

## BISHOP'S STORTFORD 3, HAVANT & WATERLOOVILLE 0 (VANARAMA NATIONAL SOUTH)

Elliott Buchanan was the hero as he hit a hat-trick on his competitive debut to set Stortford on the way to a convincing victory over the Hawks who paid for their uncertainty at the back in the first half. The win was the best start to a league campaign in terms of winning margins for nearly thirty years for the Blues who included new signing the experienced Christian Smith on the bench.

After a tentative start by both sides the visitors' Scott Donnelly was close with a deflected free-kick after Kenzer Lee had fouled Marvin Morgan on the edge of the box. Then from the resultant corner the Hawks' Brian Stock sent in a shot from the right that skimmed the side-netting. However, after Buchanan was denied by a blocking save from keeper Ryan Young in the 13<sup>th</sup> minute the striker took advantage of a misunderstanding between Young and Brian Dutton to roll the ball into an empty net for the opener four minutes later following a long ball downfield from George Allen that the Hawks players failed to deal with. Donnelly hit the bar and had an effort excellently saved by Blues' stopper Tom Lovelock initially wrong-footed soon afterwards but Buchanan doubled the lead in the 41<sup>st</sup> minute turning in a low cross from the right by De'Reece Vanderhyde who had been set free on a run on the right by a great reverse pass from Sheldon Sellears.

Morgan was almost through just before the interval after Lee had been caught in possession.

Hawks boss Lee Bradbury made a triple substitution at the break but despite having the majority of the possession the Hampshire side failed to make any inroads on the hosts' lead although Matt Paterson hit a half chance over from 15 yards ten minutes after the restart. Buchanan netted his third goal in the 58<sup>th</sup> minute with an angled shot past Young after good work by Frankie Merrifield who had made a strong diagonal run towards the left corner flag and then slipped the ball inside to the striker. Sheldon Sellears, who was set up for a shot by Matty Fanimmo and the ex West Ham United player himself nearly added to the Stortford tally before the end.

Newcomer Christian Smith replaced Sheldon Sellears just past the midway point of the half and took up a holding role in front of the back four. Other substitutions during the second half saw Billy Lobjoit replace Fanimmo and Josh Ekim replace the hard working Mikel Suarez who had won much of the ball in the air during his time on the pitch.

Donnelly came the closest to a consolation goal for the visitors with a 25 yard effort a foot over the target in stoppage time.

Not only did the Blues keep a clean sheet in terms of goals conceded but they also kept a clean sheet in the realms of disciplinary with no yellow cards or red cards. The visitors on the other hand had Brian Dutton, Scott Donnelly and Brian Stock all booked by Referee Josh Smith.

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TEAM INFO AND MATCH DETAILS:

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Tom Lovelock; De'Reece Vanderhyde; Johnny Herd; Frankie Merrifield; Kenzer Lee; George Allen; Sheldon Sellaars (Christian Smith 66); Anthony Church; Mikel Suarez (Josh Ekim 79); Elliott Buchanan; Matty Fanimmo (Billy Lobjoit 73).  
Unused substitutes: Adam Bailey-Dennis and Ejiro Okosieme

HAVANT & WATERLOOVILLE: Ryan Young; Dan Strugnell; Warren Cummings (Daniel Blanchett 46); Brian Stock; Brian Dutton (Emmanuel Monthe 46); Lee Molyneaux; Ben Swallow (James Hayter 46); Scott Donnelly; Matt Paterson; Marvin Morgan; Adrian Clifton.  
Unused substitutes: Nic Ciardini and Harry Medway.

Half time: 2-0

Goalscorer: Elliott Buchanan 17, 41 and 58

Referee: Mr Josh Smith

Attendance: 353