Sunday 6th October 2002					
Mercury Waltham Sunday League Senior Cup First Round Match at Hazelwood Sports Ground					
EDMONTON ROVERS	**4**	**CHASESIDE OLD BOYS**	**2**		HT 3-0
Bromfield (17 mins), *S.Dorward (24, 72 mins),* *P.Ellerker (38 mins)*		*Barnes (57 mins),* *Darren Cooksey (63 mins)*			

Edmonton Rovers Line-Up (with Marks out of 10): Shaun O'NEILL (GK) (7½); Robin PRYKE (7), Tony SPELLER (6½), Paul WOOLSTON (7½), Steve BEASLEY (6); Paul ELLERKER (6), Stuart DORWARD (7½), Derek DORWARD (7), John BEASLEY (6); George BROMFIELD (6½), Conor Mc,GOVERN (7½) ***Subs:*** Eric IBEKWEM (7), Chidi IBEKWEM (6)

Chaseside Old Boys Line-Up: Stavros DROUSHIOTIS (GK); Bob MacMILLAN, Nick HUBBARD, Geoff HEWITT, David COOKSEY; Danny ELBAZ, Nathan BULLEN, Mario SALOMONE, Neil BARNES; Gary BULL, Darren COOKSEY ***Subs.:*** Scott CLARKE, Robert SANDERSON

Referee: Martin DE LA FUENTE	***Weather Conditions:*** Dry & Fairly Sunny	***Attendance:*** 20

Report: Despite the continued absence of last season's leading scorer Steve Cokell (Groin Strain) and the late cry-off of current Player of the Year Marco Ellerker (Family Commitments), we were still the favourites to win this match and progress through to the Second Round, mainly because we had convincingly beaten Chaseside Old Boys 5-0 the last time we played them back in March and also because we are now a Premier Division side.

However, Chaseside Old Boys made it a much tougher game than we expected as they fielded more or less the same side that beat us 6-2 earlier on last season but had also strengthened their line-up with the addition of forward Gary Bull....who was apparently claiming to be the same Gary Bull who played for Barnet and Nottingham Forest (amongst others) in the 90's and is the cousin of Wolves legend Steve Bull, although this link suggests otherwise ! Whoever he was though, he was keeping Robert Sanderson (their 'four-goal hero' of that 6-2 victory) out of the side and we were rather grateful for that...as we were for their debutant keeper Stavros Droushiotis gifting George Bromfield our opening goal after 17 minutes by fumbling a harmless looking through ball straight into his path ! We then increased our lead in the 24th minute when Stuart Dorward tapped in on the goal-line from Conor Mc,Govern's low cross-shot and we made it 3-0 just before Half-Time when keeper Droushiotis made another howler by completely missing John Beasley's cross, thereby allowing George Bromfield to get in a free header which ended up at the feet of Paul Ellerker for another simple goal-line tap-in. That goal was actually missed by stand-in Manager Russell 'Tarby' Beeden, who was presumably looking for some paracetamols at the time, courtesy of a bad hangover from his usual marathon pub drinking session the day/evening/night before !

It was uncanny how the Chaseside Old Boys keeper's First-Half performance had mirrored our *own* keeper Stavros (Elia)'s display when we lost 4-0 to Upshire Coach & Horses in our first game of the season, but unlike our performance in that game, Chaseside Old Boys were still creating numerous chances and were showing the sort of form that had seen them beat St.Mary's 4-2 at Hazelwood the week before in a Division One match. Indeed they really came out fired up for the Second Half and gradually wore us down to pull the score back to 3-2 with two goals in six minutes mid-way through the Second Half, the first of them from their main dangerman Neil Barnes with a long range shot which zipped across the unusually shorn Hazelwood 'turf' and into the bottom corner. (Whatever happened to the usual two-foot long grass when we needed it ?!). Their second goal was also a good goal with Darren Cooksey expertly controlling and finishing off Barnes's 'trademark' long diagonal ball, but they needed to be good finishes to beat Shaun O'Neill, who was starting to produce a few heroics in goal for us in his first game back after a lengthy holiday. Of course Chaseside Old Boys were undoubtedly helped in their comeback by the fact that they had been playing every week since the season started whereas we had only played two games in five weeks. In addition to that, quite a few players from our starting line-up had been unable to play in any Pre-Season Friendlies or get themselves fit by any other means due to continuous holidays, family & social commitments or niggling injuries and those that had managed to go down the gym or 'do a bit of running' (for a bus ?!) had then invariably gone and wasted the effort by joining 'Tarby' down the pub 'all day' on Saturday...or in John Beasley's case get drunk at a Wedding Reception (which at least he had the credit to admit). That meant we spent the whole of the Second Half just piling virtually all of our players into our own penalty area to block numerous shots...some of them off the line !...as we weren't fit enough to compete in a midfield battle for a full 90 minutes. However, we still managed to create some good chances on the break, especially when substitute Eric Ibekwem came on for John Beasley on the hour mark and it was Eric who produced an excellent run down the left to help set up a sweeping move for our fourth goal in the 72nd minute which Stuart Dorward finished off with a close-range finish to make the game safe for us.

Once again then, it was another victory in the absence of Manager Trevor Hughes (who was on holiday in Atlantic City for this game), but certainly a rare First Round victory in a League Cup competition. Maybe our luck is changing and we can reach a Cup Final this time ?