

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 2 BASINGSTOKE TOWN 0  
A goal in each half saw Blues deservedly take the Evo-Stik South Premier points, on Saturday.



Stortford's performance was their best on home soil so far this campaign and they were well worth the three points with a strong showing from virtually start to finish against their Hampshire opponents.



From

the first whistle the Blues seemed to have more of a physical presence on the field than the match four days earlier against Chesham United. Sam Hatton, George Casey and Joe Robinson, in particular, had fine matches for the hosts. Kevin Watson was able to welcome back Marvel Ekpiteta and Tyler McCarthy back to the squad so that the defence had a more familiar look about it.



In

the sixth minute McCarthy had to be alert to deal with an awkward cross from the left by Ashleigh Artwell and three minutes later Stortford had their first chance to get ahead when Freddy Moncur set

up Dipo Akinyemi but the striker's right foot effort was off target when he could have used his left foot. The visitors' Sam Argent struck the base of the far post with an acute angled effort in the 14<sup>th</sup> minute after Charlie Kennedy had found the number nine in space on the right.

Darren Foxley twice was close for the Blues firstly having a shot held by keeper Colm McAdden and then another effort skimming the bar following a Sam Hatton free-kick. The hosts went ahead in the 24<sup>th</sup> minute. Good work by Tyrique Hyde on the right was instrumental in Sam Hatton having a shot pushed out by keeper Colm McAdden and Freddy Moncur netted the loose ball from close range.



Akinyemi was denied by the keeper with McAdden keeping out an acute angled shot with his leg ten minutes before break. But then, at the other end, McCarthy made an excellent save to stop an equaliser in the 43<sup>rd</sup> minute somehow turning aside a close ranger header by Ben Wright for a corner after George Bennett had crossed in from the left wing.

In added time a Foxley back post header from a Tyrique Hyde cross wasn't far off target.



Stortford suffered a blow early six minutes after the restart with Mark Hughes being replaced after suffering a knee injury following a fine block tackle in midfield. However, the loss of the skipper didn't seem to effect the workmanlike display of the side although a header by Stoke's Sam Smart in the 57<sup>th</sup> minute was only just over the target. Stortford

gained their breathing space with a second goal in the 67<sup>th</sup> minute. Two defenders misjudged a long ball downfield from George Casey that left Akinyemi clear on goal to slot past McAdden.

The goalscorer almost added another goal seconds after the restart but McAdden recovered just in time.

As the contest entered the last ten minutes, the Dragon's Dan Collier struck a shot close past McCarthy's goal from 18 yards and shortly afterwards Blues' substitute Ryan Richefond also fired wide from the edge of the box.

Four minutes from the end of normal time Darren Foxley was unlucky not to get himself on the scoresheet as he rounded great approach work with a rising shot that grazed the angle of the near post and bar. The victory could have been more emphatic but Akinyemi shot wide of an open goal from an acute angle shortly afterwards.

The only caution of the match was in the final minute when Basingstoke Town skipper Marcus Johnson-Schuster was shown a yellow card for kicking the ball away.



**STORTFORD:** Tyler McCarthy; George Casey; Aaron Tumwa; Mark Hughes (Jordan Westcott 51); Marvel Ekpiteta; Joe Robinson; Tyrique Hyde (Ryan Richefond 73); Sam Hatton; Dipo Akinyemi; Freddy Moncur; Darren Foxley.

Unused substitutes: Alex Rogers and Jack Thomas.

**BASINGSTOKE TOWN:** Colm McAdden; Marcus Johnson-Schuster; George Bennett; Dan Collier; Shane Hollamby (Guri Demuria 69); Dan Bayliss; Sam Smart; Charlie Kennedy; Sam Argent; Ben Wright (Michael Atkinson 46); Ashleigh Artwell (Callum Bunting 46).

Unused substitutes: Jack McKnight and Tim Wohlfiel

Referee: Carl Pearse. Attendance: 353

## BLUES 1 CHESHAM 1

Blues were forced to settle for a point against 10-man Chesham on Tuesday, but Kevin Watson's side will look back on it as a missed opportunity.

The visitors saw Joe Iacofano sent off shortly before half-time when he picked up a second yellow card for time-wasting in the space of three minutes.

