

Sunday 21st March 2010 (FIRST MATCH OF DOUBLE-HEADER... 30 Minutes each way)

Waltham Sunday League Division One Match at Hazelwood Sports Ground

EDMONTON ROVERS	2	FLAMSTEAD END	1	HT 1-0
McGovern (15 mins.), Daley (60 mins.)		Swift (45 mins.)		

EDMONTON ROVERS LINE-UP (with Marks out of 10): Darryl JOHNSON (GK) (7); Terry MOORE (7); Alan BARNARD (7); Martin LOVEDAY (7); Tony KING (6½); Rob BROWN (7); Danny SMITH (7); Steve COKELL (7); Stuart DORWARD (6½); Conor MCGOVERN (7); Daniel DALEY (7) **Sub.:** Kris SPYROU (6½) (On for King 39 Mins.)

FLAMSTEAD END'S LINE-UP: Gary STEVENS (GK); David RUSSELL, Paul BOURKE, Lee SIMMONS, Michael LOCK; Patrick QUINN, Antony HARRISON, David LOCK, Daniel REEVE; Danny SWIFT, Louis HART
Subs.: Stefano DiPIAZZA (On for Quinn at Half-Time), Dean LEWIS (On for Hart at Half-Time), Kevin BOURKE (On for Simmons 42 mins.)

Referee: Ian ANDREWS

Weather Conditions: Mainly Sunny

Attendance: 10

Report (by Laurence Hughes): As I 'predicted', we only managed to find a squad of 12 for this Double-Header against in-form Flamstead End after having 'too many' players for our 90-minute match against a much weaker Great Eastern side the week before. That was thanks to three players in Danny Hagan, Terry Brown & Jim Arrowsmith preferring to go away with their WAGS for the weekend and then, not for the first time this season (and it won't be the last), Vernon 'Kizza' Nxumalo dropping out late on Saturday night because he had 'no money'. However, at least we fielded more-or-less a full-strength starting line-up, even though midfielder Tony King was suffering from a stomach bug and sweeper Alan Barnard had sunk 9 pints of lager overnight...from what he could remember!

Flamstead End though had only suffered three defeats all season, with only one of them (a 5-2 League Senior Cup loss to AFC Cheshunt way back in September) being a genuine one, as they went out their County Cup only on penalties in the Quarter-Final, while their shock 4-2 defeat to Great Eastern in Division One a couple of weeks ago was down to Great Eastern playing a 'quality Senior Saturday' player as a ringer. (Flamstead End will be awarded those points at the next League Management Committee Meeting, thereby making them technically still unbeaten in Division One coming into this match). In fact four of their results so far this season made alarming reading for us (a 2-2 draw against Cheshunt Corinthians, a 3-1 win against AFC Cheshunt, a 1-0 win against East Herts and a 4-0 win against Enfield Royals), as we had been totally outclassed by those four sides! They also turned up with a full-strength squad apart from one player hobbling about on crutches who had come along to give his team-mates some support...something that none of our players would ever think of doing, probably because they would be left with the babysitting duties at home if they had a broken leg?, but maybe Flamstead End's idea of having an organised team photo before the kick-off was not the best thing to do, as when we did that against Spenny Rangers earlier this season, we fell flat on our faces as everybody had an absolute 'mare' in a game that we lost 3-0 without managing a single shot on target.

Indeed the team photo certainly appeared to be a jinx for our opponents as we really came out of the blocks and played superbly for the first 20 minutes or so and created several good chances, but we only had one goal to show for it when Conor McGovern rifled in a first-time shot from Daniel Daley's lay-off in the 15th minute. Not that I saw where the ball went as there were too many players in the way and it was nestling in the net well before I realised where it had gone and panned the camera round to find it. Sorry Conor, but it won't look good on You Tube I'm afraid. I need a higher 'gantry'.

At that stage, Flamstead End looked nothing like the side that their form suggested, but then strangely, a couple of minor Refereeing decisions that didn't go their way seemed to fire them up rather than whoever was their Manager appearing to do so, and it was a much more even game after that. We probably just about deserved to go off at Half-Time 1-0 up, but we came under much more pressure in the Second Half. Fortunately, our one and only substitute Kris Spyrou was an ideal replacement for the ailing Tony King on the right-hand side of midfield, so we were still able to compete well when he came on in the 39th minute, but Flamstead End scored an

increasingly inevitable equaliser in the 45th minute when forward Danny Swift out-jumped Conor McGovern to head in a free-kick, although keeper Darryl Johnson thought it was going wide and watch it sail in at the far post.

At that stage it looked as if Flamstead End's energy and fitness would prove decisive, but D.J. made a number of good saves to keep us on level terms.

However, we had some good chances on the break ourselves, as we were fielding our most effective front three (for a change) in McGovern, Daley and skipper Stuart Dorward, and Flamstead End certainly didn't look anywhere near as solid at the back as our last Double-Header opponents AFC Cheshunt. That saw us finally take one of those chances to go 2-1 up in the very last minute of normal time when Daley ran through to score with a good low cross-shot into the bottom corner after giving several defenders a problem with his pace. We still had work to do to gain the three points and inflict the first genuine League defeat on Flamstead End this season though, as it needed another excellent save by D.J. and a clearance off the line by Kris Spyrou, both in Injury Time, to see us through for an excellent victory.

Only one problem though...we had to play another 60 minutes!



TREVOR HUGHES'S MANAGER'S REPORT

After naming four substitutes last week we could only manage to find 12 players for a double header against Flamstead End. Despite the missing players we were still fielding a strong team and took the lead after 15 minutes when Conor McGovern was set up by his strike partner Daniel Daley and struck a good low shot into the net. Our opponents were previously unbeaten in the league and started to put us under pressure in the second half. Darryl Johnson made some good saves but had no chance with the equaliser from a header into the top corner from a free kick with 15 minutes to go. Both teams were looking for a winner and Daniel Daley was the last minute hero as he ran onto a through ball to slot the ball past the keeper. There was still time for an excellent save by Darryl and a clearance off the line by Kris Spyrou from the resulting corner.