

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014

HITCHIN TOWN 1, BISHOP'S STORTFORD 0  
(FOOTBALL CONFERENCE YOUTH ALLIANCE – ESSEX/HERTS  
DIVISION)

A controversial 90<sup>th</sup> minute penalty netted by the Canaries cost the Blues' youngsters from taking any points away from this fixture at the 3G Arena at Baldock. The match failed to reach any great heights but Tim Moylette's team should have travelled back with at least a point following a second half in which they were the better side.

Ironically a week before Stortford had lost unluckily to a stronger Hitchin side in the FA Youth Cup but the Blues never reached anywhere near the standard set in that Cup tie although in their defence they found it difficult to come to grips with the bouncy surface.

Ben Smith netted an offside goal early on but the Blues failed to settle in a first half devoid of any entertainment. The hosts' lively striker James Watkinson had an acute angled shot diverted away for a corner by keeper Cameron Robson whilst at the other end in the 27<sup>th</sup> minute a deep cross from the left by Louis Monk was headed over by Rene Leacock.

That was about all the action there was before the break as both sides were disjointed in their play.

Half time: 0-0

Three minutes after the restart Rene Leacock was close to breaking the deadlock after a nod on by Jamie Powter whilst Hitchin's Kane Smith struck a free-kick that deflected just wide.

The Canaries' keeper William Hunt managed to cling on to the ball low down in front of Jamie Powter after some good approach work by Danny Palmer. Then Powter missed a half chance in the 61<sup>st</sup> minute after Monk's throw into the box caused problems for the Hitchin defence but Powter's shot was blocked.

The Blues at this stage had the edge and most of the possession. Substitute Mason Naylor had a low effort scrambled away by keeper Hunt in the 75<sup>th</sup> minute and six minutes later Bryn Thorpe headed narrowly over the bar at the far post following a Naylor corner.

With the match entering the last ten minutes Jack Isherwood almost made the most of two free-kicks yards outside the box that Stortford were awarded in the space of two minutes. The first from the Stortford striker

was well saved by Hunt and the second free-kick was punched up into the air by the keeper who caught the ball on its way down.

Late pressure from the hosts resulted in Cameron Robson making a fine save turning a shot from Smith away for a corner. Then with the match in its last minute Bryn Thorpe was judged by the replacement referee who had just taken over the duties to have pushed a Hitchin player in the penalty area and it was Hitchin skipper **KANE SMITH** who stepped up to give Cameron Robson no chance from the penalty spot (1-0).

Full time: 1-0

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Cameron Robson; Alex Warman; Louis Monk; Lukeman Agbomabiwon; Alex Askri; Bryn Thorpe; Ben Smith; Danny Palmer; Jack Isherwood; Jamie Powter; Rene Leacock (sub – Mason Naylor 62 mins).

Unused substitutes: Ben James and Stephen Robinson