

Sunday 24th August 2003

Pre-Season Friendly Match at the Ninefields Estate, Waltham Abbey

ABBEY YOUTH OLD BOYS XI	0	EDMONTON ROVERS XI	1	HT 0-0
		Woolston (67 mins.)		

Abbey Youth Old Boys' Line-Up: David MILROY (GK); Joe HAGGER, Simon KIFF, Gary BROWNJOHN, Colin BROTHERTON; Billy BROWNJOHN, Gary DOWN, Simon CASEY, James SIBTHORPE; Chris HARPER, Rod ANDREWS **Subs.:** Simon PARCHMENT (GK), David THEOBALD, Jamie RICHARDS, Steve TILLET, Paul SPONG, Chris DUMOULIN, Jason BARRETT, Antony PALLANT

Edmonton Rovers Line-Up (with Marks out of 10): Simon JACKSON (GK) (6½); Robin PRYKE (7½), Gary ADAMSON (7), Paul WOOLSTON (8), John BEASLEY (7½); Gary ODELL (6½), Gary COKELL (6½), Steve COKELL (6½), Eric IBEKWEM (6½); Leon GREEN (6½), Myron Mc,KAY (6) **Subs:** Lexton HARRISON (6½), Jerome HARRISON (6½), Ali AHMED (6), Brian KAMUTEKU (6½), Mashood BURAAHEE (6)

Referee: Trevor IRVING

Weather Conditions: Cloudy, but Warm

Attendance: 37



Report:
Due to it being a Bank Holiday weekend, we had no less than

24 prospective players (and Management Committee Members) unavailable, yet we still managed to field a squad of 16 for this Pre-Season Friendly, while our opponents Abbey Youth Old Boys used a total of 19 players selected from both their First Team (who finished 5th in Division One of the Mercury Waltham Sunday League last season) and their Reserve Team (who finished second from bottom in the bottom Division !). Because of their Reserve Team's poor showing last season we were expecting a rather easier game, even though we were only fielding five First Team regulars ourselves, but Abbey Youth Old Boys' players all seemed to know each other irrespective of what team they normally play for, whereas too many of our midfielders and forwards didn't have much of a clue what each others' names were, especially with Gary Cokell only playing his second game for the club and Leon Green making his 11-a-side debut. With Leon being a contract player for Dr.Martens League Premier Division side Weymouth (which means he is unable to play for us in League matches), we were hoping he would be able to show some real quality, but the dreadfully bobbly pitch put paid to that, as indeed it did for all the attacking players of both sides, hence the lower than usual marks out of 10 for our forwards and midfielders. Defensively though, we were excellent (as usual) with keeper Simon Jackson and stand-in sweeper Gary Adamson both acquitting themselves well on their First Team debuts while John Beasley once again confirmed that he is more than capable of playing as a regular left-back in the Premier Division.

However, Abbey Youth Old Boys did have the two best chances of the First Half, both of which were missed as Rod Andrews scuffed a penalty wide in the 21st minute after Robin Pryke had been penalised for an innocuous push and then shortly afterwards we were caught out at the back by a well-flighted free-kick into the 6-yard box by 16-year-old ? Billy Brownjohn which was somehow headed over by an unmarked Gary Brownjohn.

Manager Trevor Hughes (who was having to run the line as usual due to Tim Beeden being 'pissed' and still in bed ?) therefore decided to bring on all five substitutes at Half-Time, including Mashood Burahee (who of course only lasted 14 minutes before coming off 'knackered') and three other Reserve Team players who are more used to having just a 'kickabout over the park' than playing in a proper match, namely Jerome Harrison, Ali Ahmed and Brian Kamuteku. Despite that though, we actually started playing a bit better from an attacking viewpoint, although our goal (in the 67th minute) perhaps not surprisingly came from a dead-ball situation in the form of a 30-yard free-kick...as that was the only way anybody was going to be able to shoot straight with the ball bobbling about so much when running along with it. When the opportunity arose though, we had all manner of players stride up purposefully to take it, including the imposing 6ft. 8ins. tall figure of Brian Kamuteku ! However, man-of-the-match Paul Woolston soon showed them who was boss by pointing at his Captain's armband before thumping a spectacular effort past a helpless Simon Parchment (Abbey's regular First Team keeper) for what turned out to be the only goal of the game.

We did create two or three other good chances in the Second Half though, most notably a header from Lexton Harrison which went narrowly over and a well-struck shot from Eric Ibekwem in the last minute which rebounded away off the top

of the crossbar, while out of our new players Brian Kamuteku was suprisingly impressive for a big man in controlling the ball with some clever pieces of skill, but unfortunately he still needs to learn what to do with it once he has done so...a problem which is not exclusive to him amongst our Reserve Team players.

Although we were the better side in the Second Half and just about deserved our win with Simon Jackson having very little to do in the way of shot-stopping, Abbey Youth Old Boys' Reserve Team players who took part in this match certainly showed that they are likely to provide us with tougher opposition than we might have expected when our Reserve Team meet them in the Quarter-Finals of the League Reserve Cup during the coming season ([Click here](#) for details), and we will have to get a few things sorted out before that game...probably in the form of signing up at least one experienced central midfield player for the Reserve Team who knows how to get goal-side and challenge for the ball. !?