

Sunday 1st March 2009 (FIRST MATCH OF DOUBLE-HEADER...30 Minutes each way)

Mercury Waltham Sunday League Division One Match at Wormley Playing Fields (Pitch 6)

TURNFORD GEESE	0	EDMONTON ROVERS	0	HT 0-0

TURNFORD GEESE'S LINE-UP: Rob DODD (GK); Dave ARMSTRONG, Neal DODD, Chris WICKS, Tony VULLO; Matt CULLY, Peter ENEFER, Chris CEDRONE, Phil BAKER; Paul SIMPSON, Lee ELLERBECK
Subs.: Jamie FEELEY (On for Baker at Half-Time), Craig NORRIS (On for Vullo 38 mins.)

EDMONTON ROVERS LINE-UP (with Marks out of 10): Darryl JOHNSON (GK) (7); Terry MOORE (8), Alan BARNARD (8), Martin LOVEDAY (8); Tony KING (6½), Rob BROWN (8), Danny HAGAN (8), Jim ARROWSMITH (6½); Vernon 'Kizza' NXUMALO (6½); Conor McGOVERN (7), Steve COKELL (7) **Subs.:** Jamie MARTIN (Not Used), Gavin MARDELL (Not Used)

Referee: Ian ANDREWS

Weather Conditions: Cloudy

Attendance: 17

Report (by Laurence Hughes):

Thanks to a frozen pitch for our Home fixture against Turnford Geese at Hazelwood back in December, we found ourselves having to play a Double-Header for the first time this season, but at Wormley Playing Fields instead, which was obviously a bit frustrating. Although skipper Stuart Dorward and forward Danny Green were both missing this fixture to go and watch Spurs in the Carling Cup Final at Wembley, playing at Hazelwood would not have made any difference to them, as getting there early for a 'piss-up' was far more important, especially for Stuart thanks to the corporate hospitality on offer !



We also had Paul Woolston (Babysitting), Terry Brown (Away for the weekend) and Tem Adil (Ankle injury) all missing as well though, so bearing in mind we were playing two one-hour matches, we ideally needed a squad of 16-18 players and therefore took a chance by naming Daniel Daley, Ramel Palmer, Paul Amico, Scott Jenkins and Aron White amongst them. Needless to say, none of them bothered to turn up (or even get in touch in some cases), and we were left with just 13 to last the two matches, but at least they were all good players and capable of getting a result, even though Turnford Geese were a known good side (thanks to me having filmed them winning numerous Cup Finals over the past few seasons...while we have 'done nothing' of course !).

One worry for us though was the number of players warning me in the changing rooms after our 2-0 defeat to Abbey Youth Old Boys the week before that they would be attending all-night parties before this match. Danny Hagan was one of them, but thankfully he turned up in a reasonably fit state. After a week of trying to remember who the other two players were though, I soon found out when they plonked their bags on the touchline next to the camera just before the kick-off, as the stench of Brown(s) Ale was truly overpowering. Jamie Martin was then named as a substitute for the first match by Manager Trevor Hughes (because of that ?), but Rob (Brown) started in the centre of midfield as normal (with Danny Hagan), when if others had turned up, maybe he might have been left out to sober up first ? Having said that, it was actually defender Martin Loveday who looked the worst for wear...as if he had been sleeping rough all night ?

As usual once the season is dead for us and we are out of contention to win anything, the majority of our players are suddenly injury-free and able to play most weeks, and with everybody now getting used to our current 3-4-1-2 formation and only two changes having to be made to the starting line-up from the previous week (instead of the normal seven or eight), we looked comfortable defensively straight away, despite Turnford Geese fielding a full-strength side in this first match and being very much in contention to win the Division One title. The First Half was fairly even in terms of chances created though, but neither goalkeeper was really tested as both sides rather cancelled each other out on what was a small tight pitch.

It certainly looked as if we would go behind after seven minutes of the Second Half though, when Rob Brown, who had been charging around the pitch like a madman, hacked down Turnford Geese's Second Half substitute Jamie Feeley just inside the area with a mistimed challenge to give away an obvious penalty. Thankfully though, Darryl Johnson guessed the right way and made a good save low down to his right. We did have another lucky escape eight minutes from time though when a spectacular long-range volley from Geese's other substitute Craig Norris crashed off the crossbar with Darryl well beaten, but we created some reasonable chances as well and defended

superbly to hang on for a valuable point.

Here's one strange statistic...We have only ever had eight goal-less draws in the 20 years that we have been in the Mercury Waltham Sunday League, and the very first one was on exactly the same pitch at Wormley Playing Fields (in our first-ever MWSL game in fact, against Eleanor Cross). Hopefully we can keep on improving defensively to keep a few more clean sheets, as it is certainly not something we are renowned for !

[CLICK HERE](#) to visit Turnford Geese's Club Website.

TREVOR HUGHES'S MANAGER'S REPORT

After a good performance last week we were hoping for a larger squad this week for our double header against Turnford Geese. However, by Sunday morning we were down to a squad of 13. Fortunately, 10 of those had played last week with Alan Barnard, Jim Arrowsmith and Gavin Mardell replacing Paul Woolston, Danny Green and Scott Jenkins. This meant that I was able to keep the same formation that was successful last week and the first half of the first game was definitely one of our better performances as a result. Although it was 0-0 we had lots of possession against a team who Laurence had informed us were one of the stronger sides in our division. In the second half we could have gone behind after a penalty was awarded for a badly timed tackle by Rob Brown but Darryl Johnson made an excellent save. Turnford also hit the bar from a spectacular volley but apart from these chances we defended superbly and definitely deserved at least a point as the game finished 0-0.