

**Sunday 4th August 2002**

Pre-Season Friendly Match (for the Tony Scoates Memorial Trophy) at the Theobalds Park Country Club, Cheshunt

**EVEREST** **3** **EDMONTON ROVERS** **0** HT 2-0

Baxter (18, 68 mins.),  
Reeve (37 mins.)

**Everest's Line-Up:** Mark DYER (GK); Bobby RANDALL, Alex LEONARD, Andrew WARMERDAM, Andy BRACE; Richard BATES, Jim PEARCE, Matt CRAWLEY, Paul MORRISON; Dave BAXTER, Scott YATES **Subs.:** Justin REEVE, Jamie STOREY, Dean BATES, Martin COX, Neil COYTE, Bill WHEELER

**Edmonton Rovers Line-Up (with Marks out of 10):** Shaun O'NEILL (GK) ( 6 ); Paul REBAIRO ( 6 ), Robin PRYKE ( 7 ), Tony SPELLER ( 7 ), Steve BEASLEY ( 6 ); Paul ELLERKER ( 6½ ), Conor McGOVERN ( 6 ), Marco ELLERKER ( 6½ ), Eric IBEKWEM ( 6½ ) Lee OSBORN ( 6 ); George BROMFIELD ( 6 ) **Subs.:** Chidi IBEKWEM ( 6 ), Lexton HARRISON ( 6 ), Stuart DORWARD ( 6½ ), Derek DORWARD ( 6 ), Chris BEEDEN ( 7 )

**Referee:** Jim HOCKNEY

**Weather Conditions:** Cloudy but Dry

**Attendance:** 39

**Report:** It had been mentioned during the week leading up to this match that our 4-0 win against Hinton Rangers the previous Sunday was such a good victory that it should be included in our 'Best Ever Performances' section, mainly on the basis that it was achieved without six of our first-choice players. With three of them (Steve Beasley, Conor McGovern & Derek Dorward) returning to the squad for this game then, we were expecting to do just as well or even better against a side one Division lower, especially on the 'bowling green' of a pitch that would normally suit our style of play. However, newly-promoted Division Two side Everest really brought us back down to earth with a deserved victory in which they stifled our attack and caused our defence all sorts of problems, particularly in the First Half in which their comparatively 'super-fit' side didn't give our players any time on the ball whatsoever and forced us into numerous mistakes...the worst one being committed by keeper Shaun O'Neill (of all people) after 18 minutes when he fumbled a harmless looking long ball at the feet of forward Dave Baxter, who was left with an easy tap-in on the goal-line (albeit after Referee Jim Hockney allowed Baxter an advantage after O'Neill had rugby tackled him first !). That obviously gave Everest confidence and they increased their lead in the 37th minute when substitute Justin Reeve (a new signing ?) headed in a long throw at the near post after outjumping Robin Pryke.

A 'mass inquest' at Half-Time was only avoided by Manager Trevor Hughes using up all five minutes to give 'zonal marking' and tactical instructions to the five substitutes he was to bring on for the start of the Second Half and thankfully we did play better after that with Chris 'Nugget' Beeden doing well in a midfield holding role after eight years out with a knee injury ! Unfortunately though, Everest still managed to score a third goal in the 68th minute when Baxter scored his second with another free header (from a long free-kick this time) after his 'marker' Paul Rebairo lost concentration and 'let him go'. However, Shaun O'Neill was more or less a spectator after that...as indeed he had been even when Everest were on top as they squandered quite a few good chances by shooting wide, but Everest keeper Mark Dyer (Stuart Dorward's work colleague) was having the sort of inspired game that O'Neill had the week before, with Second-Half saves from our debut-making substitute Chidi Ibeqwem and Marco Ellerker (from a 30-yard yard 'piledriver' tipped onto the underside of the bar) being particularly impressive.

In fact we were probably a bit unlucky to lose by such a wide margin, but we didn't play well as a team and there were a number of possible reasons for that, one of which was the fact that we were actually playing for a Trophy...and when have we ever won anything !! Indeed Everest have been a bit of a 'jinx' team for us over the years, but they were certainly fired-up for this match having arrived at the venue an hour before kick-off to undertake an extensive Pre-Match warm-up routine, whereas most of our players were still struggling to get out of bed at that time because they were 'absolutely knackered' from the 'Paintball & Drinking' session(s) they had the day before to celebrate Steve Beasley's 'Stag Do' !

We also badly missed Paul Woolston's aerial ability in defence for this match, as he would undoubtedly have 'been there' to make a challenge for two of Everest's goals, while Steve Cokell and John Beasley (our other first-choice players who were missing this match) may have had a bit more of an idea of how to unlock Everest's defence than the numerous new (or returning) players we had to field.

Everest though, were certainly better than we expected, mainly because they were apparently fielding a much stronger side than they would normally do in a League match !