

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 4, MARGATE 1 (VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH)

Elliott Buchanan was on fire and took home the match-ball as he scored all four goals to extinguish any lingering doubts about the Blues' National League South status.

A tenth straight loss for Gate saw them fall into the relegation mix and they were lucky not to see further damage to their goal difference.



The Stortford marksman's goals also sent him back to the top of the division's goalscorer's list having now notched 26 goals and he was unlucky not to add to his tally during this contest. His first two goals came in the first ten minutes and they helped to banish any nerves Stortford had. The visitors had their chances to have made the game closer but the Blues defence was tight whilst Tom Lovelock made an important stop from Danny Green five minutes from the break with his side only 2-1 ahead at the time. The result continued Stortford's recent good form at the ProKit (UK) Stadium.

Rod Stringer was again short on numbers when selecting his team. He was able to include the fit-again Kenzer Lee to partner George Allen with Anthony Furlonge injured whilst Frankie Merrifield was in the starting eleven. Mikel Suarez, Ashley Miller and Byron Lawrence were on the bench but

none were fully fit. Margate included former Stortford players Matt Johnson and Danny Green in their starting eleven.



Stortford were attacking the Airport end in the first half and with Buchanan looking sharp from the start his goal-scoring spree began in the 5th minute. He went up with a defender to meet a long kick downfield from Tom Lovelock and with the ball rebounding off both players to fall in the striker's path BUCHANAN took the ball on before drilling it low past Chris Lewington from 20 yards and inside the keeper's left-hand upright (1-0).



The visitors were close to an equaliser shortly afterwards when good work by Danny Green led to Nathan Green heading goalwards but Kenzer Lee, close to the goal-line, headed away from danger. Buchanan's

best goal of the afternoon was his second in the 10th minute. Breaking quickly down the middle Corby Moore switched the ball out to him on the right and after cutting in from the flank BUCHANAN smashed an acute angled right-footed shot high into the opposite top corner of the net for a spectacular goal (2-0).



Gate's Lewis Taylor was narrowly over the target in the 20th minute with a volley after pressure following a long throw into the box by their skipper David Hunt. However, just past the midway point of the half Corby Moore again found Buchanan in space on the right but this time the Blues' number nine, after working himself into a shooting position, sent his angled shot wide of the far post.

On the half-hour, a long throw from the left by Johnny Herd produced a back-header from Buchanan at the near post that Lewington saved low to his left. Stortford continued to have the best of the exchanges but were thankful to Tom Lovelock in the 40th minute for an excellent save when blocking out a Danny Green shot after David Hunt and Charlie Wassmer had created a chance for the former Blues player. Stortford, though, extended their lead three minutes from the break with Buchanan completing his hat-trick. Corby Moore, just inside the Margate half, just managed to slip the ball to Robbie Willmott and the on-loan midfielder's pass through the middle found

BUCHANAN who neatly sent the ball over Lewington and into the net (3-0).

Half time: 3-0



The Blues threatened first on the resumption and in the 47th minute a George Allen free-kick was headed inside by Buchanan and a first time drive from 20 yards by Corby Moore skimmed the bar. Then a minute later Moore headed over from a Frankie Merrifield cross. However, the East Kent side noticeably upped their tempo and after Kane Wills saw his dipping acute angled volley from the right turned over the bar by Lovelock, they reduced the arrears in the 55th minute when substitute Christian Jolley's cross from the right was converted at close range by DANNY GREEN (3-1)

Green then almost connected with a diagonal ball into the box from his namesake Nathan but Margate had a lucky escape in the 69th minute. A clearance upfield by Lewington hit the back of Buchanan and rebounded goalwards almost to the goal-line. The Blues striker was attempting to provide the finishing touch but seemed to be impeded by the keeper who eventually grabbed the ball. Referee Christopher Pollard waived away appeals for a penalty and the action continued. However, in the 71st minute Buchanan netted again. He had collected the ball on the right before squaring it inside to Frankie

Merrifield who drove a strong low shot from outside the area that Lewington dived to his left to push away but BUCHANAN reacted quickest and was on hand to stretch a boot to guide the ball over the goal-line from eight yards (4-1).

With the match entering the last ten minutes of normal time Christian Jolley headed wide for Gate whilst Anthony Church was narrowly wide past the post from the edge of the box at the other end.

It was fitting that Buchanan should be the centre of the final action of the match in added time as his 20 yard free-kick following a foul by a defender on substitute Bradley Fortnam-Tomlinson brought a flying save from Lewington, diving to his right, to prevent the man-of-the-match from claiming his fifth goal of the match.

The only yellow cards of the afternoon were shown to Margate's Kane Wills and GlennWilson.

Full time: 4-1

TEAM DETAILS AND MATCH DETAILS:-

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Tom Lovelock; De'Reece Vanderhyde (Ashley Miller 81); Johnny Herd; Alli Abdullahi; Kenzer Lee; George Allen; Corby Moore; Anthony Church; Elliott Buchanan; Robbie Willmott

(Bradley Fortnam-Tomlinson 62); Frankie Merrifield (Josh Ekim 88).

Unused substitutes: Mikel Suarez and Byron Lawrence.



MARGATE: Chris Lewington; Glenn Wilson (Jamie Stuart 83) ; Nathan Green, David Hunt; Jake Goodman (Christian Jolley 46); Charlie Wassmer; Danny Green (Dion Sembie-Ferris 76); Kane Wills; Matt Johnson; Luke Moore; Lewis Taylor.

Unused substitutes: Corrie Andrew and Mitchell Laing.

Half time: 3-0

Goalscorers: Bishop's Stortford – Elliott Buchanan 5, 10, 42 and 71

Margate – Danny Green 55

Referee: Mr Christopher Pollard

Attendance: 388