

Thursday 30th April 2009 (6.30.p.m. Kick-Off...45 Minutes each way)

Mercury Waltham Sunday League Division One Match at Waltham Cross Playing Fields

EDMONTON ROVERS	4	NORTHMET (RIVERSIDE)	1	HT 2-1
T.Brown (6 mins.), Hagan (31 mins.), Garwood (Own Goal) (50 mins.), McGovern (76 mins.)		Adil (Own Goal) (7 mins.)		

EDMONTON ROVERS LINE-UP (with Marks out of 10): Tim BEEDEN (GK) (6); Terry MOORE (8), Alan BARNARD (8), Martin LOVEDAY (*In Goal after 58 mins.*) (8); Tony KING (7), Tem ADIL (6½), Danny HAGAN (8), Scott JENKINS (7); Terry BROWN (8); Conor McGOVERN (7½), Jamie MARTIN (6½) **Subs.:** Danny GREEN (*On for Beeden 58 mins.*) (7), Gavin MARDELL (*On for Hagan 81 mins.*) (6)

NORTHMET (RIVERSIDE)'S LINE-UP: Lewis HOWARD (GK); Jamie WEBB, Martin GARWOOD, Gareth McGIRR, Jamie JONES; Gary STEVENS, Peter STYLIANOU, Aidan MULLALLY, Paul GROOME; Clayton MILLS, Alan CHATTERTON **Sub.:** Paul FLYNN (*On for Mills 68 mins.*)

Referee: Ian ANDREWS

Weather Conditions: Sunny

Attendance: 11

Report (by Laurence Hughes):

As usual for a midweek fixture we had plenty of players volunteering to play in this, our final game of the season, even though it was a rather meaningless match with both sides destined to finish in mid-table. As always though, a large number of players then decided to drop out within 24 hours of the kick-off due to injuries or work & family commitments, the 'culprits' on this occasion being Steve Cokell (Work), Clark Williams (Babysitting), Vernon 'Kizza' Nxumalo (Ankle Injury), Stuart Dorward (Ankle Injury), Jim Arrowsmith (Family commitments) & Rob Brown (Fractured foot), while



Darryl Johnson, Daniel Daley & Paul Woolston were already unavailable through work commitments and had not been named in the squad anyway.

Despite those nine absentees all being key players, we still managed to field a squad of 13 and a decent starting eleven thanks to a rare appearance from Scott Jenkins (because he knew half of Northmet's players !?) and also Terry Brown & Jamie Martin, who fortunately both live close enough to Waltham Cross Playing Fields to be able to get a bus then walk there. (If we had been playing this match at Hazelwood, they would have had to drop out as well, as they don't drive and have to rely on Rob Brown for a lift every time). With Waltham Cross Playing Fields being situated right next to Waltham Cross railway station, it also meant several players were able to get there from work in the City easily in time for the 6.30.p.m. kick-off and we were therefore able to get a full 90 minutes in as nobody arrived late...unlike the last midweek match against East Herts.

The only slight concern for us as we kicked-off was in the goalkeeping position where Simon Jackson (and others) were also unavailable in addition to first-choice keeper Darryl Johnson, meaning a first Rovers appearance for 15 years for one of our Life Vice-Presidents [Tim Beeden](#), whose career as an outfield player (and a very good one at that) was cut short in his early 20's when he dislocated a knee playing for Norsemen. Tim therefore became our 36th player used this season...yes, I know...it's a ridiculous amount !...but he had been playing regularly on Saturdays as a goalkeeper for Jim Arrowsmith's Church League Team and doing well by all accounts, so it was a worthwhile idea to put him in goal so that Martin Loveday could continue to play alongside Terry Moore and Alan Barnard in what was by now a first-choice and very much in-form back three. However, Beeden then went and dislocated his finger in the very first minute by trying to stop an aimless long, high ball going out for a goal-kick (and giving away a corner in the process), and although Alan Barnard nonchalantly snapped it back into place without so much as a flinch from Beeden...presumably a regular occurrence at Edmonton Cricket Club during the Summer then ?...he was obviously going to think twice about actually trying to save anything fired at him thereafter. Manager Trevor Hughes decided to take a risk and leave him on though, rather than take Loveday out of defence that early when we had no other 'proper' defenders available, and as it turned out, that was very much the right decision, as Northmet were on a poor run of form and had several players missing, although they were

not exactly fielding a **weak** side with all of their starting eleven being regulars, several of whom had torn our defence apart in previous matches during the past three or four seasons.

