

AFC SUDBURY 4, BISHOP'S STORTFORD 2  
(FOOTBALL CONFERENCE YOUTH ALLIANCE – DIVISION 'C')

The Blues played their part in an entertaining match on AFC Sudbury's 3G pitch but travelled back from the Wardale Williams Stadium empty handed.

After going two behind Tim Moylette's team pulled a goal back on the stroke of half-time through a Mason Naylor penalty but the key period was the fifteen or so minutes after the break when despite heavy pressure Stortford were unable to equalise. The hosts restored the two goal margin and despite Aaron Thomas finding the net with a header with a couple of minutes to go Sudbury broke upfield to score a fourth goal with the last kick of the contest.

Stortford constructed some promising attacks in the early stages with Aaron Thomas and Alex Rogers going close in the opening minutes. However, the Suffolk side's Laslo Santa hit the post in the 12<sup>th</sup> minute with a low shot. The Blues came back with Aaron Thomas and Alex Rogers shooting narrowly wide.

Sudbury took the lead in the 23<sup>rd</sup> minute as Santa, to the left of the goal, chipped the ball over Tom Beckett at the near post and MEKHI MCKENZIE provided the finishing touch to send it over the goal-line (1-0). A shot from Zach Smith-Walter was held by Beckett before Sudbury's lead was extended in the 31<sup>st</sup> minute. A long ball from the right was fastened on to by HAYDEN WYATT who made tracks into the box and after seeming to push Blues defender Ross Gill out of his way then beat Beckett with a strong drive (2-0). Five minutes from the interval a volley from Danny Palmer was held by Sudbury stopper Aaron Smyth and then in the last minute of the half Mason Naylor was fouled just inside the box and NAYLOR got up to convert the penalty kick via the inside of an upright (2-1).

Half time: 2-1

The Blues made a good start to the second period as they forced the hosts on the back-foot. In the first couple of minutes Mason Naylor sent Aaron Thomas away down the left flank and after cutting inside placed a shot wide of Smyth but the ball struck the far post with no one able to touch home the rebound. Then skipper Bryn Thorpe had a shot well saved by the keeper at the foot of an upright and shortly afterwards after more pressure Mason Naylor saw his volley excellently saved by Smyth. A shot on the turn in the 59<sup>th</sup> minute from Alex Rogers was inches wide of the target.

The home side looked dangerous however whenever they went forward and after Smith-Walter had fired into the side-netting HAYDEN WYATT scored with a low shot past Beckett after being sent clear in the 64<sup>th</sup> minute (3-1).

Play after the hosts' third goal became very much an end-to-end affair. Smyth made a good save from another Aaron Thomas effort whilst Tom Beckett produced a fine save to turn a shot from Harry McDonald away for a corner in the 84<sup>th</sup> minute. Blues' substitute Ted Dean had a shot on the turn pushed for a corner by Smyth in the 88<sup>th</sup> minute and when the corner was cleared out to Danny Palmer wide on the right his deep cross to the far post was headed home by AARON THOMAS (3-2).

Stortford piled forward to try to rescue a point and following a Callum O'Brien corner there was a goalmouth melee with Jack Thomas having a goalbound effort blocked by bodies near the goal-line. Into added time Bryn Thorpe had a 20 yard free-kick held by Smyth and then in the last action of the match a long clearance out of the Sudbury half flicked off the top of Thorpe's head and HAYDEN WYATT ran on to lob the ball over the advancing Tom Beckett to complete his hat-trick (4-2).

Bishop's Stortford: Tom Beckett; Ben Smith; Callum O'Brien; Jack Thomas; Ross Gill; Bryn Thorpe; Alex Rogers (Ted Dean 86); Danny Palmer; Aaron Thomas; Mason Naylor; Joe Senior (George Bartlam 48).

Unused substitute: Sam Philpot