

Sunday 18th March 2007

Mercury Waltham Sunday League Division One Match at Hazelwood Sports Ground

**EDMONTON ROVERS**

**3**

**ENFIELD CRUSADERS**

**0**

HT 1-0

*S.Dorward (Pen.) (7 mins.),  
Daley (56 mins.),  
McGovern (76 mins.)*

**EDMONTON ROVERS LINE-UP (with Marks out of 10):** Darryl JOHNSON (GK) (7); Bobby RANDALL (7½), Stuart DORWARD (7½), Clark WILLIAMS (7½), Terry MOORE (7½); Foyso! AHMED (6½), Tem ADIL (7½), Steve COKELL (7½), Derek DORWARD (6½); Conor McGOVERN (7½), Daniel DALEY (7)  
**Subs.:** Tony KING (7), Kris SPYROU (7)

**ENFIELD CRUSADERS' LINE-UP:** No Team Details **Subs.:**

**Referee:** Steve WILDGOOSE

**Weather Conditions:** Sunny & Very Windy

**Attendance:** 9

### **Factual Report (by Laurence Hughes):**

When we played Enfield Crusaders back in September and cancelled each other out in a boring goal-less draw at Enfield Playing Fields, I was met with much abuse from their players afterwards for suggesting before the match that they might struggle in Division One this season having only finished in mid-table in Division Two the previous campaign and being promoted due to teams withdrawing from the League. Of course from our experience of knowing just how tough Division One is in comparison, I was of course right, and coming into this match Enfield Crusaders were anchored firmly at the bottom of the table with only one win all season. Unfortunately though, the team lying **second** from bottom coming into this match were **us**...which was something we had not been anticipating



at the start of the season, and with six defeats in a row behind us and no less than nine key players missing, this promised to be another game of poor quality in which any goals scored were likely to be as a result of defensive mistakes, especially with a horrible blustery gale-force wind blowing across the pitch.

Indeed some of the excuses for our nine absent players were most definitely of the 'I've got better things to do' variety, although surely going all the way up to Liverpool to watch Arsenal lose 1-0 to Everton (Peter Murphy & Paul Ellerker) wasn't a good idea? It was the absence of defenders Paul Woolston, Alan Barnard, Andrew Warmerdam & Tony Speller because of family/Mothers' Day commitments that was the most worrying problem for us though, together with that of Darryl Johnson initially, as two days before the game we were in a situation where we had a squad of eleven consisting of no goalkeeper, one defender, four midfielders and six forwards! Thankfully though, 'D.J.' managed to wangle his way out of all that and play at short notice, while Foyso Ahmed, Tem Adil and substitutes Tony King & Kris Spyrou were all available to play a rare game, but it did mean midfielder Clark Williams having to



play at centre-half and forward Steve Cokell having to play in an unfamiliar central midfield role. We were given a good start though when Referee Steve Wildgoose spotted a push in the back on Daniel Daley in the area after just 7 minutes and Stuart Dorward confidently stepped up to send keeper Mal Saphiris the wrong way from the resulting penalty. However, the rest of the First Half was a dreadful spectacle as both sides really struggled to cope with the wind...as did the cameraman, who was nearly blown off his podium on several occasions. Referee Wildgoose meanwhile predictably booked two Enfield Crusaders players for dissent during the course of the First Half, and maybe they were a bit unlucky in that several of their players had not encountered him before and didn't realise that any 'gobbing off' offences would be immediately punished with a yellow card (or worse) rather than a verbal warning. Of course as Mr. Wildgoose is our regular Referee in the Summer 7-a-side League we knew what to expect, and thankfully all of our players in this match were intelligent enough to just keep their traps shut whereas Enfield Crusaders' players just couldn't seem to resist having a 'pop'...much to the frustration of their Manager standing on the touchline quite near the camera.

