

Whitehawk 2-3 Bishop's Stortford

The Blues bounced back from Monday evening's disappointing derby defeat at Chelmsford with an away victory at Whitehawk that in truth was more comfortable than the score line suggested.



Rod Stringer was unable to call on injured duo Mikel Suarez and Ashley Miller with Morgan Ferrier away and midfielder Frankie Merrifield only fit enough for a place on the bench. Skipper Anthony Church returned to the starting line up alongside De'Reece Vanderhyde whilst there was a debut for Luton Town loanee Craig King in the Blues goal.

It was the Blues that got off to the dream start as they took the lead in the sixth minute. Johnny Herd collected the ball on the half in his own half and hit a well-executed ball over the Hawks backline that ROBBIE WILLMOTT raced onto before hitting a stunning dipping volley that was too good for Craig Ross in the Hawks goal.



Willmott went close to doubling the visitors lead eight minutes later as he twisted and turned past

Sergio Torres and fired a stinging 25 yard effort just wide of the right upright.

The hosts pulled level on the 18th minute following an unfortunate own goal from the returning De'Reece Vanderhyde. Kenzer Lee was punished for holding forward Danny Mills on the right flank, with Hawks full back Sam Rents swinging in a curling left footed effort that seemed destined for Craig King's arms before Vanderhyde stretched out a leg and diverted the ball past the debutant Blues keeper.

It got worse for the visitors as the Hawks took a surprising lead just 60 seconds later. Scott Neilson hitting a lofted ball over the Blues defence into the path of striker DANNY MILLS. The prolific Hawks frontman brushed past Kenzer Lee and lifted over King into the corner of the net to put the home side in front.



The frantic action continued as the Blues responded immediately with a 20th minute goal from ELLIOTT BUCHANAN. Vanderhyde found space on the right to swing in a tempting cross that the Blues striker rose first for and headed across goal into the Hawks net.

This seemed to knock the steam out of the hosts and after several minutes of pressure the Blues went ahead again as ELLIOTT BUCHANAN struck a 34th minute goal for his second of the afternoon.

Sergio Torres slipped whilst in possession for the hosts and his error was ruthlessly punished as Corby Moore seized upon the loose ball before sliding an inch perfect pass to Buchanan who made no mistake as he calmly slid into the corner of the net.

The Blues almost snuck another before the interval as the hard working Byron Lawrence struck a powerful effort from an acute angle that seemed to catch Ross by surprise with the Hawks stopper just tipping over the bar in time.

Half Time: 2-3

The second half was a much more one sided affair as the Blues launched a number of attacks in order to put the game to bed.

The first of those chances came in the 48th minute as Johnny Herd cut inside from the left and released Lawrence who snatched his strike from the corner of the penalty area wide of the left upright.



Just four minutes later the Blues went close again as a long diagonal ball from George Allen was controlled beautifully by Lawrence. The midfielder set back for Robbie Willmott who struck a powerful 20 yard effort that whistled just over the crossbar.

The Hawks collected the first caution of the game on 58 minutes when David Martin arrived very late on Blues skipper Anthony Church near the corner flag as the home side's frustration began to show.

Their best effort came on 61 minutes with a surging run and strike from 25 yards from Scott

Neilson flying inches over the bar via a deflection off the shin of Byron Lawrence.

Just a minute later the Blues should have scored a fourth as Corby Moore released Lawrence one on one with Craig Ross, but the Blues midfielder could only find the side netting after he had lifted the ball over the Hawks stopper.

Alli Abdullahi collected the solitary Blues caution on 64 minutes for a cynical trip on Danny Mills. Soon after Craig Ross was in action again as Corby Moore forced a fine low save with a bobbling 20 yard effort.

The Blues came closest to extending their lead in the 78th minute as a sublime inswinging Buchanan corner was met by the head of Anthony Church from eighth yards with Ross somehow able to keep out the Blues skipper with a fine reaction save.

Josh Ekim replaced Byron Lawrence on 85 minutes as the Blues looked to secure the points and with the Hawks only able to muster a comfortably saved 30 yard Neilson effort in the closing stages the points were safely secured for the Hertfordshire side.

Full Time: Whitehawk 2-3 Bishop's Stortford

WHITEHAWK: Ross, Sessegnon, Rents, Ijaha, Leacock, Mendy (Arnold 68), West, Torres (c), Neilson, Mills, Martin. **Unused Subs:** Rodrigues, Lincold



BISHOP'S STORTFORD: King, Vanderhyde, Allen, Lee, Herd, Abdullahi, Church (c), Lawrence (Ekim 85), Moore, Willmott, Buchanan. **Unused Subs:** Lovelock, M'Boungou, Fowler, Merrifield

Attendance: 166