

FELIXSTOWE & WALTON UNITED 2, BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1 (FA CUP – 2ND QUALIFYING ROUND)

Blues' FA Cup hopes ended in embarrassing fashions as they went down at Ridgeons League side Felixstowe, on Saturday.



Stortford have been down this path before with this depressing chapter matching the lows of past ties against Mirlees Blackstone and Boston Town.

There was little doubt that at the end of the match the Seasiders fully deserved to cause an upset at the Goldstar ground and go through to the next round although it looked for a long time that there would be a replay. As it was United clinched the tie with the winning goal just three minutes from the end of normal time before there was almost ten minutes of injury time.



The first chance of the game fell to the Blues with a strong run on the left by Evans Kouassi ended with a cross that Ioannis Varouxakis side-footed wide of the near post. However, Stortford's defence had already looked shaky when the hosts took the lead in the 7th minute. A Felixstowe attack on the right saw the ball

played inside to CHRIS WILLIAMS who fired into the corner of the net from 15 yards (1-0).

The Blues retaliated and three minutes later following an attack up the right Chace O'Neill hit the near post and the same player drove the ball just wide a little later. Lee Sawyer had a low effort held by the Seasiders' keeper Daniel Crump but then the hosts, gaining confidence, looked the stronger side. Joe Wright held a header from Liam Hillyard and saved a shot from the same player in quick succession before the half-hour mark.



More pressure ended with Wright holding a drive from Jordan Matthews but Stortford had a great chance to equalise ten minutes before the break as a poor back-pass from Daniel Davis was collected by Varouxakis but Crump came out to block. Then, in the 41st minute Johnny Herd trying to head back to Wright was jostled off the ball by Hillyard who fortunately had his lobbed attempt at goal held by the Blues' keeper.

Stortford began the second half looking more positive and levelled in the 59th minute with a slightly strange goal. Danny Rumens played a bouncing ball forward into the box and keeper Crump under pressure from Evans Kouassi allowed the ball to evade him and drop over him and over the line. This goal has been credited to EVANS KOUASSI who got a touch on the ball before it crossed the line (1-1).

The Blues were now on top and in control in midfield. Rumens was narrowly over the bar after a Herd long throw into the box had only been half cleared and Sam Smith had an angled effort deflected for a corner.



Then the loan frontman netted in the 73rd minute but the goal was disallowed for offside. Kouassi was close for the Blues after a good run but with a replay looking more and more likely the Seasiders struck in the 87th minute. A free-kick from deep on the right by Callum Bennett was met by the head of LIAM HILLYARD and the ball found the net via the inside of the far post (2-1).

Hillyard almost added to the hosts' tally in the first minute of added time but was denied by a great save from Wright who spread himself to block the striker's shot.

In all there was almost ten minutes of injury time at the end caused by a long delay in the second period due to a head injury suffered by Felixstowe central defender Daniel Davis. However in that time Stortford were unable to create a chance for an equaliser.

BISHOP'S STORTFORD: Joe Wright, Marvel Ekpiteta, Johnny Herd, Tambeson Eyong (Dominic Green 56) , Harry Osborne, Danny Rumens, Evans Kouassi, Lee Sawyer (Josh Ekim 51), Sam Smith, Chace O'Neill, Ioannis Varouxakis (Bradley Woods-Garness 60).

Unused substitutes: Jermaine Osei, Jon Nouble and Tom Lovelock

FELIXSTOWE & WALTON UNITED: Daniel Crump, Callum Bennett, Stuart Ainsley, Joshua Kerridge, Rhys Barber, Daniel Davis, Chris Williams, Scott Chaplin (Sheridan Driver 79), Craig Jennings (Kyron Andrews 90+5), Jordan Matthews, Liam Hillyard.

Unused substitutes: Arran Sheppard, Jamal Wiggins and Kyle Birchfield.

Referee: C Pollard

Attendance: 416

