

Sunday 26th November 2023

Barnet Sunday League John Motson Junior Challenge Cup First Round Match at Old Cholmeleians, Mill Hill

Kick-Off: 10.00 a.m.

Result: **AC FINCHLEY** 4 **EDMONTON ROVERS** 1 **Half-Time:** 1-1

SHIRT NUMBER	TEAM (3-4-1-2 / 4-3-3 78)			GOAL TIMES
1	GK	Kai McAULEY		
5	RCB	Fergus MURRAY		
2	SW/LCB 78	Chris JORDANOU		
18	LCB	Tobi CHARLES	OFF (Inj.) 78	
17	RWB/RCF 86	Eddie COX	OFF HT / BACK ON 86	
8	CM	Paddy BAYNES	OFF 60	
3	CM	Charlie SAVAGE (Captain)		
7	LWB/RWB HT/RB 78	Christian ELLIS		
10	ACM/CM 78	Rashawn BENNETT-DYER		
9	CF	Myreon KEANE	OFF (Inj.) 86	
14	CF/LCF 78	Tairique HARRISON		5 Mins.
SUBSTITUTES				
11	LWB/LB 78	Max FRANCIS	ON HT	
15	CM	Joe ATTIPA	ON 60	
16	RCF/CF 86	Harvey ANTONIOU	ON 78	
OWN GOALS Scored For Us:				

CARETAKER PLAYER-MANAGER: Charlie Savage **CLUB LINESMEN:** Not Required by Referee **ATTENDANCE:** 26

OTHER CLUB MEMBERS PRESENT: Laurence Hughes, Bob Cleary, Roderick Bennett, Sarah Bartlett, Lorna Bennett, Louis Bennett, Sylvia Bennett, Mike Jordanou, Tracy Charles, John Murray

REFEREE: Harry Cowell

BOOKINGS: Fergus Murray (Foul...23 Mins.), Sohail Qayoumi (AC Finchley) (Kicking Ball Away...36 Mins.)

SENDING-OFFS: None

WEATHER CONDITIONS: Cloudy & Cold. No Wind. **STATE OF PITCH:** Very soft & muddy. Badly churned up.

UNAVAILABILITY: (9 Players): Josh Wakeford (Player-Manager), Stuart Dorward (Assistant Manager), Harry Dorward, Jack Vanvynck (All Away/Other Commitments), Daniel Schwartz-Gee, Gianni Dipo (Both Injured), Natan Pawlaczyk (Working), Sam Pritchett (University), Michael Menzies (Playing Youth Football), Ritchie Redgrave (Playing Vets Football)

OPPONENTS' LINE-UP (4-2-3-1): 1. James Parkinson (GK); 15. Sohail Qayoumi (RB), 17. Matthew Ray (RCB), 8. Ryan Head (LCB), 5. Ross Dipple (LB); 4. Jake Barraclough (DCM), 7. Michael Walsh (DCM); 16. Steven Aguiar (RM), 10. Alex Corradi (ACM...Captain), 9. Rick Timanti (LM); 12. Michael Carroll (CF)
Subs. 20. Adam Gwynnette, 24. Rashid Yadgary, 23. Anwar French (All Used)

OPPONENTS' GOALSCORERS: Timanti (10 Mins.), Carroll (56 Mins.), Barraclough (71 Mins.), Walsh (88 Mins.)

MATCH REPORT... After four wins in a row in Division Five, we faced a sterner test in this Cup match against Division Three side AC Finchley, who were unbeaten in their last three matches themselves including a 4-1 win against last season's Division 5 Runners-Up NLR the week before. They also fielded seven players who had played for them regularly in the Premier Division only four years ago, so with ourselves missing Player-Manager Josh Wakeford, Assistant Manager Stuart Dorward and a number of defenders, we were never really going to be the favourites to win this match. However, we shocked our very experienced opponents by taking the lead after just five minutes when Tairique Harrison ran in at the far post to tap in from Eddie Cox's low cross-shot, but we threw away that lead just five minutes later when Eddie, who was having to play out of position as a Right Wing-Back, allowed Finchley's left-sided attacking midfielder Rick Timanti to get in behind him to score easily on the half-volley from a right-wing cross. The rest of the First Half saw both goalkeepers make a number of good saves, but our stand-in keeper Kai McAuley had a lot more to do and it was mainly thanks to him that we came off at Half-Time with the scores level. We then brought on Max Francis for the start of the Second Half to make us a bit more secure defensively, but after a good start to the half where we created a couple more chances we switched off from a throw-in in the 56th minute and allowed the thrower to get a cross into the 6-yard box which Finchley's big target-man centre forward Michael Carroll easily controlled to fire into the roof of the net and put his side 2-1 up. We continued to battle away though, but Finchley's extra physical strength started to tell as the game went on with the pitch a real mud-bath which didn't suit our players at all, and it was no surprise when we found ourselves 3-1 down after 71 minutes when Finchley's best player on the day, Jake Barraclough, ploughed his way through the centre of the pitch to score with a good finish after a one-two with substitute Anwar French. With Tobi Charles limping off after a kick on the knee and with no other defenders on the bench, we then had to switch to what was supposed to be a 4-4-2, but with several different people on our touchline taking it upon themselves to act as Managers and having different ideas, we became more and more disorganised and Finchley's Michael Walsh punished us for that by making it 4-1 with two minutes remaining, giving Kai McAuley no chance with a long-range shot into the bottom corner. Although this was a competition we were never going to win with teams from much higher divisions involved, it was disappointing to lose our unbeaten run and most of our players walked off on the final whistle without shaking hands with our opponents. Hopefully we can get back to 'normal' as soon as possible.