

Sunday 29th February 2004

Mercury Waltham Sunday League Premier Division Match at Enfield Playing Fields (Pitch 16)

SPORTING CLUB TOTTENHAM	1	EDMONTON ROVERS	2	HT 0-1
Smith (51 mins.)		S.Dorward (4 mins.), S.Cokell (56 mins.)		

Sporting Club Tottenham's Line-Up: Paul MITCHELL (GK); Andrew WILLIAMS, Jean-Luc DA SILVA, Richard DILL; Mark FRASER, Russell Mc,PERSON, Chris Mc,NEILL, Alex BENJAMIN, Mason RANDERWALLA; Jermaine SMITH, Ashley SANDIFORD **Subs.:** None

Edmonton Rovers Line-Up (with Marks out of 10): Darryl JOHNSON (GK) (6½); Chidi IBEKWEM (6½), Stuart DORWARD (7), Paul WOOLSTON (7), Tony SPELLER (6½); Leon Mc,KENZIE-Mc,KAY (7), Brian KAMUTEKU (6½), Eric IBEKWEM (6½), Derek DORWARD (6½); Conor Mc,GOVERN (6½), Steve COKELL (6½) **Subs.:** None

Referee: Denis COVENTRY

Weather Conditions: Sunny, but Cold

Attendance: 7



Report: With Sporting Club Tottenham lying at the bottom of the Premier Division table, but capable of catching us and dragging us down there if they had *won* this match, we were rather annoyed and frustrated when during the week Marco & Paul Ellerker both pulled out through family commitments, Peter Sutton was ruled out with a broken nose, Gary Cokell declared he had to work this Sunday and then on the morning of the match both Steve & John Beasley dropped out because of illness...although Steve was stuck in a snowdrift in Royston anyway !? With Robin Pryke and Chris 'Nugget' Beeden still showing no signs of returning, it meant we only had nine First Team squad members available, so Leon Mc,Kenzie-Mc,Kay and Brian Kamuteku were therefore dragged away at the last minute from the Reserve Team's match over on Pitch 12, much to their disappointment, while we only had Paul Rebairo to name as a substitute...although he didn't even bother to get changed after turning up half-way through the First Half as he was suffering from

high blood pressure, vertigo and a hamstring injury anyway !

Fortunately though, Sporting were only fielding a bare eleven as well and there was no sign of their usual pre-match warm up half-an-hour before the kick-off *this* time ! Indeed they looked in a bit of disarray at the back when we took the lead after just 4 minutes when keeper Paul Mitchell and skipper Mason Randerwalla got in each others' way at the near post from Steve Cokell's inswinging corner, leaving the ball to fall at the feet of Leon Mc,Kenzie-Mc,Kay who then squared it to Stuart Dorward for an easy tap-in on the goal-line.

We then should have made it 2-0 in the 23rd minute when Dorward came up from the back again to set up Steve Cokell with a cross from the left-wing, but the ball was sliced well wide from 6 yards with only keeper Mitchell to beat...a terrible miss, but presumably Cokell's attempted use of his right foot and a bobbly pitch was to blame ? Eric Ibekwem then managed to test keeper Mitchell with a close-range shot shortly afterwards though, while Brian Kamuteku started to get more confident on his competitive First Team debut in the midfield holding role with the 'Vieira impersonations' that he has been showing for the Reserve Team so far this season coming to the fore.

However, Sporting then started getting on top towards the end of the First Half, with forward Jermaine Smith missing a couple of clear-cut chances which came about because our defenders were all telling Brian Kamuteku to cover in different positions at the same time (thereby leaving him utterly confused), while it didn't help that Eric Ibekwem suddenly started to suffer from a disease peculiar to Edmonton Rovers F.C. named 'Osborn-itus'...whereby he kept calling Brian 'Barry' non-stop for the rest of the match ! In fact that also started off Leon Mc,Kenzie-Mc,Kay, who was calling Darryl Johnson 'keeper' and seemingly forgetting everybody else's names, while various people started calling Eric 'Chidi' and Chidi 'Eric', although that was presumably as a piss-take !? In addition to that, the First Half was rather ruined as a spectacle by numerous fouls, with about 30 of them being committed by either Chidi or Eric Ibekwem, who were too fired-up against their old club and guilty of several clumsy challenges which showed a bad lack of technique in the art of tackling rather than anything malicious....although Eric did actually end up getting himself booked late in the Second Half for one foul too many. In fact Paul Rebairo (on the touchline) was watching more of the Dysons Rovers v. Enfield Rosaneri Division Four match on the next pitch than *our* match as that was apparently a 'much better standard' !

Indeed, we started the Second Half badly as well, and Darryl Johnson had already had to make an excellent save from Sporting forward Ashley Sandiford before Sporting equalised in the 51st minute after Tony Speller sliced a free-kick straight out of play and then did a feeble challenge from the resulting quickly-taken throw-in which allowed the useful-looking Sandiford to play a dangerous through ball that Johnson hesitated in coming for, leaving Jermaine Smith to eventually capitalise and tap the ball into an empty net.

Fortunately though, we managed to hit back and regain the lead just five minutes later when a quick break out of defence by Leon Mc,Kenzie-Mc,Kay resulted in him setting up Derek Dorward for a cross which keeper Mitchell and defender Richard Dill made a mess of under pressure from Conor Mc,Govern, leaving Steve Cokell with an easy left-footed finish

from inside the 6-yard box.

That goal obviously gave us a lift and we then played really well for the rest of the match and should have won by more, but Steve Cokell (twice), Paul Woolston, Derek Dorward, Eric Ibekwem & Conor McGovern all missed further clear-cut chances in the Second Half and we nearly paid the price for that in Injury Time when Sporting midfielder Alex Benjamin hit the post from a half-chance after we failed to deal with a 'desperation' long ball into the area.

However, we held on for a deserved and vital three points which more or less guarantees that Sporting will finish below us and just one more win from our last five matches should see us safe from relegation.