

BRENTWOOD TOWN 1, BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1
(FOOTBALL CONFERENCE YOUTH ALLIANCE – DIVISION 'C')

Once again Stortford proved to be a thorn in the side of one of the top sides in the Youth Alliance when deservedly sharing the points with Brentwood. Earlier in the season Stortford had beaten second-in-the-table Brentwood at the ProKit UK Stadium and in the return fixture they gave a much improved overall performance compared to that at AFC Sudbury Reds two days earlier. They had to withstand some pressure at times as the Essex side shaded the midfield but the Stortford defence, with Ross Gill outstanding and Callum Lynskey making a few fine saves, held on well for a point.

On a difficult surface where the ball bobbed almost every time, Stortford settled fairly quickly and had their rewards with a goal in the 14th minute. Ben Smith broke quickly on the right and laid the ball back into the centre for ALEX ROGERS to net (0-1).

The lead was held until the 25th minute when TARRYN ALLARAKHIA equalised for the hosts (1-1). The state of the pitch meant that openings for both sides were few and far between. Callum Lynskey gathered the ball from the hosts' Kieran Gore following a free-kick into the area from Callum Hubble and then in the final action of the half Town's Max Watters headed narrowly wide.

Half time: 1-1

After the break, in the 56th minute, Ben Smith mis-headed the ball when in a good position to meet Alex Rogers' cross from the left and ten minutes later Aaron Thomas delivered a free-kick just wide of the target. In the last fifteen minutes Brentwood pressed strongly and Callum Lynskey had to make an outstanding save to turn a header from Town's Lewis Scott over the bar. Then in the 81st minute Ross Gill made his only mistake of the match when passing the ball straight to Scott who set Max Watters on a clear run at goal. However, Watters overran the ball and Lynskey was able to grab the ball away from his feet.

In the closing minutes Mason Naylor went close with a shot from distance and then home keeper James Alborough pushed aside a deflected free-kick from skipper Bryn Thorpe. In the final minute Callum Hubble cut in from the right but his low acute angled effort hit Lynskey's legs and spun away to safety.

So Stortford have gathered four points from Brentwood this campaign following on two draws last season with the Divisional Champions.

Bishop's Stortford: Callum Lynskey; Alex Warman (George Bartlam 42); Callum O'Brien; Jack Thomas; Ross Gill; Bryn Thorpe; Alex Rogers (Ted Dean 69); Mason Naylor; Ben Smith; Aaron Thomas; Danny Palmer.
Unused substitutes: Samuel Brown and Joe Senior.