

**Sunday 28th July 2002**

Pre-Season Friendly Match at the Riverside Club, Turkey Street, Enfield

|                       |          |   |          |        |
|-----------------------|----------|---|----------|--------|
| <b>HINTON RANGERS</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>EDMONTON ROVERS</b>  | <b>4</b> | HT 0-1 |
|                       |          | <i>T.Bliss (Own Goal) (40 mins.),<br/>Bromfield (56 mins.),<br/>Odell (69 mins.),<br/>Rebairo (Pen.) (87 mins.)</i> |          |        |

**Hinton Rangers Line-Up:** Jason HENDERSON (GK); Kevin HUNT, Nick HENSON, Asa BURGESS; Terry BLISS; Hassan TASSAN, Lee GILDERSLEVE, Adrian ROBINSON, Shane O'BRIEN; Ian BLISS, Dean HARDING **Subs.:** Lee WAGNER, Matt WAGSTAFF, Danny WALKER, Anthony BUTTS

**Edmonton Rovers Line-Up (with Marks out of 10):** Shaun O'NEILL (GK) ( 8½ ); Paul REBAIRO ( 7 ), Robin PRYKE ( 8 ), Tony SPELLER ( 7½ ), Lee OSBORN ( 7 ); Gary ODELL ( 7 ), Paul ELLERKER ( 7 ), Marco ELLERKER ( 7½ ), Stuart DORWARD ( 7 ) Eric IBEKWEM ( 7½ ); George BROMFIELD ( 7½ ) **Subs:** Scott ROBERTSON ( 7 ), Lexton HARRISON ( 7 )

**Referee:** Phil GISSING

**Weather Conditions:** Very Hot & Sunny

**Attendance:** 50

**Report:** This game was arranged because we originally had only one first-choice player missing...the injured Steve Cokell, and with newly-promoted Division One side Hinton Rangers having a reputation of being as good as most Premier Division teams because of all the players in their squad who play in Senior Saturday football, we knew they would provide us with a good test as we approach our first season in the Premier Division. We were therefore really worried when five other first-choice players in Paul Woolston (Family/Social Commitment), Derek Dorward (Attending a Wedding in Bradford), Conor Mc Govern ("Too tired" after returning late from holiday the night before) and Steve & John Beasley (Family Commitments) all dropped out, as although Hinton Rangers apparently had anything between 2-4 regulars missing themselves (depending on which of their players or officials you talked to !) they still had a stronger-looking squad available on the day with four substitutes compared to our two.

However, all nine players who took part in this game for us who were not in Manager Trevor Hughes's first-choice starting eleven last season really played above themselves despite the 90° heat, leaving him with a possible selection problem when it comes to our first League match of the season !? That included new signings George Bromfield and Eric Ibekwem, who both looked extremely useful, Lexton Harrison, who was playing his first 11-a-side match for 16 months after a serious knee injury and most impressively of all, returning keeper Shaun O'Neill, who kept a clean sheet after making some outstanding saves while organising our 'makeshift' back four superbly with some sensible calling.

Despite the high temperature, the match was played at a furious pace with both teams playing a slick passing game and the First Half was very even but with few clear-cut chances until we sneaked a 1-0 Half-Time lead just before the break when Hinton Rangers defender Terry Bliss deflected Eric Ibekwem's cross into his own net at the near post.

The Second Half was a lot more open though as both sides tired in the heat, but we were a bit lucky to go into a 2-0 lead in the 56th minute when Gary Odell's corner hit George Bromfield on the backside in a crowded area and trickled over the line. However, we then scored the best goal of the game in the 69th minute when Odell ran on to Marco Ellerker's perfect through ball to beat keeper Henderson in a one-on-one for his first goal in 52 matches !, and then George Bromfield nearly scored a Goal Of The Season Winner already when he fired narrowly over with a spectacular overhead kick after Lexton Harrison's brilliant run and cross. It was then that Shaun O'Neill had to come into his own to stop Hinton Rangers getting back into the game as we suffered from a lack of substitutes with Lee Osborn having gone off to a Barbecue at half-time...this being caused by a delay to the kick-off of 45 minutes at the start of the match due to a double-booking of the pitch.

However, we still looked dangerous on the break with George Bromfield forcing a defender into conceding a penalty in the 87th minute which Paul Rebairo converted in his usual convincing style to give us an excellent (and somewhat surprising) 4-0 victory.