



BISHOP'S STORTFORD 4 ST IVES TOWN 3

BLUES twice came from behind to record their first win of 2018 in a seven goal thriller, on Saturday.



A very entertaining contest saw some poor defending from both sides, but Kevin Watson's side produced a strong second half performance to take all three points.

With Dean Ager and Callum Jones called back by Colchester United for an FA Youth Cup tie, Dipo Akinyemi returned to the starting line-up as had one of his best games in a Stortford shirt.



Both sides had chances to have gone ahead in the first five minutes. The visitors' Danny Watson and Ollie Snaithe had goalbound shots either blocked or deflected away for a corner. At the other end Ives' keeper Tim Trebes, parried upwards a close range

header from Jack Thomas following a cross from the left by Darren Foxley.

Poor marking by Stortford from Tom Knowles' free-kick gave the visitors the lead in the 10th minute. Lloyd Groves' back post header across the goal found Ben Baker in space to shoot past Tyler McCarthy from ten yards



Stortford fought back and an Akinyemi low cross from the left just evaded Callum Taylor but, in the 18th minute, they were back level. A concerted attack seemed to have come to nothing but then skipper Mark Hughes gained possession at the right angle edge of the box and swept the ball over towards the far post where Akinyemi squeezed the ball into the net from an acute angle via a deflection off the keeper.

The Blues seemed to be settling down and Jordan Westcott had an effort blocked by Trebes but they fell behind again in the 28th minute.

Baker was running at the Stortford defence with ease and when he finally shot at goal the ball cannoned off Joe Robinson's shin into the path of Ollie Snaith who fired into the net.

Just after the half hour Stortford had an escape when in the matter of seconds goalbound shots from both Knowles and Miles Smith were kept out by the legs of McCarthy.



Stortford then mustered up some promising moves and two minutes before the break an Akinyemi free-kick spun out of Trebes' grasp and spun on to the bar and rebounded to safety.

The Blues boss made a number of alterations at the interval including bringing on young defender Max Brassington on for Callum Taylor. The changes soon had an effect and Jack Thomas could have done better near goal from Hughes' cross.

Ives' Ben Baker had a shot held at the foot of an upright by McCarthy but Stortford were level again in the 54th minute.

When Jordan Westcott delivered a fine pass out to the right to stretch the opposing defence Jamie Cureton gained possession and then bent a great shot around a defender to hit the post and when the veteran striker collected the rebound he quickly crossed into the middle where Akinyemi had the simple task of guiding the ball into the empty net

It took only two more minutes before Stortford were in front for the first time. This time it was Thomas who delivered a fine pass out to the right and George Casey's first time shot-cum-cross struck a defender but fell into Cureton's path and he found the back of the net with a clinical shot.

Knowles had an effort held by McCarthy but the on-loan Cambridge United midfielder equalised in the 66th minute when he finished an excellent solo run with a shot

past McCarthy's dive from just inside the box.



McCarthy was quickly off his line to hold a through ball at the feet of Danny Watson and then shortly afterwards, in the 74th minute, Blues hit the winner.

They won a corner on the right and Darren Foxley's flag-kick was headed home at the far post by skipper Marvell Ekpiteta.

The visitors made a triple substitution in the 79th minute but the only time they threatened before the end was when Knowles shot wide of the target in a good position following a dangerous attack.

Three minutes from the end of normal time Cureton nearly scored again but his header from a Thomas cross was held by Trebes but the hosts comfortably held on to complete their second league double of the campaign.

STORTFORD: Tyler McCarthy; George Casey; Darren Foxley; Mark Hughes; Marvel Ekpiteta; Joe Robinson; Jordan Westcott; Jack Thomas; Callum Taylor (Max Brassington 46); Jamie Cureton; Dipo Akinyemi. Unused substitutes: Freddie Oakman, Chad Cruse, Marcus Crowther and Joe Ryan.

