

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 3, HISTON 4

(FOOTBALL CONFERENCE YOUTH ALLIANCE – DIVISION 'C')

For the second successive fixture the Blues' Academy side was involved in a high scoring match and for the successive game they lost after being in front. Against top-of-the-table Histon they conceded an early goal before hitting a purple patch scoring three goals in an eighteen minute first half spell when they played their best football of the season to take a two goal lead. However, the visitors scored from a penalty just before the break and scored a further brace of goals in the second half to extinguish Stortford's dreams of an upset.

Stortford were slow to get started and found themselves a goal down in the 2nd minute. A run down the left flank and low cross into the middle by Elkanah Sibanda saw DANNY GOULD gain possession close to the near post and find the net past keeper Steve Robinson (0-1). The Stutes' Jos Gwynne and Matty Allen had shots held by the Blues' stopper soon afterwards but then Tim Moylette's team began to gain a foothold on the game. In the 18th minute Danny Palmer's drive from outside the box was turned for a corner by Histon keeper Will Gilbert and Aaron Thomas was narrowly over the bar from the flag-kick.

Playing now with plenty of purpose the hosts equalised in the 21st minute. A deep free-kick from near the left touch-line by Callum O'Brien towards the far post was met by ROSS GILL who comfortably sent the ball past Gilbert (1-1). Four minutes later Histon striker Luke Brown was almost in with a chance of retaking the lead for the visitors but Blues' skipper Bryn Thorpe made a fine and well-timed tackle and the ball deflected for a corner. The Blues extended their lead in the 32nd minute following a corner on the right from Callum O'Brien with GEORGE BARTLAM swinging his boot at the ball at close range and deflecting it past keeper Gilbert to just cross the goal-line (2-1). Stortford had their Cambridge opponents stretched and Jordan Handscomb fired wide of the far post from 15 yards after Danny Palmer had supplied him with a pass. This was followed by Bartlam having an attempt at goal scrambled away out of danger by Gilbert.

Stortford netted their third goal in the 38th minute as Alex Rogers crossed from the left and AARON THOMAS timed his header well to beat Gilbert (3-1). Blues' hopes of maintaining a two goal cushion to the interval ended in the 43rd minute when, following a quick break upfield by the visitors, keeper Steve Robinson was judged to have fouled a Histon forward in the area and LUKE BROWN scored from the penalty spot (3-2).

Half time: 3-2

Stortford substitute keeper Callum Lynskey scrambled the ball away at his near post after a Histon corner early on after the restart and at the other end, in the 50th minute, Aaron Thomas completed a move through the middle with a pass that Jordan Handscomb took on to go round the keeper but unfortunately the angle for a shot at goal was too narrow and the striker's shot finished in the side-netting.

Openings were fewer than in the first period but Histon were slightly shading the proceedings and drew level in the 68th minute. Matty Allen sent LUKE BROWN away to cut in from the right and beat Lynskey with a low drive (3-3). Stortford then had a good spell with twenty minutes left as Handscomb had a 15 yard effort blocked away for a corner and his glancing header from an O'Brien free-kick drifted wide. In the 80th minute Alex Rogers found the side-netting following a cross into the box from Jack Thomas. However, the Stutes were increasingly posing threats going forward and in the 84th minute Callum Lynskey made a fine save diving to his left to keep out a shot from Elkanah Sibanda. Then two minutes later the visitors claimed all three points after the Blues lost possession in midfield and Brown slipped the ball through for MATTY ALLEN to take on and shoot past Lynskey (3-4).

Lynskey had to deal with an awkward low effort from Jos Gwynne soon afterwards but Stortford were close to grabbing a point at the end of added time when in the last action

of the match Aaron Thomas' corner was deflected out to Ross Gill whose goal-bound shot from ten yards hit a defender and rebounded clear away from danger.

Bishop's Stortford: Stephen Robinson (Callum Lynskey 46); Danny Palmer; Callum O'Brien; Jack Thomas; Ross Gill; Bryn Thorpe; Alex Rogers (Sam Philpot 81); Ben Smith; Jordan Handscomb; George Bartlam (John Clarke 59); Aaron Thomas.
Unused substitute: Ted Dean.