Both sides were guilty of missing late sitters with a substitute of each club being culpable with Ryan Richefond responsible for Stortford and Jon-Jo Bates for the visiting Generals.

Kevin Watson had a few selection problems before the start as regular keeper Tyler McCarthy was out of action with a shoulder injury sustained at Gosport whilst Marvel Ekpiteta was away on holiday and Jason Williams commencing a two match suspension. It meant that Luke Sheldrick made his debut between the sticks, whilst Sam Hatton and George Casey were in a reshuffled defence. Also, Freddy Moncur was brought into the starting eleven.

Darren Foxley shot over the bar from a Dipo Akinyemi early cross but he was in any case in an offside position. There were very few openings and little between the sides in the opening minutes although Sheldrick was the busier of the two goalkeepers. The new keeper saved well to keep out a 30 yard volley from Adam Watkins. Generally, shooting and passing the ball was wayward although in Stortford's favour was the fact the Chesham defence looked a little unsure of itself.

However, it was the Buckinghamshire side that took the lead in the 31<sup>st</sup> minute. The visitors' Jhai Dhillon crossed hard and low from the left touchline and Iacofona netted from inside the six yard box.



Jordan Westcott struck a rising shot just over the bar from eighteen yards in the 38<sup>th</sup> minute before Iacofona left the pitch in the 44<sup>th</sup> minute after receiving yellow cards in quick succession for first

blocking a Blues free-kick and then kicking the ball away when another free-kick was conceded.

The Blues could have fallen behind further before the break as an unmarked Kieran Murphy, at the back post, headed across goal following a Dhillon corner and fortunately the ball deflected away for another flag kick.

Kevin Watson made a substitution at half time with Christian Owusu replacing Jordan Westcott.

The rest of the match saw Stortford understandably on the front foot and having the majority of the possession but they found it very difficult to break down the United defence to create any worthwhile chances.



It took a well worked goal to provide the equaliser in the 71<sup>st</sup> minute. An excellent pass up the left wing by Darren Foxley sent Owusu on a run forward and although he was closely policed by Chesham skipper Adam Pepera the substitute managed to provide a deflected low cross into the centre and Mark Hughes, scoring his second goal in two games, fired into the net via the underside of the bar from close range.

In a rare raid for Chesham, Watkins' shot from the edge of the area was beaten away by the flying Sheldrick.

In the 76<sup>th</sup> minute Owusu, struggling with a groin strain, was replaced by Richefond.

Then, with ten minutes of normal time remaining, the first glaring miss occurred. A deep cross from the right by Sam Hampson saw the ball drop kindly for Richefond close to goal but the midfielder blasted the ball over the bar.

Then four minutes later a long clearance by the Generals' keeper, Hafed Al-Droubi found substitute Oran Swales on the left and his angled effort rebounded off the Blues bar. There was an even closer escape in the 88<sup>th</sup> minute when Swales attacked from the opposite side and although Sheldrick got down to turn aside the shot the ball ran into the path of Bates. But with faced virtually with an open goal he contrived to miss the target.

There were five minutes of added time but neither side threatened the goal again.

As well as the sending off, referee Dean Skipper showed yellow cards to Stortford's Hatton, Casey, Foxley and Akinyemi and the visitors' Zack Reynolds and Bates.

STORTFORD: Luke Sheldrick; Sam Hatton; Aaron Tumwa; Mark Hughes; George Casey; Joe Robinson; Tyrique Hyde-Skerritt; Jordan Westcott (Christian Owusu 46 (Ryan Richefond 76)); Dipo Akinyemi; Freddy Moncur (Alex Rogers 66); Darren Foxley. Unused substitute: Jack Thomas.

CHESHAM UNITED: Hafed Al-Droubi; Benji Crilley; Jhai Dhillon; Matt Bevans; Kieran Murphy; Adam Pepera; David Hutton (Danny Green 78); Adam Watkins (Jon-Jo Bates 82); Lewis Toomey (Oran Swales 73); Joe Iacofano; Zack Reynolds. Unused substitutes: Shane Bush and Ahmed El-Sahib.

Referee: Dean Skipper. Attendance: 234