ST IVES TOWN: Tim Trebes; Miles Smith; Luke Warner-Eley; Ryan McGeorge (Eugene Libertucci 79); Lloyd Groves; Danny Kelly; Tom Knowles; Ollie Snaith (Daniel Moyes 79); Peter Clark (Declan Rogers 79); Danny Watson; Ben Baker. Unused substitutes: Jordan Jarrold and Ben Sawyer.

Referee: Lee Grimsey Attendance: 307

CHESHAM UTD 2 BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1

Blues were made to pay for missed chances against Chesham United for the second time this season as they went down 2-1, on Saturday.

Kevin Watson's side controlled the first half and went into the dressing room 1-0 up following a superb 25 yard lob by Jamie Cureton in the 40th minute.

But it was very much a case of a game of two halves with Stortford having the benefit of the wind and rain together with The Meadow slope before half-time and the Generals making use of the conditions for the remainder of the match.

The Blues should have made more of their superior edge in the first 45 minutes and netted more than one goal so they were always going to be up against it in the second half facing a side on a four game winning streak.

Kevin Watson had more of his squad available for this fixture with Mark Hughes, George Casey, Marvel Ekpiteta and Jason Williams all returning to the starting squad whilst Josh Simpson was on the bench and came on late in the match.

Dipo Akinyemi, Tom Clifford and Alex Rogers were absent through injury.

On another day the Blues would have taken a point as overall there wasn't a great amount between the two sides. Both Chesham goals could have been prevented and Stortford had a number of half chances to have doubled their lead before the interval. Marvel Ekpiteta and Jack Thomas had fine performances for the visitors.

Stortford soon had the majority of the possession and in the eighth minute Darren Foxley crossed in low and Cureton's flick at goal was too close to keeper Harry Isted and then shortly afterwards a Casey cross swept through the six yard box with no one getting a touch.

In the 17th minute Cureton collected a Westcott pass and the striker's shot forced Isted into pushing the angled shot away for a corner.

Four minutes later good work by Ekpiteta on the right saw his centre met by Williams whose

shot was deflected over the bar for another corner.

A rare raid by the hosts just before the half-hour resulted in Jefferson Louis crossing to the far post where Ravi Shamsi's goalbound effort was well blocked by Foxley.

In the 31st minute, an excellent attack on the right involving Cureton and Casey ended with the veteran striker's shot destined for the net but Jason Williams got the last touch on the ball as it entered the net and was adjudged offside.

Three minutes later another promising move saw Foxley and Williams play their part and ended with a fierce 20 yard low drive by Jack Thomas that whistled past an upright.

Shamsi struck a rising shot over the angle in the 37th minute but two minutes later the Blues were in front. A long clearance by Tyler McCarthy was headed on by Williams to find Cureton in space a few yards outside the right side of the box and he flighted a great shot over the top of Isted and into the net from 20 yards.

Just before half-time Williams steered a Cureton cross wide at the far upright.

Blues began the second period with a number of threatening attacks whilst the defence looked comfortable but in the 57th minute keeper Isted sent a deep free-kick towards the Blues box and Louis' header found an unmarked Lewis Toomey who worked himself inside to shoot wide of McCarthy from 15 yards.

Louis was close for the home side on the hour with a shot on the turn whilst substitute Adam Watkins' shot from the edge of the box was deflected for a corner and Chesham's winner, in the 66th minute, arrived from the resultant flag kick.

Former Blue David Hutton's corner from the left, aided by the wind, blew in and over McCarthy and the ball entered the net via the far post.

Hutton nearly scored again after he gained possession of a poor clearance from McCarthy. An Ager cross flew across the face of the Chesham goal and Watson made a double substitution 14 minutes from the end of

normal time and one of those, Callum Jones, making his Blues' debut, saw his dangerous cross intercepted.

Stortford were unable to make much headway in the closing minutes as the hosts held the upper hand. McCarthy held on to a Shamsi free-kick and then saved well from Louis whilst a late corner caused problems for the Blues' defence before the ball was eventually cleared. STORTFORD: Tyler McCarthy; George Casey; Darren Foxley; Mark Hughes; Marvel Ekpiteta; Joe Robinson; Jordan Westcott (Josh Simpson 76); Jack Thomas; Jason Williams (Callum Taylor 87); Jamie Cureton (Callum Jones 76); Dean Ager. Unused substitutes: Alfie Mason and Max Brassington.