We managed to take the lead after just six minutes though, when Terry Brown ran onto Jamie Martin's through ball just outside the area and ploughed his way through defender Martin Garwood's challenge to drill a fiercely-struck shot into the roof of the net. However, we then conceded a really silly goal just a minute later to allow Northmet to draw level when Scott Jenkins deflected a corner onto Alan Barnard's chest and the ball bobbled into the net off the ample stomach of Tem Adil on the goal-line. (See picture top right). The rest of the First Half saw us mainly playing in our usual 'rusty' way as we always do when we have not played for 'weeks', but Northmet were no better and we just about deserved a 2-1 Half-Time lead which Danny Hagan gave us in the 31st minute by side-footing home Conor McGovern's low cross after an excellent move.

As usual, we had a good positive team-talk at Half-Time and then played much better immediately after the break, and we went 3-1 up in the 50th minute when another good move saw Man-Of-The-Match Danny Hagan get over a dangerous cross from the right that forced Northmet defender Martin Garwood to turn the ball into his own

net under pressure from Jamie Martin. Manager Hughes then thought that was good enough and decided to bring off Tim Beeden in the 58th minute before Northmet managed to get in a shot on target at his dislocated finger, with Danny Green therefore coming on to play in attack, Jamie Martin moving into the attacking midfield 'hole' position, Terry Brown moving to the left of midfield, Scott Jenkins playing in defence and Martin Loveday going in goal...Loveday requesting to do so after apparently being 'knackered' from putting the nets up before the match where despite his height he couldn't reach the crossbars properly to wrap the velcro tie-ups round and had to 'really stretch'! Yes, there are no hooks on the crossbars or



any stepladders about at **this** place...where Darryl Johnson once let in a silly goal over his head because the crossbar was allegedly a 'foot too high'!?

Those changes saw Northmet get on top for a spell though, as Terry Brown really should have been left in the centre of midfield rather than isolated out on the left, but Northmet's finishing was poor...as it had been all match, and they let us off the hook. However, Conor McGovern was also having an off-day in front of goal for us as he too squandered a number of good chances, but at least he took one in the 76th minute to give us a 4-1 lead and make the game safe with a close-range left-footed finish after good work by Danny Green. That confirmed McGovern as the [Club Top Goalscorer](#) for the [5th season in the row](#), no doubt to the frustration of injured skipper Stuart Dorward, who had been ahead of him up until the last three matches, while the final scoreline also gave us a [7th-placed finish](#) and a level goal difference if a League decision on the 14th May on our abandoned match against Cheshunt (Sunday) goes our way (which it eventually did...Ed). That means it is our best season since getting relegated to Division One five years ago, but at the start of this season we were expecting to win something and/or get promotion such is the strength of our squad, and once again it was long-term injuries and family commitments that put paid to that.

Oh well. One of these days ?

TREVOR HUGHES'S MANAGER'S REPORT

Our last match of the season was another midweek fixture against Northmet. As usual there were numerous team changes with a first appearance of the season for Tim Beeden in goal and the return of Terry Brown, Jamie Martin, Dan Green and Scott Jenkins who had all missed recent matches. We managed a squad of 13 and again it was a strong starting XI despite the absence of many regulars. We got off to an excellent start after just 6 minutes when Terry Brown did well to get through the Northmet defence to fire home. Unfortunately we conceded a rare goal from a corner just a minute later to give Northmet an equaliser. Scott Jenkins deflected the ball onto Alan Barnard's chest and Tem Adil couldn't clear it off the line. I suppose that if we had been marking man to man no-one would have touched it as there was no Northmet player near the ball. We retook the lead after 31 minutes when Danny Hagan finished from Conor McGovern's cross after an excellent move. Scott Jenkins cleared a header off the line to keep our 2-1 lead at half time. Another good move early in the second half saw Danny Hagan's cross turned into his own net by a Northmet defender under pressure from Jamie Martin. With the cushion of a two goal lead I was able to substitute Tim Beeden who had managed to dislocate a finger with his first touch of the ball but had played on without needing to use that hand again thanks to some poor finishing by Northmet and good defending by us. Martin Loveday went in goal and substitute Dan Green set up our fourth goal for Conor McGovern to confirm another top goalscorer trophy. The final score of 4-1 left us in mid table with 30 points and a level goal difference. This is our best season since we were relegated from the Premier Division and hopefully gives us something to build on for next season.