

Sunday 30th November 2003

Mercury Waltham Sunday League (Premier Division) Match at Hazelwood Sports Ground

EDMONTON ROVERS	5	BROXBOURNE RANGERS	2	HT 3-1
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C.McGovern (13, 89 mins.),
D.Dorward (39, 42 mins),
Own Goal (65 mins)

A.Reed (25 mins),
C.Beeden Own Goal (86 mins)

Edmonton Rovers Line-Up (with Marks out of 10): Simon JACKSON (GK) (8); Chidi IBEKWEM (6½), Stuart DORWARD (6½), Paul WOOLSTON (7), Tony SPELLER (7); Gary COKELL (6½), Paul ELLERKER (7½), Chris 'Nugget' BEEDEN (7), Eric IBEKWEM (7); Derek DORWARD (7½), Conor McGOVERN (7½) **Subs.:** None !

Broxbourne Rangers Line-Up: No Team Details **Subs.:**

Referee: Kevin DOHERTY

Weather Conditions: Sunny & Dry. No Wind

Attendance: ?

Report (From details supplied by Manager Trevor Hughes...as Laurence Hughes was playing for the Reserves): We ended up fielding just a bare eleven for this match as we had yet another 'nightmare' day in terms of players dropping out at the last minute. (See Sunday 16th November above for a comparison). This saw Lexton Harrison being taken so that the Reserve Team could field eleven men in their London F.A. Sunday Junior Cup match in Chislehurst (Kent !), Treasure MacCarthy not turning up because he was 'too tired' after going to Rudolphs the night before (predictably !), Robin Pryke dropping out the day before due to 'a bit of a cold and a stiff neck' and worst of all Steve Beasley not turning up at all without any explanation, despite having told Stuart Dorward at 9.00.a.m. that he was definitely playing because he was staying with relatives nearby rather than driving down from his home in Royston (near Cambridge). Those arrangements were as a result of Stuart's Stag Do at the races at Newbury the day before, which needless to say saw Stuart stagger around the pitch in a 'drunken stupor' for most of this match, although the numerous times he fell over flat on his face or did Gary Southam-style 'air-shots' were not captured on video for any Out-Takes or Clip Of The Week's because the cameraman was also missing on this occasion.

With Marco Ellerker, Steve Cokell & Peter Sutton all unfit for this match in addition to those mentioned above, we were obviously worried when Broxbourne Rangers turned up with a squad of 14...in stark contrast to the previous week when they 'non-fulfilled a Roy Bailey Challenge Cup fixture against us. However, our makeshift side got off to a good start when Conor McGovern tapped in the rebound from 6 yards to give us the lead after 13 minutes after Stuart Dorward had somehow managed to connect with a well-struck shot to test the Broxbourne Rangers keeper. Unfortunately our lead didn't last for long though, as Chris 'Nugget' Beeden (who was playing a now rare match for us after only being a substitute for Broxbourne Borough the day before) gave away a penalty with some sort of 'Gascoigne-style dangerous use of the arms' ? challenge, and although Simon Jackson saved Andrew 'Biffer' Reed's weak spot kick with his legs, the rebound went straight back to Reed who made no mistake at the second attempt.

Broxbourne Rangers appeared to have a stronger side out than usual from an attacking viewpoint, but they were definitely missing one or two key defenders and that showed in the 39th minute when one of them let Chris Beeden's through ball pass straight under his foot to Derek Dorward, who rounded the keeper to put us 2-1 up. In fact Broxbourne Rangers then looked even more dodgy at the back just 3 minutes later when they left 'Del' totally unmarked to volley in a corner with ease and give us a 3-1 Half-Time lead which we probably didn't deserve, as Simon Jackson had been kept busy with one save from a 'Biffer' volley being particularly memorable. (This would have been a definite Clip Of The Week apparently). Trevor Hughes's Half-Time instructions were therefore to defend deep (as usual) in order to frustrate Broxbourne Rangers forwards, especially as their main dangerman 'Biffer' had (deliberately ?) been put out on the left wing to test out the fitness of Gary Cokell (who was playing his first match for 8 weeks...and a bit out of position on the right of midfield) and also right-back Chidi Ibekwem (who was playing his first match for 8 months !).

However, we actually increased our lead in the 65th minute when a Broxbourne Rangers defender committed another howler by heading Eric Ibekwem's free-kick into his own net to put us 4-1 up. That saw their heads drop a bit and we started creating more chances, especially in the last 10 minutes when a Paul Woolston shot hit the post from a corner as several Broxbourne Rangers players couldn't be bothered to get back and defend. However, they pulled it back to 4-2 in the 86th minute when Chris 'Nugget' Beeden scored an Own Goal this time by deflecting in a near post cross in trying to stop Ben Newmarch getting on this end of it...Newmarch actually claiming the goal, but we have given it to 'Nugget' who requested that we do so !

However, we hit straight back and should have scored a 5th goal straight away when we had a three against two situation in our favour, but Conor McGovern shot wide. At least he made up for that though by heading in 'Nugget's cross in the 89th minute to seal a 5-2 victory and hopefully start us off on the same sort of long unbeaten run we managed last season, although it's unlikely that many other Premier Division teams will gift us goals in this fashion.