

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015

**BISHOP'S STORTFORD 2 STAINES TOWN 1  
(VANARAMA CONFERENCE SOUTH)**

Second half goals from Ashley Miller and Greg Pearson nailed three vital points for Stortford as they came from behind to beat basement side Staines Town. The points took the Blues seven clear of the drop zone and the victory meant that they had won at the ProKit UK Stadium for the first time since before Christmas. Additionally after the win at the weekend over Wealdstone it was the first time in the current campaign that Stortford had strung together two successive Vanarama Conference South victories. Also they leapfrogged over Maidenhead United into 17<sup>th</sup> place in the table.

Stortford deserved the points over the ninety minutes but they played well below the standard they had achieved against Wealdstone and it seemed that it was only after the visiting Swans went ahead that the Blues kick-started their teamwork and tempo to take control of the match in the final twenty minutes or so.

There was just one change in Rod Stringer's side and that was due as expected to the absence of skipper Anthony Church because of a hamstring injury with Bobby-Joe Taylor coming into the starting line-up. Rickie Hayles started in midfield but when George Allen was injured late in the match he reverted to the defence.

The first half of this contest won't be remembered long for the football. In an even start neither side looked confident and openings were few and far between in the early stages. A glancing header narrowly wide from the Swans' Chris M'Boungou following a cross from the right by skipper Max Worsfold midway through the half was the closest anyone came to scoring. Stortford were particularly poor from dead-ball situations and rarely troubled the Middlesex side's defence.

The biggest talking point of the half was the dangerous tackles put in by big visiting striker Jamal Fenelon. He was finally cautioned by Referee Carl Fitch in the 36<sup>th</sup> minute after a strong challenge on Greg Pearson and then Staines defender Harry Medway was also shown a yellow card five minutes later for a tackle on Joe Tabiri.

A worrying aspect for Stortford was that keeper Jake Larkins was struggling with a thigh problem and from late in the half he didn't take any goal-kicks with these being taken by Adam Bailey-Dennis.

Half time: 0-0

Stortford started slowly on the restart, although Greg Pearson just failed to connect with a cross from the right flank by Sheldon Sellears that whizzed across the six yard box.

It came as a surprise when a goal was scored in the 59<sup>th</sup> minute and it was the visitors who took the lead. Joe Tabiri lost possession near the halfway line and with the aid of a deflection a pass forward by Jamal Fenelon found **ELLIOTT BUCHANAN** advancing down the middle and he finished with a fine low shot beating the advancing Larkins with the ball ending in the bottom corner of the net (0-1).

It looked as though the home hoodoo was going to strike again but almost immediately there was more urgency and cohesion about Stortford's football and four minutes after going behind skipper Joe Tabiri struck a twenty yard deflected shot that keeper Jack Turner held. Then shortly afterwards an under pressure Chris M'Boungou headed away a dangerous cross from Bobby-Joe Taylor past his own back post.

In the 66<sup>th</sup> minute Greg Pearson set up Mikel Suarez to have an attempt at goal from the edge of the box and although the Spaniard's effort lacked power the ball escaped Turner's clutches and the keeper had to be quick to retrieve the ball before it crossed the line.

The equaliser arrived in the 69<sup>th</sup> minute. A Sheldon Sellears' free-kick was only half cleared and when Stortford raided down the right after collecting the loose ball Ashley Miller, Joe Tabiri and Bobby-Joe Taylor were involved before Taylor crossed short in towards the near upright and **ASHLEY MILLER's** low shot on the turn from ten yards beat Turner (1-1).

With the game entering the last twenty minutes the Swans made a double substitution whilst Rod Stringer brought on Frankie Merrifield to replace the injured George Allen,

Blues' winning goal came with fourteen minutes left on normal time. They won a corner on the right and when Bobby-Joe Taylor's flag kick swung in past the near post **GREG PEARSON** went up for the ball together with Turner and it appeared the keeper's attempted punch away resulted in the ball hitting the striker and rebounding into the net (2-1).

The remaining minutes including three of added time was seen out comfortably by Stortford and in fact they could have widened the margin of victory. Bobby-Joe Taylor was nearly on the end of a cross from the right by Sheldon Sellears in the 87<sup>th</sup> minute and then two minutes later a deep free-kick from his own half by Adam Bailey-Dennis found Sellears

30 yards out and his first time crack at goal was tipped round the near post by Turner.

Following the two yellow cards for Staines players in the first half there were no more cautions.

Full time: 2-1

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Jake Larkins; Ashley Miller; Kenzer Lee; Rickie Hayles; Adam Bailey-Dennis; George Allen (sub – Frankie Merrifield 73 mins); Sheldon Sellears; Joe Tabiri; Greg Pearson; Bobby-Joe Taylor; Mikel Suarez (sub – James Walker 78 mins).  
Unused substitutes: Spencer McCall, Nicky Nicolau and Nick Salapatas.

STAINES TOWN: Jack Turner; Erivaldo Felix; Harry Medway (sub – Justyn Roberts 88 mins); Tommy Brewer; Darren Purse; Chris M'Boungou; Ashley Lodge; Chace O'Neill; Jamal Fenelon; Elliott Buchanan (sub – Josh Cooke 72 mins); Max Worsfold (sub – Michael Freiter 72 mins).  
Unused substitutes: Joe Aribo and Harry Churchill.

Attendance: 312