We came off at Half-Time still 1-0 up but it was a very slender lead, and the first 10 minutes of the Second Half continued in much the same vein with the ball spending most of the time crashing against the fence on

the Connaught Gardens side after the wind had blown it out of play, mainly from Darryl Johnson's drop kicks. However, we suddenly produced a good bit of play in the 56th minute which saw Conor McGovern's shot only half-smothered at the near post by keeper Saphiris with Daniel Daley being quick and sharp to tap in the rebound on the goal-line and put us 2-0 up.

That saw the game change dramatically as Enfield Crusaders seemed to go to pieces after that, and especially once we brought on some fresh legs in the 61st minute with Tony King and Kris Spyrou coming on for Daniel Daley and Derek Dorward, who had both been struggling with slight injuries. In fact the wind started dying down slightly as well, so that certainly helped us, and we were given another big advantage in the 70th minute when one of Crusaders' better players was sent off for a second bookable offence after a foul on Tem Adil. In fact Referee Wildgoose actually showed a red card to **another** Crusaders' player a minute later (for dissent this time)...but he was already off the pitch having just been substituted ! (The red card was for 'mumbling something' derogatory about Mr. Wildgoose as he left the field !

They then had another player booked shortly afterwards for a wild challenge on Foysoh Ahmed, but we ignored all that to score a third goal in the 76th minute when Conor McGovern found himself unmarked at the far post to head in an excellent deep free-kick from Steve Cokell. McGovern though really should have had a hat-trick at least in this match, as the Enfield Crusaders defence was almost non-existent once they had gone two goals behind, but McGovern missed three great chances when he was clean through by blasting one shot high over the bar, being foiled by an excellent save by keeper Saphiris from another, and then being too slow to set himself up to shoot and allowing a defender to get back and make a challenge. Other players had chances to increase our lead as well though, particularly Tem Adil with a half-volley which went narrowly over the bar and Tony King with a bit of a scuffed shot straight at keeper Saphiris when 'clean through', but we were well happy to settle for a 3-0 win in the end after such a miserable time in recent months.

**'Murf's Alternative Report !!:** Murf did not play in this match as he was up in Liverpool watching Arsenal lose to Everton !

#### TREVOR HUGHES'S MANAGER'S REPORT

Sunday's match was a relegation 6 pointer against bottom of the table, Enfield Crusaders. There was the usual list of team changes due to unavailability but no last minute cry offs. I was short of defenders but Stuart Dorward reverted to sweeper with Clark Williams dropping to centre back from midfield and Bobby Randall playing at right back. This meant recalls into midfield for Foysoh Ahmed and Tem Adil who formed a central midfield partnership with Steve Cokell. Daniel Daley continued up front with Conor McGovern. The referee appointed for this game was Mr Wildgoose who we know from previous games and the 7 a side league to be the 'Graham Poll' of Sunday football. I was, therefore, able to warn my players to be on their best behaviour and accept all of his decisions without question. Inevitably, two Enfield Crusaders players were cautioned for dissent in the first half, one after just 4 minutes. A crucial decision went in our favour in the 7<sup>th</sup> minute when a push in Daniel Daley's back was spotted by Mr Wildgoose and the resulting penalty was despatched by Stuart Dorward. We comfortably held onto our lead until half time and were determined not to give it away like last week so there were no back passes today. Enfield Crusaders did start the second half on the attack but we scored a vital second when Conor's shot was touched onto the post and Daniel Daley scored from the rebound. One of Enfield Crusaders' midfielders then picked up a second yellow card followed by the red for a foul on Tem and left the field complaining that our two 'fat blokes' in midfield had been kicking him all game. He was obviously talking about Steve Cokell and, I presume, Tem! Another red card would have followed after more abuse aimed at Mr Wildgoose but the player had already been substituted so they continued with ten men. There was another yellow shortly afterwards for a foul on Foysoh and when Conor headed our third goal from Steve Cokell's cross the game was over. We created several more chances with Conor missing a couple and hitting the bar but we were very happy with a 3-0 win.