CHESHAM UNITED: Harry Isted; Benji Crilley; Jhai Dhillon (Adam Watkins 55); Matt Bevans; Kieran Murphy; Darren Locke; Ravi Shamsi; Danny Green; Jefferson Louis; Lewis Toomey (Oran Swales 74); David Hutton (Jon-Jo Bates 82). Unused substitutes: Scott McGleish and Matthew Hall.

Referee: Tom Danaher Attendance: 282

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 0 BANBURY UTD 5



INJURY-hit Blues went down to a heavy defeat as Banbury left the ProKit (UK) with the three points.

An experienced United were too strong for a depleted and youthful Stortford side that through circumstances had to give first team league debuts to three players. Max Brassington filled the right back berth with George Casey still injured while Freddie Oakman and Joe Ryan made their league debuts coming on as second half substitutes. Marvel Ekpiteta and Josh Simpson were still out injured and a big blow was the absence of

Dipo Akinyemi who was injured earlier in the week training with his parent club Stevenage and could be out of action for some time.



Also missing was Dean Ager who was called back by Colchester United for an FA Youth Cup tie in the coming week. New signing and academy player, Chad Cruse, was on the bench alongside another youth player Marcus Crowther.

It took only six minutes for the Puritans to open the scoring when their first real attack ended with Jack Self's cross towards the far post being headed in by Elliott Sandy.



The Blues had a number of promising attacks without really threatening the Banbury goal although Jamie Cureton tested keeper Jack Harding after receiving a fine pass from Alfie Mason and they were well in the contest until the visitors notched two goals in three minutes.

On the half hour Ricky Johnson headed Charlie Hawtin's cross back to Sandy who drove home from just inside the box..

Then Johnson again won a header from a Hawtin centre and Conor McDonough was able to tap in from close range.

Two minutes later Jason Williams released Darren Foxley to arrow the ball across the six

yard box with no one getting a touch and Stortford came their closest to scoring ten minutes from the break as Williams goalbound header from Foxley's corner was headed off the line by Sandy.



United's Luke Carnell had a back post header gathered by Tyler McCarthy and a McDonough free-kick was close across the face of the Blues goal.

At the other end Jordan Westcott tried a shot from distance that was held by Harding as Blues went into the dressing room with a three-goal deficit.

Kevin Watson's side kept battling after the break but fell further behind in the 59th minute when Luke Carnell's header from McDonough's corner was initially saved by keeper Tyler McCarthy but the United player was quick to hammer the loose ball into the net.

Foxley was close for a consolation goal with a long-range effort that was just wide of Harding's left-hand upright but the Puritans scored their fifth goal in the 76th minute.

A clever back-heel from McDonough set up Jordy Ngathe to centre from the right and substitute Tom Winters, who had only been on the pitch for a couple of minutes, found the net with a close range header.

The Puritans had the ball in the net a couple of times before the final whistle but on both occasions the goals were overruled for offside and it would have been an injustice if Banbury had scored any further.

STORTFORD: Tyler McCarthy; Max Brassington; Darren Foxley; Jack Thomas; Alex Rogers; Joe Robinson; Alfie Mason; Jordan Westcott; Jason Williams (Joe Ryan 82); Jamie Cureton; Callum Taylor (Freddie Oakman 61).

Unused substitutes: Marcus Crowther and Chad Cruse.

BANBURY UNITED: Jack Harding; George Nash; Luke Carnell; Tom Bradbury; Charlie Hawtin; Jack Self (Jack Finch 80); Conor McDonough (Ryan McDonald 86); Ricky Johnson; Jordy

Ngathe; Elliot Sandy (Tom Winters 73); Charlie Wise.

Unused substitute: Jamie Heapy.

Referee: Elliott Kaye

Attendance: 301