

BLUES 3 REDDITCH UNITED 0

THREE second half goals saw Blues make it three straight home wins with a comfortable victory against Redditch.



Kevin Watson's side fully deserved their victory as they were virtually in full control over the midlands side after half-time following on a low-key first half in which there had been little between the two sides when both took time to settle.

The Stortford side had some changes compared to the last match at home to Frome Town with Dipo Akinyemi having finished his loan spell and Dean Ager not allowed by his parent club Colchester United to play in the match. Marvel Ekpiteta was back in action following his suspension while Alfie Mason played the whole ninety minutes up front alongside Jamie Cureton.



After a slow, even start with few openings the Reds then shaded near misses up to the break as Jed Davies twice went close and Adam Page shot straight at Calum Kitscha from a few yards out. Attacking the Airport end, Darren Foxley, receiving a pass from Jamie Cureton flighted a shot a foot over for the hosts but the experienced Stuart Fleetwood had an acute

angled shot deflected away from danger by Kitscha in the 22nd minute.



Ashley Sammons had a long range effort tipped away for a corner whilst five minutes from the break a Davies free-kick just missing Tom Fishwick's forehead, struck the far upright. Two minutes after the restart Darren Foxley drove his shot just past the far post following a George Casey free-kick on the right. Then Mason shot over from 12 yards in the 56th minute after good approach work by Tom Clifford and Cureton.

It was MARVEL EKPITETA who broke the deadlock on the hour as he fastened on to the loose ball at the back post and drilled home after Ethan Ross had been troubled by Foxley's corner.



From that point Stortford were on top and six minutes later Fishwick headed narrowly past his own post when Casey crossed the ball from the right flank. JAMIE CURETON who doubled the lead in the 68th minute when he curled a shot under the bar from the edge of the box after Casey and Foxley were involved in the

build up on the right. It was the striker's sixth goal in nine matches since joining Stortford.



Skipper Mark Hughes, with a powerful header, then made it three from another Foxley corner in the 77th minute.

The only yellow card in the match was shown six minutes from time when the Reds skipper James Mutton was cautioned after a foul on Cureton. A Tom Clifford free-kick wasn't far off target for the Blues before the end whilst Kitscha kept a clean sheet with the aid of an excellent tip over from Sammons' shot in the 87th minute.

Academy centre back Jamie Riley made his senior debut in added time when he replaced Marvel Ekpiteta.



STORTFORD: Calum Kitscha; George Casey; Tom Clifford; Mark Hughes (Freddie Oakman 89); Marvel Ekpiteta (Jamie Riley 90+3); Joe Robinson; Jordan Westcott; Jack Thomas; Alfie Mason; Jamie Cureton; Darren Foxley (Chad Cruse 83).

Unused substitutes: Marcus Crowther and Max Brassington.

REDDITCH UNITED: Ethan Ross; Joshua Ekewele; Nathan Fox; Danny Jackman; Tom Fishwick; James Mutton; Tristain Dunkley (Gowan Stares 68); Ashley Sammons; Stuart Fleetwood; Jed Davies (Adam Davie 68); Adam Page (Jordan McKenzie 83).

Unused substitutes: Louis Ezewele and Lewis Wright.

Referee: Peter Venables Attendance: 242

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 4 FROME TOWN 0



BLUES hit four goals for the second successive home game as they effectively ended Frome's play-off chances.

It was the biggest league victory for Kevin Watson's side since the final day of last season and new keeper Calum Kitscha kept Blues' first clean sheet since December.



Although Dipo Akinyemi gave the hosts an early lead, there was little between the two sides up until the final 20 minutes when Stortford notched three goals with Jamie Cureton and Akinyemi each hitting a brace. Watson was without Marvel Ekpiteta who was serving his one match suspension after being red carded the previous Saturday. The Blues boss brought Jordan Westcott into the right back position and George Casey switched to a central defence role alongside Joe Robinson.

It was a good performance all round with the defence much tighter and organised than of late. Stortford closed down quickly and allowed Frome little time to dwell on the ball.

Although Dean Ager had a low drive held by keeper Kyle Phillips in the opening minute it was the visitors who looked to have the edge early on and looking slightly stronger in midfield at that time.

Ryan Bath went close following a Darren Jefferies cross but it was the Blues who took the lead in the 16th minute. Casey intercepted the ball in his own half and set up Akinyemi to run down the middle and with the visiting defence caught out of position the Blues' number nine advanced to beat Phillips with a low drive.

Akinyemi should have added a further goal seven minutes later after Ager and Westcott had combined on the right but after the latter had crossed to the far post the striker headed wide of the target.



Jack Thomas had a 25 yard shot blocked and then the Somerset side came more into the picture as the break approached.

An effort from outside the box in the 34th minute by Jon Davies was close after the ball had been chested down by Bath and then 10 minutes later Kitscha blocked away an acute angled strike from Jefferies. Soon afterwards in added time, a Connor Roberts header was held by Kitscha after a free-kick and Jefferies was close with a shot past the far upright.



The Somerset side began after the resumption on the front foot and a 20 yard drive by skipper George Miller was tipped over the bar by Kitscha in the 49th minute and Marcus Mapstone headed narrowly over at near post from the resultant corner.

Stortford soon settled down and Mark Hughes headed over from a Ager cross from the right in the 64th minute and then five minutes later the roles were reversed as the Blues skipper slipped the ball into Ager to cut in from the right and send a shot into the side-netting.

The all important second goal for Stortford arrived in the 70th minute. The goal was largely netted thanks to some hard work by Akinyemi who battled after seeming to be on a lost cause to win the ball midway in the Frome half and when it ran loose Cureton fastened on to it and advanced to fire past Phillips from an angle.



