

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 0, MAIDSTONE UNITED 1 (VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH)

A debut goal from Maidstone striker Dumebi Dumaka gave the high-flying Kent side all three points at the ProKit UK Stadium, on Saturday.

The striker, just signed from Ryman Premier Leaguers' Grays Athletic having attracted the attention of several Football League club, consigned the Blues to their third successive odd goal defeat.

The goal coming three minutes after the break moved the visitors up into second place in the league. For Stortford this was a match that rarely saw them manage any fluency in their play on what was a difficult, wet and muddy pitch and in truth although there was only one goal in it United were largely in control for most of the game.



Johnny Herd, making his 150th appearance for Stortford, was captain for the day. Andrew Dawber was the new goalkeeper for the Blues being brought in by Rod Stringer on loan from Fulham until the end of the season. Both Byron Lawrence and Morgan Ferrier were included in the starting eleven with Robbie Willmott, Frankie Merrifield and Alli Abdullahi on the bench. Bobby-Joe Taylor who was on loan to Stortford from Cambridge United in the latter stages of last season was amongst the Maidstone substitutes.

In driving rain Stortford started well in the opening minutes with Ferrier making one dangerous run down the left flank but Maidstone soon settled to have the edge in midfield. Chances were few and far between before the interval in the very heavy conditions. In the 14th minute Jamie Coyle connected with a Vas Karagiannis free-kick towards the back post but Dawber managed to deflect the ball away for a corner. Then just before the midpoint of the half Stortford won a number of corners that came to nothing. A cross from the left

by Ferrier was well cut out by Maidstone stopper Lee Worgan in the 35th minute and sixty seconds later at the other end the Blues had a narrow escape as Dumaka, receiving a pass on the right from Jack Paxman, struck an angled effort at goal past the advancing Dawber. Fortunately the ball stuck in the mud near the goal-line and Kenzer Lee cleared upfield. Shortly afterwards the Stones' Joe Healy headed narrowly over from a Vas Karagiannis corner. Just before the break Elliott Buchanan and Ashley Miller combined in a thrusting move on the right but the latter lost control of the ball as he took it into the penalty area.



An early corner after the restart from Karagiannis had already caused a few problems for the Blues' defence before another flag-kick in the 48th minute resulted in the only goal of the game. Karagiannis' corner was cleared out to the far side and when Paxman crossed back into the box towards the near post he found DUMAKA and his header arrowed wide of keeper Andrew Dawber's dive (0-1).



Defender Jamie Coyle blocked a shot from Elliott Buchanan as Stortford countered but Dawber soon had to save well from Karagiannis, diving to his

right to keep out a shot from distance in the 54th minute. Shortly afterwards the Blues keeper was in action again coming off his line quickly to take the ball off the toes of Dumaka.

Rod Stringer made a double substitution just after the hour with Robbie Willmott and Frankie Merrifield replacing Byron Lawrence and Josh Ekim. The visitors continued to look to have more threat than Stortford but the first of a couple of chances to level the scores before the end came in the 69th minute when Willmott provided the pass for Ferrier to send a low inviting cross from the right into the six yard box but there was no one in a blue and white shirt in the vicinity to take advantage in front of an open goal. Karagiannis was narrowly wide in the 71st minute with another shot from outside the box.



Stortford had a strong penalty shout turned down by referee Declan Ford with twelve minutes of normal time remaining after Morgan Ferrier, receiving a pass from Robbie Willmott in the box, went down under a heavy challenge from central defender Callum Davies. This was followed three minutes later with an opening for Ferrier after being set up by the two substitutes Willmott and Merrifield but unfortunately the young striker tried to walk the ball into the net and Worgan was able to scramble the ball away from danger. Dumaka could have extended United's lead in the last ten minutes missing a couple of straightforward chances having one shot easily saved by Dawber and another by blazing over the bar.

There were three minutes of stoppage time but the Blues were unable to make any further impression

with the last action seeing Ashley Miller clearing the bar with a 25 yard effort. Miller also was shown the only yellow card of the game.



TEAM DETAILS AND MATCH DETAILS:-

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Andrew Dawber; Ashley Miller; Johnny Herd; Josh Ekim (Frankie Merrifield 62); Kenzer Lee; Chris M'Boungou; Corby Moore; Byron Lawrence (Robbie Willmott 62); Mikel Suarez; Elliott Buchanan; Morgan Ferrier.

Unused substitutes: Alli Abdullahi, Jack Fowler and Tom Lovelock.

MAIDSTONE UNITED: Lee Worgan; Callum Driver; Tom Mills; Jamie Coyle; Callum Davies; James Rogers; Charles Banya (Bobby-Joe Taylor 77); Joe Healy; Dumebi Dumaka; Jack Paxman (Alex Fisher 75); Vas Karagiannis.

Unused substitutes: Manny Parry, Matt Bodkin and Adam Birchall.

Half time: 0-0

Goalscorers: Maidstone United – Dumebi Dumaka 48.

Referee: Mr Declan Ford

Attendance: 652