

Sunday 16th February 2003

Mercury Waltham Sunday League Premier Division Match at Hazelwood Sports Ground

EDMONTON ROVERS **3** **ENFIELD RANGERS OLD BOYS** **0** HT 0-0

D.Dorward (53 mins),
Kelly (Own Goal) (71 mins),
Harrison (85 mins)

Edmonton Rovers Line-Up (with Marks out of 10): Darryl JOHNSON (GK) (7); Robin PRYKE (6½), Stuart DORWARD (6), Paul WOOLSTON (7), Tony SPELLER (6½); Derek DORWARD (6½), Marco ELLERKER (6½), Paul ELLERKER (7½), Conor McGOVERN (6), John BEASLEY (6½); Steve COKELL (6½) **Subs:** Eric IBEKWEM (6), Lexton HARRISON (6½), Chidi IBEKWEM (6)

Enfield Rangers Old Boys Line-Up: Ian MITCHELL (GK); Dave TOWNSEND Snr., Dean STUBER, Derek KELLY; Gavin BIGNALL; Dave TOWNSEND Jnr., Javan SMITH, Andy LEADBITTER, Steve LIVERMORE Snr.; John MILLS; Paul CANAVAN **Subs:** None

Referee: Chris BEAMENT

Weather Conditions: Sunny & Dry

Attendance: 20

Report: When Enfield Rangers Old Boys finally took to the field 20 minutes late and with only 10 men, we seemed to just assume that we would end up with at least a 10-0 victory from this match, especially as their line-up included three players over the age of 50 and two others in their 40's ! However, despite us being able to name more or less a full-strength side with only midfielder Chris 'Nugget' Beeden missing, we just couldn't get going in the First Half as we suffered from a lack of motivation after originally anticipating a good close game against a side who on their day are as good if not better than even the likes of Brimsdown Rovers & Percival. Unlike in previous seasons, 'Nugget' was the only one of our players who decided to go away with his girlfriend for a 'Valentine's Weekend' this time and it was the *rest* of the League that suffered from that excuse on *this* occasion with Royal Blues & Broxbourne Rangers Old Boys being unable to field a team at all (against Percival & Brimsdown Rovers respectively) and numerous referees also crying off for the same reason, leaving several postponements in other Divisions. In fact, Enfield Rangers Old Boys came perilously close to 'Non-Fulfilling' this fixture as well, but they managed to scrape up eleven in the end...the last of their players (forward Paul Canavan) turning up 16 minutes into the First Half. By that time we had already been frustrated by a combination of well-organised defending, some good saves by keeper Ian Mitchell and most of all the state of the pitch, which was in an ideal condition for growing potatoes but certainly not for passing a football about on ! In fact the pitch was so churned up that some passes actually ended up veering off at a 90° angle off various massive divots instead of finding their intended target and at that stage both sides were getting increasingly annoyed and therefore had a justifiable complaint about the Enfield Council Pitch Inspector/groundsman responsible for deeming the pitch playable...except that he was actually *playing* in this match as Enfield Rangers Old Boys' Right-Back !!!

However, by Half-Time we realised that those sort of conditions were something we were likely to encounter for the rest of the season and that we would have to start adapting by getting in more challenges and just grinding out a win...even if it meant the spectators on the touchline (including Percival's players) were bored stiff watching it. We were therefore a lot more focused in the Second Half and Derek Dorward finally gave us the lead in the 53rd minute when he rounded keeper Ian Mitchell and blasted the ball into an empty net after being allowed to play on when he may have been in an offside position when the ball was played, although there was some confusion regarding whether the ball was last played by John Beasley or Enfield Rangers Old Boys defender Dave Townsend Snr. (See our [Video Clip Of The Week](#)). Not surprisingly, Enfield Rangers Old Boys many veterans then started tiring as the Second Half went on whereas we were able to bring on three substitutes at various stages, and it was shortly after Eric Ibekwem came on for the injured Conor McGovern that we went 2-0 up as Rangers defender Derek Kelly turned Steve Cokell's low cross into his own net at the far post. It was then time for Lexton Harrison to come on and notch yet another goal against weak opposition in an effort to win the Top Goalscorer Award this season (much to the annoyance of Steve Cokell, Derek Dorward & Conor McGovern no doubt ?) as he found himself in a one-on-one with keeper Mitchell in the 85th minute to fire the ball in low and hard from close range after taking advantage of some comical defending, thereby giving us a 3-0 victory and our third win in a row.

Although it wasn't a particularly entertaining game to watch (especially as the weather was absolutely freezing as well !), it was good to actually play a match for the fifth week in a row and we also had another bonus in not losing a Match Ball over a wall this time...for about the first time in our last 10 matches at Hazelwood !?