen then had a goalbound shot kept out by the legs of Cameron Robson and it was a little against the run of play when the Blues retook the lead in the 72nd minute. A ball in from the left by Mason Naylor was laid back by Jack Isherwood into the path of **BEN SMITH** whose low shot from 15 yards found the net via the inside of an upright (1-2).

The lead didn't last long as in less than a minute United went straight down the other end and Wasiu Adeniran crossed for **GIDEON THOMAS** to equalise (2-2).

Stortford battled back with Mason Naylor being denied by a save from Fenton and Thomas shooting narrowly wide. Just as the Blues seemed to be back in the ascendancy the Hammers snatched the winning goal with ten minutes left. Axel Kakou found **IMEDD KARITTA** in what appeared to be in an offside position but with no decision given he went on to beat Cameron Robson (3-2).

The Blues' keeper again saved with his legs – this time from Gideon Thomas soon afterwards. Stortford pressed in the final minutes but the nearest they came to equalising was when substitute Rene Leacock crossed from the right and Fenton saved low down from Isherwood.

Full time: 3-2

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Cameron Robson; Alex Warman (sub – Rene Leacock 64 mins); Louis Monk; Lukeman Agbomabiwon; Alex Askri; Bryn Thorpe; Mason Naylor; Aaron Thomas (sub – Danny Palmer 80 mins); Jack Isherwood; Ben James; Ben Smith.

Unused substitutes: Declan Button and Stephen Robinson