

Sunday 27th April 2008 (SECOND MATCH OF DOUBLE-HEADER...30 Minutes each way)

Mercury Waltham Sunday League Division One Match at Larsens Recreation Ground, Waltham Abbey

EDMONTON ROVERS	5	LARSENS	2	HT 1-0
Loveday (14 mins.), Nxumalo (31 mins.), McGovern (45, 50 mins.), Jenkins (47 mins.)		Williams (38 mins.), Williamson (56 mins.)		

EDMONTON ROVERS LINE-UP (with Marks out of 10): Ozel OZERMAN (GK) (6); Terry MOORE (7), Alan BARNARD (7), Martin LOVEDAY (7); Kris SPYROU (6½), Scott JENKINS (7½), Danny HAGAN (7), Vernon 'Kizza' NXUMALO (7½); Nick VERTIGANS (7); Daniel DALEY (7), Conor McGOVERN (7) **Subs.:** Andrew WARMERDAM (On for Moore 50 mins.) (6), Tony KING (On for Nxumalo 50 mins.) (6), Danny GREEN (On for Hagan 50 mins.) (6), Tem ADIL (Not Used)

LARSENS' LINE-UP: Russell WILLIAMSON (First Half GK), Terry IRETON (Second Half GK); Gary KILLINGTON, Lee CODLIN, Mark SONTAG; Craig JACKSON, Dave MARRION, Angelo BISCEGLIA, Danny LAWRENCE; Jason DOWNER, Asa BURCHES **Subs.:** Gareth WILLIAMS (On for Killington at Half-Time), Jason BURCHES (On for Asa Burches at Half-Time)

Referee: Andy SMITH

Weather Conditions: Cloudy with occasional drizzle

Attendance: 38

Factual Report (by Laurence Hughes):

For this second match, which we still needed to win, we fielded an equally strong side as we had in the first game, despite making six changes to the starting line-up. That saw Ozel Ozerman in goal this time with Martin Loveday replacing Paul Woolston in



defence...Wooly having only been able to play in the first match because of family commitments..., while Kris Spyrou, Nick Vertigans and Scott Jenkins all started in midfield, and in attack we had Conor McGovern returning to play his first match for nearly two months after being out with a broken thumb, alongside Daniel Daley, who had to be left out of the first game after 'injuring himself' in the warm-up. Somehow, Daley had miraculously recovered in time to start this game despite using up a whole can of freeze spray (instead of heat spray) for an

apparent pulled muscle ! Needless to say, as soon as the game kicked off, Daley was sprinting about and outpacing Larsens players with no adverse effects whatsoever. However, that wasn't too difficult, as having now clinched the title in the first game, it was time for them to treat this particular fixture as if it was a Veterans' post-season Charity match by fielding their 15-stone ? Manager Gary Killington at right-back, their 20-stone ? goalkeeper Angelo Bisceglia as a left winger, and 25-stone ? Waltham Abbey F.C. Bar Manager Dave Marrion as an attacking midfielder, while their forwards played in defence, their defenders played in attack, and their smallest player (5 foot 2 inch Russell Williamson) played in goal. Maybe I'm exaggerating with some of those descriptions, but you get my drift. It was understandable from their viewpoint, but very frustrating for us, as we knew that any victory for us would be a bit of a hollow one, and we would much rather have beaten them in a 'proper' game...which we were well capable of with the squad of players at our disposal on this occasion, despite Larsens' impressive record this season.

In fact, so easy was it for us in this match that Martin Loveday was able to score his first goal for the club in the 14th minute to give us the lead with a 'rasping' first time shot just above Williamson's head into the centre of the net, but unfortunately, for most of the First Half we carried on in similar fashion to the first match by not taking our chances, although Larsens' experienced players certainly knew what they were doing and didn't make it easy for us. For the Second Half though, Larsens changed their team around a bit as they obviously realised that we were actually a good side (despite some of our appalling results this season), and they certainly didn't want to suffer a defeat of any sort, having only lost twice all season. They probably assumed that we were going to 'have a laugh' in the Second match as well and give the likes of myself a run-out !? They therefore put their forwards back up front or in midfield and their overweight players in defence, while getting their obvious best player Russell Williamson back out on the pitch and a slightly taller player (Terry Ireton) in goal.