Cureton struck again in the 79th minute. This time Ager collected a misdirected Frome pass near the halfway line and slipped the ball upfield to the veteran who beat Phillips with a clinical shot.

It only took three more minutes until the fourth goal was registered. Tom Clifford's corner from the left into the middle deflected to Akinyemi and the on-loan striker drove the ball low through a forest of legs and into the net from 12 yards



There could have been more goals before the final whistle. Phillips, diving to his left, saved well after Darren Foxley rounded off a fine move with a goalbound effort. Jefferies was close again for the visitors with a shot across the face of goal and George Miller skimmed the bar.

Akinyemi was denied scoring a hat-trick by Phillips with a fine blocking save and then in the closing action of the match Kitscha stopped Davies snatching a consolation goal.

STORTFORD: Calum Kitscha; Jordan Westcott; Tom Clifford; Mark Hughes; George Casey; Joe Robinson; Dean Ager (Alfie Mason 79); Jack Thomas (Freddie Oakman 86); Dipo Akinyemi; Jamie Cureton; Darren Foxley.

Unused substitutes: Max Brassington, Chad Cruse and Tyler McCarthy.



FROME TOWN: Kyle Phillips; Krissy Miller; Ben Withey; Connor Roberts (Sam Teale 58); Marcus Mapstone; Chas Hemmings; Jon Davies; George Miller; Ryan Bath (Ollie Knowles 63); Darren Jefferies; Ollie Knight.

Unused substitutes: Ben Griffiths and Ben Cleverley.

Referee: Carl Pearse

Attendance: 231

KETTERING TOWN 6 BISHOP'S STORTFORD 0

A TERRIBLE first half saw ten-man Blues go down to their heaviest defeat of the season.

Kevin Watson's side were 5-0 down at half time and had seen Marvel Ekpiteta harshly red carded when conceding a penalty in the 38th minute to leave them with ten men for the majority of the contest for the second match in succession.

While five of the goals were scored during a 25 minute spell, Stortford were outplayed by the Poppies for most of the 90 minutes and didn't dictate any of the action on a heavy pitch.

It was ironic that Watson was able to put out probably his strongest team on paper for some time. Loan players Tom Clifford and Dean Ager returned to the starting line-up whilst Alex Rogers who had been missing for several weeks due to having his tonsils removed was in the squad. Jordan Westcott was also on the bench. Callum Taylor was absent as he was starting a three match suspension for his sending off at Hereford.

It was the Blues who struck first at goal with Jamie Cureton smashing a first time effort a foot over the bar from 20 yards after being slipped a pass by Dipo Akinyemi inside the first minute.

Rhys Hoenes and Aaron O'Connor cutting went close before the Poppies' opener arrived in the 18th minute.

Matt Stevens appeared to be in an offside position when receiving the ball on his own in the box from a headed pass forward by Lindon Meikle and although Tyler McCarthy blocked his shot the Blues keeper lost track of where the ball was and Stevens was able to steer the rebound into an empty net from ten yards.

Stevens had a hand in Town's second goal in the 24th minute as it was his low cross from the right that was netted at close range by O'Connor who beat McCarthy to the ball.

It was 3-0 just two minutes later when Meikle centred from that flank and Stevens found the net from six yards.

Just before the half hour skipper Mark Hughes laid the ball off to Akinyemi but the striker's effort from long range was comfortably held by Kettering stopper Paul White.

Shortly afterwards Stortford won their first corner but Tom Clifford's flag kick resulted in a

header from Joe Robinson that was again held by White.

More indecision in the Stortford defence led to the hosts' fourth goal in the 38th minute. Marshall fed a long ball up the left for Hoenes who gained possession and advancing for goal was ruled by referee Andrew Dallison to have been pushed by Marvel Ekpiteta. It was a harsh dismissal for the Blues defender who was adjudged to have been the last man.

Kettering skipper Brett Solkhon duly dispatched the resultant spot kick.

There was more pain for Stortford two minutes before the interval when Meikle fed Kalern Thomas wide on the right and Thomas' cross was easily headed in by O'Connor.

A drive from Darren Foxley wasn't far off target shortly before the break and it was a very downcast Blues side that retreated to the dressing room.

It was very much a damage limitation exercise in the second half and the Blues boss made a change with Westcott replacing Dean Ager on the resumption.

An early attack was Jack Thomas cross from the right to the back post but Kalern Thomas headed back to his keeper as Dipo Akinyemi closed in.

Most of the action was in the Stortford half but they limited the Poppies chances until the 69th

minute when a corner was cleared out to Meikle who floated the ball into the box where Orrin Pendley headed past McCarthy.

The Stortford stopper held a Ben Toseland free-kick with 12 minutes remaining and then in the 81st minute Stortford had their best chance of a consolation goal when Foxley fed Akinyemi with a through ball to run at goal but the Stevenage loan player's drive at goal took a slight deflection off of White to go out for a corner.

STORTFORD: Tyler McCarthy; George Casey; Tom Clifford; Mark Hughes; Marvel Ekpiteta; Joe Robinson; Dean Ager (Jordan Westcott 46); Jack Thomas; Dipo Akinyemi; Jamie Cureton (Freddie Oakman 63); Darren Foxley.

Unused substitutes: Max Brassington, Chad Cruse and Alex Rogers.

KETTERING TOWN: Paul White; Kalern Thomas; Ben Toseland; Brett Solkhon (Ben Bradshaw 59); Gary Mulligan (Liam Bateman 63); Orrin Pendley; Lindon Meikle; Aaron O'Connor (Rene Howe 74); Matt Stevens; Tom Marshall; Rhys Hoenes.

Unused substitutes: Gary Stohrer and Callum Snow.

Attendance: 558



