

# HAVANT & WATERLOOVILLE 2, BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1 (VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH)

Returning to Westleigh Park three weeks after the previous abortive trip, Stortford still suffered a fruitless journey this time in terms of points as they lost by the odd goal in three. Two strikes in each half from Scott Donnelly gave the hosts the upper hand and although substitute Morgan Ferrier pulled a goal back with nine minutes of normal time remaining the Blues were unable to force an equaliser.



Possession-wise, there was little to choose between Havant, who needed the points to try to escape from the bottom three places in the league table, and Stortford in the ninety minutes. The Blues, although playing some attractive approach work at times, perhaps crucially lacked the intensity and desire that they have displayed in recent games. Also, Elliott Buchanan and skipper Mikel Suarez had off-nights and didn't threaten the home defence on many occasions.

There were a few changes in Rod Stringer's squad since the last match ten days earlier against Ebbsfleet United. Ross Fitzsimons' loan spell had finished so Tom Lovelock was back between the sticks. Josh Ekim having recovered from a hamstring injury was in midfield and Robbie Willmott, who wasn't allowed to play against his parent Club in the previous match, also returned. Still missing was the injured Anthony Church whilst serving his suspension was George Allen. Amongst those on the bench was defender Jack Fowler who was to come on and make his debut twenty minutes from the end. Up front for the Hampshire side was Shamir Mullings who played once for Stortford in a Herts Charity Cup tie at the start of the 2012/13 campaign and the striker caused

a lot of problems for Kenzer Lee and Chris M'Boungou throughout the evening.

Both sides began the contest on the front foot with a swift Stortford move up the left flank in the 3<sup>rd</sup> minute seeing Robbie Willmott and Mikel Suarez linking with the latter crossing low into the six yard box and Corby Moore's attempt at goal foiled by a close marking defender and the ball rebounded away from the danger zone. Then, five minutes later, Willmott sent Johnny Herd away in space on the left and the long-serving back delivered a low shot-cum-cross a yard or so past the far upright. The Hawks countered with Mullings heading narrowly wide following a deep free-kick from the left by Theo Lewis and the same player having a looping header held under the bar by Tom Lovelock in the 19<sup>th</sup> minute after an attack involving Ben Swallow and Scott Donnelly. A minute later, Mikel Suarez also had a header held high by Havant keeper Ryan Young after Elliott Buchanan nodded on a Johnny Herd free-kick. The hosts then threatened in the 26<sup>th</sup> minute as a dangerous move was rounded off with Lewis' low goalbound effort kept out by Tom Lovelock's outstretched leg.

However, just two minutes later, Havant took the lead. A long clearance downfield was back-heeled by Mullings into the path of SCOTT DONNELLY who saw Lovelock slightly off his line and chipped a lofted shot from 23 yards over the Blues' keeper and under the bar (1-0). Stortford should have equalised in the 36<sup>th</sup> minute. A run on the right from Corby Moore ended with a cross into the middle where a shot from Willmott deflected to Buchanan in front of goal. The Blues' top goalscorer sent his first effort at goal straight at Havant keeper Ryan Young and couldn't force home the rebound because he was being held back by central defender Brian Dutton. Referee Daniel Leach failed to spot the infringement and play continued. Keeper Young, late in the half, held on to a Willmott free-kick from the left.

Half-time: 1-0

With Stortford now kicking down the slight slope on the restart, a low shot by Mikel Suarez from the edge of the box was just wide following a promising attack up the left. In the 56<sup>th</sup> minute Rod Stringer

brought on Morgan Ferrier to replace Josh Ekim and the substitute soon proved a handful for the home defence and the contest went through a stage where it seemed that Stortford were the more likely side to score the next goal. Another Willmott free-kick saw Chris M'Boungou head on in towards the six yard box where the ball was hastily cleared and just before the hour Ferrier fired wide from an acute angle. Then a long throw from the left by Johnny Herd was missed by everyone before going wide of the near post.

The best chance for Stortford came in the 67<sup>th</sup> minute as Moore and Buchanan combined to send Morgan Ferrier clear on goal but stopper Ryan Young advanced quickly to block the substitute's shot from the edge of the area. The Blues were made to pay just two minutes later as the Hawks doubled their lead. In an attack on the right wing Mullings supplied the pass for SCOTT DONNELLY to take the ball forward and hammer a drive from 20 yards wide of Lovelock into the far corner of the net (2-0).

Havant's Nic Ciardini missed a golden chance to widen the lead in the 73<sup>rd</sup> minute by poking the ball past the post from close range. Then, with nine minutes of normal time remaining Stortford's hopes rose as they reduced the arrears. Elliott Buchanan spread the ball out to the right for Robbie Willmott and when Willmott swung the ball into the middle MORGAN FERRIER sent a firm header into the bottom corner of the net inside the near upright (2-1).

From then in the time until the final whistle, which included an additional five minutes to take account of stoppages, Stortford piled forward and forced a number of corners but were unable to net a leveler. Havant substitute Matt Paterson missed out on a chance to notch a third for his side when he controlled a cross from Shamir Mullings and fired

his 12 yard shot too close to Tom Lovelock who saved fairly comfortably.

Referee Leach booked two players from each side with Kenzer Lee and Ashley Miller picking up yellow cards alongside Havant's Brian Dutton and Shamir Mullings.

-----  
-----  
TEAM DETAILS AND MATCH DETAILS:-

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Tom Lovelock; Ashley Miller (Jack Fowler 70); Johnny Herd; Josh Ekim (Morgan Ferrier 56); Kenzer Lee; Chris M'Boungou; Corby Moore; Frankie Merrifield (Byron Lawrence 70); Mikel Suarez; Elliott Buchanan; Robbie Willmott.

Unused substitute: Alli Abdullahi.

HAVANT & WATERLOOVILLE: Ryan Young; Dan Strugnell (Lee Molyneaux 70); Harry Medway; Brian Stock; Brian Dutton; Josh Hill; Ben Swallow; Scott Donnelly (Matt Paterson 85); Shamir Mullings; Nic Ciardini (Dan Blanchett 85); Theo Lewis.

Unused substitutes: James Hayter and Jake Thomson.

Half time: 1-0

Goalscorers: Bishop's Stortford – Morgan Ferrier 81

Havant & Waterlooville – Scott Donnelly 28 and 69.

Referee: Mr Daniel Leach

Attendance: 419