However, no goalkeeper would have had a chance of stopping Vernon 'Kizza' Nxumalo's brilliant 30 yard chip that put us 2-0 up just a minute into the Second Half, but with Larsens pushing players forward, they had plenty of chances as well and defender Gareth 'Scouse' Williams (who had been playing up front) pulled a goal back in the 38th minute with a scrappy bundled-in finish which the Larsens' supporters were trying to get disallowed for offside 'for a laugh' by asking Tem Adil to raise his flag...which he duly did, but Referee Andy Smith quite rightly ignored it.



With Larsens having nothing to lose, they then threw 8 men into attack for the rest of the match, leaving just 45-stone of lard at the back, so it was therefore inevitable that Conor Mc,Govern would break the [Club All-Time First Team Goalscoring Record](#) at some stage during the 60 minutes, and after

going desperately close with a spectacular long range volley that cannoned off the far post in the 43rd minute, he duly obliged two minutes later with a cross-shot into the far corner from closer range to put us 3-1 up before running over to the camera and taking his shirt off to reveal a pre-printed '183 not out' message on his vest. Unfortunately, Referee Smith realised it was a 'nothing' match and didn't book him for that, which would have been an obvious laugh for Mc,Govern's team-mates. Where was Mr. Wildgoose when we needed him ?!

The game then became even more of a joke after that though, as we created something like 12 clear-cut chances in the last 12 minutes but only managed to take two of them, firstly in the 47th minute when Scott Jenkins made it 4-1 with his first goal for the club after Daniel Daley

unselfishly squared the ball to him in front of goal when he could easily have beaten 'keeper' Ireton himself, and then McGovern grabbed his second and our 5th three minutes later after more good play by Daley.

Larsens pulled a goal back in the 56th minute though when Russell Williamson outjumped the slightly taller Ozel Ozerman to head in a high ball as our defenders left it for Oz to claim, but Referee Smith spoilt the 'fun' by blowing for Full-Time three minutes early because he was 'bored' and would have preferred to have been taking charge of a more competitive match...and we could see where he was coming from with that. I'm sure our players were enjoying themselves though, particularly as we no longer have training, so this wasn't a bad replacement for that ! It will undoubtedly be good entertainment on video though, particularly the horrendously bad misses our players conjured up in the Second Half !?

TREVOR HUGHES'S MANAGER'S REPORT

Our large squad meant that we were able to bring in five fresh players to the starting line up for the second match without weakening our team. Larsens also made several changes with their smallest player going in goal and the two largest beer guts in the league patrolling the midfield. Apparently, they were picking names out of a hat for who was going to play. Nevertheless, they were the champions and we needed a win. Centre half, Martin Loveday, scored his first goal for the club with a blaster from long range after a good spell of pressure. We should have scored more in the first half and were worried that Larsens were making substitutions at half time. However, they put another outfield player in goal and the two beer guts played in defence. In the first minute Vernon 'Kizza' Nxumalo scored with a superb chip which would have beaten most goalkeepers to extend our lead. Unfortunately, Larsens pulled one back when a high ball was bundled in at the far post and the goal stood despite a linesman's flag from Tem Adil and Larsens' players appealing for offside apparently because of a bet about their player scoring. Larsens then started pushing everyone forward except the two beer guts and we were being left 4 v 2 on numerous occasions. We missed a hatful of chances before Conor McGovern finally scored his club record goal. He took his shirt off to reveal an Ian Wright style T shirt with 183 Not Out printed on it which cost the referee marks for failing to administer the customary caution and blot an otherwise excellent performance. Daniel Daley created two further goals by unselfishly squaring for Scott Jenkins and then Conor to score. Daley then blazed over an open goal from 6 yards before Larsens scored again with another high ball which was headed in by their smallest player with no challenge by any of our players. The referee blew up 3 minutes early as the game had become something of a farce but a 5-2 win against the Division One champions is in the record books. Having avoided relegation another win in our last match in midweek against St. Margaretsbury could now see us finish in mid table.