

Tuesday 25th November 2014

STEVENAGE 2, BISHOP'S STORTFORD 0
(HERTS SENIOR CHALLENGE CUP – 2ND ROUND)

Stortford could have few complaints after losing this County Cup tie at The Lamex Stadium. The Boro side included seven players that had been part of the squad for their Sky Bet Division 2 match at Northampton at the weekend and they proved to be a little too strong for the Blues. The hosts netted a goal in each half and although Stortford had a good period of play either side of the interval Stevenage deserved their passage into the next round.

The squad that Rod Stringer put out for the tie included newcomer Lee Weemes up front and the other new signing Daniel O'Reilly, a defender with experience at Fulham and Hereford United, was on the bench but didn't come on. A substitute who did come on and in fact replaced Weemes at the start of the second half was Donovan Simmonds. Joe Tabiri was unavailable and George Allen was skipper for the night playing against his parent Club.

There was an early near miss in the 2nd minute for the Blues when Ryan Auger found Sheldon Sellars on the right and the midfielder drilled the ball low across the six yard box and George Sykes, sliding in at the far post, just failed to make contact.

However, from that point for most of the half Boro dominated the midfield and had most of the possession. After going close on a couple of occasions they took the lead in the 25th minute with **JACK JEBB** netting with a low angled shot past David Gregory from 16 yards (1-0).

Stortford strung a few useful moves together before the break but two minutes after they had gone one up Stevenage's Roarie Deacon hit the side-netting after a run in from the left flank that took him past two Blues defenders.

Half time: 1-0

Rod Stringer made a double substitution at the break with, apart from Simmonds coming on for Weemes, Ryan Melaugh replacing Phil Anderson.

Stevenage substitute Dale Gorman went close with a shot and their Tom Conlon headed narrow over the bar early on after the restart but Stortford were much more in the game and a shot by George Sykes from outside the box in the 53rd minute was held by Stevenage stopper Sam Beasant, the son of former Wimbledon custodian and skipper Dave.

Two minutes later a free-kick by Spencer McCall found Adam Bailey-Dennis in the box but the central defender's header was too close to Beasant. Then shortly afterwards Stortford had strong shouts for a penalty when Ryan Auger was bundled over by Simon Walton on the right hand side of the box. The spell of pressure led to a series of corners. A speculative shot from Auger deflected off of Bira Dembele for a flag kick whilst in the 67th minute a good run on the right by Sheldon Sellears culminated with a 15 yard effort from Frankie Merrifield that was just wide of the mark.

However, at the other end Deacon missed a chance to enhanced Boro's lead after a slip by Johnny Herd before he scored their second in the 76th minute. Jerome Okimo raided down the left and when he squared the ball low into the middle **DEACON** smashed the ball wide of Gregory from 25 yards and it whistled inside the keeper's right hand upright (2-0).

George Allen had to leave the field with an injury and was replaced by Rod Young.

The hosts netted an offside goal before the end and Ryan Auger made an acrobatic clearance from under the Stortford bar to keep a shot from Tom Pett from crossing the goal-line.

Referee Stephen Bates showed no cards during the evening.

Full time: 2-0

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: David Gregory; Sheldon Sellears; Johnny Herd; Phil Anderson (sub – Ryan Melaugh 46 mins); Adam Bailey-Dennis; George Allen (sub - Rod Young 76 mins); Spencer McCall; Ryan Auger; Lee Weemes (sub – Donovan Simmonds 46 mins); George Sykes; Frankie Merrifield.

Unused substitutes: Mikel Suarez and Daniel O'Reilly.

STEVENAGE: Sam Beasant; Dean Parrett; Bira Dembele; Ricardo Alves (sub – Ross Millard 78 mins); Jerome Okimo; Tom Conlon; Jack Jebb (sub – George Casey 46 mins); Simon Walton; Amodou Abdullei (sub – Dale Gorman 46 mins); Roarie Deacon; Tom Pett.

Unused substitutes: Ryan Johnson and Tyler Reading

Attendance: approx. 150

