

Saturday 28th March 2015

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 2 FARNBOROUGH 2
(VANARAMA CONFERENCE SOUTH)

It was a case of the great escape as the Blues somehow salvaged a point from a contest where they had been two goals adrift at the start of stoppage time. Fortunately a goal from substitute Anthony Edgar in the first minute of added time and then an equaliser from skipper Anthony Church salvaged a point to ease Stortford a little closer to safety in the Vanarama Conference South table. For their opponents the final result was a heartbreaker and leaves them with much still to do to escape the trap door.

Apart from those closing minutes this was generally a poor display from the Blues and they seemed to find it hard to raise their game against a side that has struggled for most of the season. There were a couple of changes to Rod Stringer's line-up with central defender Adam Bailey-Dennis out with a back problem but on the plus side skipper Anthony Church returned following his hamstring injury. Amongst those on the substitutes bench were Anthony Furlonge returning for a second spell at Woodside.

Facing a strong wind Stortford were soon under pressure. A shot from striker Jordan Robertson was curling narrowly over the bar from the edge of the box in the 5th minute. Then three minutes later when the Blues failed to clear an attack Dan Bennett crossed from the right and **JORDAN ROBERTSON** with a comfortable header from close range beat James Bransgrove (0-1).

There was almost further trouble three minutes later as a high ball downwind found Bennett in space with only Bransgrove to beat but fortunately he shot against the stopper's legs and the ball rebounded out of danger.

The action was very scrappy with Stortford giving possession of the ball away far too easily. However they were close to levelling in the space of a couple of minutes. Firstly in the 24th minute when Bobby-Joe Taylor crossed in towards the six yard box the ball rebounded off a number of bodies before Ashley Miller, on the ground, swung a boot at the ball and it fell conveniently into the grasp of Borough keeper Charlie Grainger. Then a minute later Greg Pearson was unlucky with an attempt from just inside the visitors' half that was just wide of the target.

Ten minutes from the break a neat inter-passing movement between Ashley Miller and Sheldon Sellaars threatened but the final pass went

astray in the box and the threat evaporated. Shortly afterwards Kenzer Lee found Sellears with a crossfield pass and when he cut in from the right Sellears saw his almost go underneath Grainger at the near upright.

The Blues seemed to be improving at this time and a stretching header from Anthony Church following a Taylor cross in the 42nd minute flew wide. Then a Greg Pearson header from a Lee centre was held by Grainger under the bar.

However, it took an excellent save from James Bransgrove to keep Stortford just one goal adrift at the break. On the stroke of half-time George Allen committed a foul on the edge of his own box for which he was yellow carded and Jordan Robertson's resultant free-kick saw the loan keeper throw himself full length to his left to turn the ball away for a corner.

Half time: 0-1

Rod Stringer brought Mikel Suarez on to replace Sheldon Sellears in the 49th minute but just sixty seconds later the visitors doubled their lead. Rickie Hayles made an error losing possession when bringing the ball away from defence and after Courtney Fearn had nipped in the attack finished with Bennett crossing low and short from the left and **JORDAN ROBERTSON** having the simple task of turning the ball into an empty net from a few yards out (0-2).

Although Stortford pushed forward and had most of the possession openings in their favour were few and far between. In the 55th minute Ashley Miller was wide from distance and then in the 66th minute when defender Darryl Siaw fouled Miller on a run towards goal substitute Anthony Edgar's free-kick struck the defensive wall.

Farnborough were defending well to limit Stortford's chances although when a long throw by Rickie Hayles from the right in the 80th minute reached Mikel Suarez the Spaniard's glancing header finished on the roof of the net. The Blues came closer in the 84th minute as Suarez nodded a long clearance from Bransgrove into Greg Pearson's path tracking in from the right but the striker was foiled by Grainger who saved at the near post.

It looked as though it was going to be all doom and gloom at the ProKit UK Stadium as the match entered stoppage time but there was a twist in the tail. In the first minute of added time a Blues attack on the left flank saw the ball moved across the park and when Anthony Church spread it out to **ANTHONY EDGAR** just inside the far side of the box the

substitute drove a superb low shot into the far bottom corner past Grainger (1-2).

There was further drama in the last action of the contest. Stortford won a free-kick deep on the left just inside the Farnborough half and with all their players up in the area including James Bransgrove up there Bobby-Joe Taylor swung the ball towards the far post. Mikel Suarez headed on and Greg Pearson may also have had a touch but in any event the ball looped towards the opposite side of the goal and **ANTHONY CHURCH** nodded in under the bar (2-2).

After the unlikely equaliser the ball was brought back to the centre spot and Referee Lee Betts immediately blew the full time whistle.

Apart from George Allen the Blues' Rickie Hayles was booked alongside Farnborough's Darryl Siaw, Jordan Robertson, Jamie White and Charlie Grainger.

Full time: 2-2

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: James Bransgrove; Ashley Miller; Kenzer Lee; Ben Marlow; Rickie Hayles; George Allen (sub – Frankie Merrifield 68 mins); Sheldon Sellaars (sub – Mikel Suarez 49 mins); Joe Tabiri (sub – Anthony Edgar 52 mins); Greg Pearson; Anthony Church; Bobby-Joe Taylor.

Unused substitutes: Anthony Furlonge and Matt Gill.

FARNBOROUGH: Charlie Grainger; Michael Richens; Freddie Grant; Courtney Fearn; Ollie Treacher; Darryl Siaw; Dan Bennett; Josh Webb (sub - Jamie Hand 78 mins); Jordan Robertson (sub – Stephane Ngamvoulou 81 mins); James White; Harry Grant.

Unused substitutes: Josh Shama and Nathan Chambers.

Attendance: 382