

Saturday 22nd November 2014

STAINES TOWN 1, BISHOP'S STORTFORD 0
(VANARAMA CONFERENCE SOUTH)

The frustration and the winless run for the Blues continued at Wheatsheaf Lane as a goal eight minutes from time scored by Staines skipper Max Worsfold proved to be the difference between the two sides. This was a first victory for the bottom of the table hosts after nine successive Vanarama Conference South defeats whilst for Stortford the slide down the league table continues having not picked up three points since the win at Farnborough on 11th October.

The final score was all the more frustrating considering Stortford were the better side on the day particularly in the first half and should have done better. They found the Swans' keeper, Jack Turner, in very good form making an excellent save in each half but the Blues lack of a cutting edge up front was very evident. Also, there was no intense pressure against a side that was clearly lacking confidence at the start of the game.

Manager Rod Stringer again had to do without the services of Anthony Church through injury but George Allen returned to the central defence having recovered from his broken toe. Ryan Auger was also back in the side after completing his one match suspension. There was no place in the team for the defender Danny Fitzsimons.

The start of the contest was generally scrappy with passes going astray but Stortford looked the stronger side and the Staines goal looked more under threat. A deflected shot from outside the box by Frankie Merrifield was held by Turner high above his head in the 11th minute and then three minutes later after receiving the ball from Spencer McCall, Ryan Auger struck a 25 yard drive that the Staines stopper beat away diving to his right.

Shortly afterwards Mikel Suarez nodded on down the middle for Rod Young to chase and the striker stretched forward to make contact at the edge of the box but the ball rebounded off the chest of the advancing Turner to safety.

The Blues continued to have the edge and the hosts' first worthwhile attempt didn't come about until midway through the half when, following an error by George Allen, Town's number nine Romone Rose shot just wide of the far post from the left side of the box. Stortford came back with a promising spell of pressure and when a Johnny Herd cross from the left diverted towards the far post Rod Young had a shot blocked by a

defender. In the 35th minute Young combined with Ryan Auger whose shot from outside the box was cleared for a corner.

Stortford came their closest to notching a goal before the break in the 41st minute. Rod Young brought the ball out of defence and then after laying it out to Spencer McCall on the right was in position to receive it back in the middle and hammered a 20 yard goalbound shot that Turner, pulling off a fine save, turned away one handed to his left.

Just on the break a flick at the near post from Rose following a low cross from Elliott Charles inched past the far upright.

Half time: 0-0

The Blues started the second half brightly and two minutes after the restart a long ball from skipper Joe Tabiri up to Rod Young in the left angle of the area saw the on loan player from Welling United slice wide his first time shot. Then a minute or so later Young, on the other side of the box, drove the ball across the six yard box.

At the other end the Swan's Rose tried an attempt at goal from near the edge of the area that was deflected over the bar and the Middlesex side seemed to be getting stronger as the second half progressed. In the 69th minute a long throw from Ashley Lodge on the left caused problems and Elliott Charles poked the ball wide at the near post.

The Swans had brought on a lively substitute in Danny Bassett just after the hour mark and with twenty minutes left he was involved in an attack on the right with Lodge that created an opening but Lodge's shot was narrowly wide of the far post.

Rod Stringer made a double substitution in the 71st minute with Sheldon Sellears replacing Rod Young and Ryan Melaugh coming on for Phil Anderson. It was Sellears who forced Turner to leap high to cut out a fine cross from the substitute soon after he had come on.

David Gregory saved well at his near post from Bassett whilst Ryan Auger hit another distance effort not far off target but then with eight minutes of normal time remaining the home side struck after another raid on the right flank. Bassett and Stephane Ngamvoulou were involved in a move that finished with the former crossing low to the edge of the box where **MAX WORSFOLD** made perfect connection with a first time attempt that beat David Gregory's full length dive and flew inside the post (1-0).

Bassett almost put the hosts further ahead but keeper Turner again came to the rescue of his side in the 86th minute. Mikel Suarez once more nodded the ball down the middle and although Frankie Merrifield was squeezed off the ball by a couple of defenders the ball ran loose to Spencer McCall but the midfielder was denied an equalising goal as the Staines stopper dropping to his left pushed aside the shot from 15 yards for a corner.

Stortford pushed forward but were unable to create any further chances before end and in the opening minute of added time Gregory had to save well from Bassett.

Referee Simon Knapp dished out yellow cards to Stortford's Adam Bailey-Dennis and George Allen and to the home side's Jerel Ifil, Elliott Charles and Max Worsfold.

Full time: 1-0

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: David Gregory; Ryan Auger; Johnny Herd (sub – George Sykes 89 mins); Phil Anderson (sub – Ryan Melaugh 71 mins); Adam Bailey-Dennis; George Allen; Spencer McCall; Joe Tabiri; Mikel Suarez; Rod Young (sub – Sheldon Sellears 71 mins); Frankie Merrifield.

Unused substitute: Lee Weemes.

STAINES TOWN: Jack Turner; Stephane Ngamvoulou (sub - Erivaldo Felix 90 mins); Luke Neville, Tommy Brewer; Chris M'Boungou; Jerel Ifil; Ashley Lodge; Max Worsfold; Romone Rose (sub – Danny Bassett 62 mins); Elliott Buchanan (sub – Calum Willock 74 mins); Elliott Charles.

Unused substitutes: Joe Aribio and Bajram Pashaj.

Attendance: 215