

**Sunday 20th October 2002**

Mercury Waltham Sunday League Premier Division Match at Bush Hill Park

|                                                               |          |                        |          |        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------|----------|--------|
| <b>PERCIVAL</b>                                               | <b>3</b> | <b>EDMONTON ROVERS</b> | <b>1</b> | HT 0-0 |
| Barnes (59 mins.),<br>Weaver (72 mins.),<br>Wilton (88 mins.) |          | S.Dorward (86 mins.)   |          |        |

**Percival's Line-Up:** Michael HAYES (GK); Ben WINCH, Ian BARNES, Terry HARPER, Ian HILLIER; Martin PAYNE, Alex CLARK, Scott DIPPLE, Steve WEAVER; Dave RUSSELL, Dave WILTON **Subs.:** Scott OYSTON, Darren WOODWARD, Paul CHRISTODOULOU

**Edmonton Rovers Line-Up (with Marks out of 10):** Shaun O'NEILL (GK) ( 7 ); Steve BEASLEY ( 7 ), Paul WOOLSTON ( 6½ ), Tony SPELLER ( 7 ), Lee OSBORN ( 7½ ); Paul ELLERKER ( 6 ), Stuart DORWARD ( 7½ ), Derek DORWARD ( 7 ), Marco ELLERKER ( 7 ), Eric IBEKWEM ( 6 ); Conor McGOVERN ( 7 ) **Subs.:** John BEASLEY ( 6 ), Chris 'Nugget' BEEDEN ( 7 ), Chidi IBEKWEM ( 6½ )

**Referee:** Jeff TILL

**Weather Conditions:** Cloudy with occasional rain **Attendance:** 47

**Report:** As Percival's players all drink in the same pub as us (On Broadway) on Sunday afternoons and are good friends with most of our players, we had been eagerly anticipating what was our first meeting with them since March 1997 when we beat them 1-0 in a Division Two match. Indeed a 'massive' crowd of 47 was attracted to Bush Hill Park for this 'local derby', that figure being only 18 less than Enfield attracted the day before for a Ryman League Premier Division match ! That meant that finding room for the video camera & tripod on the touchline amongst our many supporters was not very easy, especially when they kept getting in front of the camera in an effort to keep an inquisitive pet cat off the pitch !

Our excellent performance in the London Intermediate Cup the week before had really given everyone a boost though, even to the extent that all of our players turned up 'sober' for a change in an effort to gain a place in the starting line-up. However, only one change was made by Manager Trevor Hughes with Marco Ellerker coming in for the injured George Bromfield as a 4-5-1 formation was fielded in order to strengthen the midfield against arguably the best team in the League. Those tactics worked for most of the First Half with both sides conjuring up some really slick moves and a number of reasonable chances despite the ridiculously long grass and half the pitch being covered in conkers, twigs and leaves ! However, Percival (who were fielding a fired-up and more-or-less full-strength side) started getting on top towards the end of the half as they showed the sort of form that had seen them unbeaten in their four matches so far this season, but Shaun O'Neill ignored a nasty stomach bug to make two or three good saves to keep us on level terms at the break.

We then managed to sort a few things out at Half-Time and we played better again for the first 14 minutes of the Second Half and at that stage it was anyone's game, but then Percival skipper Ian Barnes sussed out our zonal marking system to powerfully head in a fiercely-driven corner to put them ahead and we then had to start taking a few more risks at the back in an effort to push forward and get back into the game. Despite creating plenty of chances though, our finishing became increasingly woeful and Percival punished us in the 72nd minute when Steve Weaver put them 2-0 up on the break with a far post header from a right-wing cross. However, the gradual introduction of all three substitutes during the Second Half eventually started to make a difference and we then had our best spell of the match with Stuart Dorward pulling a goal back in the 86th minute with a scrambled effort, although Conor McGovern and particularly Derek Dorward were guilty of some horrendous bad misses just before that which could even have seen us go on and win the match had they been 'buried' as Percival seemed to be tiring somewhat. Typical of us though, we then let in a really silly goal just 19 seconds from the re-start after pulling it back to 2-1 as virtually the whole of our team lost their concentration, leaving Percival forward Dave Wilton with a simple opportunity to lob the stranded Shaun O'Neill and kill off the game.

With Percival being strong enough to enter the F.A. National Sunday Cup (and beating previous finalists Ouzavich in the First Round only two weeks ago), at least we proved that we could match them in terms of ability, possession and the creating of chances, but our finishing let us down badly on this occasion and maybe the absence of injured forwards Steve Cokell, George Bromfield & Lexton Harrison was a factor as it was likely that at least one of that trio would have been on form enough to be able to finish some of the chances created.