

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2015

**BISHOP'S STORTFORD 2, HAYES & YEADING UNITED 2  
(VANARAMA CONFERENCE SOUTH)**

Two goals ahead with fifteen minutes left on the clock Stortford looked all but sure to take maximum points from a welcome victory but they were to be denied by late goals from two United substitutes who were making their debuts. To rub salt into the wound Tom Derry's equalising goal came in the third of four minutes of added time. Earlier, after a goalless first half, Sheldon Sellears and Frankie Merrifield had netted for the Blues in the space of 90 seconds soon after the restart and they had looked strong enough to hold on but it wasn't to be.

Rod Stringer's squad saw in the inclusion on the bench of defender George Allen who had been absent since late November with a broken toe, However, striker Mikel Suarez was still unavailable due to his groin strain.

The Blues, with the elements in their favour, attacked the Airport end but there were few noteworthy incidents in a tentative start by both sides. In the 9<sup>th</sup> minute a Sheldon Sellears free-kick was comfortably taken by the Middlesex side's stopper Calum Kitscha and then in the 17<sup>th</sup> minute his opposite number Dillon Phillips stretched high to catch well a deep free-kick from the left by Adam Everitt.

A minute later a long throw from Johnny Herd led to a United defender deflecting the ball over his own bar and two successive corners followed. A volley from Donovan Simmonds and another Sellears' free-kick weren't far off target and although Rhys Murrell-Williamson finished a good run on the left with a shot into the side-netting in the 26<sup>th</sup> minute it was the Blues who had more of the possession as the half progressed.

Ten minutes before the break Simmonds struck a shot on the turn that Kitscha did well to tip over and from Sellears' corner on the right skipper Anthony Church's firm header was cleared off the line at the near post by defender Adam Everitt. Then when the lively Simmonds broke on the right and crossed low towards the near upright James Walker was closed down quickly by Matt Ruby and the defender conceded another corner.

Stortford continued to have the better of exchanges but the visitors were awarded a penalty a minute from half-time. A cross from the right was headed away by Adam Bailey-Dennis towards the 18 yard line but when Elliot Benyon went to retrieve the ball Ashley Miller bundled into the striker and Referee Neil Hair awarded a penalty. However, when Benyon

took the spot-kick, Dillon Phillips guessed right and dived the right way to save.

Half time: 0-0

The scoreline deadlock was broken in the 52<sup>nd</sup> minute when the Blues netted their first goal in two minutes shy of seven hours football. Just inside the West Londoners' half Adam Bailey-Dennis challenged and lifted a high ball forward for Donovan Simmonds to nod on into James Walker's path and the striker neatly slipped the ball through the middle for **SHELDON SELLEARS** to run on and guide low past Kitscha (1-0).

Within ninety seconds Stortford had doubled their lead. A quickly taken throw in on the right by Anthony Church set James Walker on a run to the bye-line and his dropping cross into the area was headed inside the far post by **FRANKIE MERRIFIELD** from close range (2-0).

The visitors tried to fight back with Rhys Murrell-Williamson, a constant threat in the second period, firing over from long range in the 55<sup>th</sup> minute. But Stortford were close to establishing a three goal lead shortly afterwards and only a fine save from Kitscha denied Sellears from adding to the tally when the keeper saved an angled shot from the left after Walker had cut the ball back.

United's Wes Daly was close with a drive from outside the box and then midway through the half Donovan Simmonds hit a low shot on the turn that Kitscha saved falling to his left. The visitors had made all their three substitutions by the 75<sup>th</sup> minute at which time they reduced the arrears. It was two of the substitutes who were involved in the goal. Tom Derry back-heeled a long ball out of defence into the path of **JUNIOR OGEDI-UZOKWE** who broke towards goal from the right flank and shot past Phillips (2-1).

Stortford were close to restoring a two goal lead on two occasions in the next few minutes. Firstly, in the 77<sup>th</sup> minute, a Sheldon Sellears' free-kick was held at the second attempt by Kitscha as Donovan Simmonds closed in when the ball originally escaped the keeper's grasp and then four minutes later a shot from a tight angle by James Walker was diverted for a corner at the near upright by Kitscha.

However, the visitors were raising their tempo all the time in the closing minutes of the contest. Three minutes from the end of normal time Rhys Murrell-Williamson stormed down the left and a combination of Adam Bailey-Dennis and Dillon Phillips blocked out a shot from the dangerman. Finally in the third minute of four added minutes United netted the equaliser. The Blues had failed to retain possession of the ball

and when Gary MacDonald picked up a loose clearance from Joe Tabiri and planted a cross into the box from the left it was only half cleared as far as **TOM DERRY** on the edge of the box and the substitute's first time rising effort found the roof of the net (2-2).

Referee Hair showed no yellow or red cards during the match.

Full time: 2-2

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Dillon Phillips; Ashley Miller (sub – Ryan Auger 61 mins); Johnny Herd; Joe Tabiri; Adam Bailey-Dennis; Rickie Hayles; Sheldon Sellears (sub – Jay Davies 89 mins); Anthony Church; James Walker; Donovan Simmonds; Frankie Merrifield.

Unused substitutes: Phil Anderson, George Allen and Spencer McCall.

HAYES & YEADING UNITED: Calum Kitscha; Greg Morgan; Adam Everitt; Gary MacDonald; Matt Ruby; Dean Inman; Mason Spence (sub – Junior Ogedi-Uzokwe 61 mins); Wes Daly; Elliot Benyon (sub – Nic Bignall 73 mins); Lewis Ferrell (sub – Tom Derry 54 mins); Rhys Murrell-Williamson.

Unused substitutes: Charlie Mitchell and Grant Smith.

Attendance: 304