

Sunday 21st December – League Cray Wanderers 1 Dartford FC 2

Our opponents today were the only team that could overtake us by winning their games in hand. They hadn't lost in the league yet this season and they had had some credible results. The pitch conditions were awful today down the centre of the park with the only areas containing any grass being the wide areas. There was also a strong wind blowing the length of the pitch but other than it was a perfect day for football!! Adding to this we only had the 1 sub with players missing for a multitude of reasons. So to get anything today was going to take a huge effort.

We stuck with the usual formation that served us so well so far this season. The game started at quite a pace and we made full use of the wide areas and it was from the right hand side, from a Danny Nash cross, that we took the lead. The ball wasn't cleared and Frazer found himself 6 yards from goal with nobody in front of him and he duly put the ball in the net for his second goal in two games. Cray then found their feet and the rest of the half was played out in a good spirited but competitive manner. We had the wind against us in the first half and this may have contributed to the inability to clear our lines at the back and a Cray forward was allowed to hook the ball over to equalise. Half-time score 1-1 – All that needed saying at half time was the usual reminder to the players to keep their shape and to be fair they did this.

The second half started with Dartford well in control. We built up a fair bit of pressure and a defender was forced into heading the ball towards his own goal. The ball came back off the post and Jack Walter had the easiest of chances and put us 2-1 up. We then seemed to be creating chance after chance but some good approach play meant that although we were creating chances we were having to take these chances from a fair distance out. Sean Heather was unlucky not to score when his 20 yard drive clipped the top of the cross bar. We were then denied what looked like an obvious penalty when the ball was handled in the area. We continued to create chances but the more the ball went into the central areas the more difficult the conditions became. It wasn't all one way traffic and Cray had their chances but I have to say that we defended very well in the last 30 minutes and on the rare occasions that the defence was beaten, Adam Molloy stood firm, most notably with a double save in the last 10 minutes.

This was a big result for us and if any game can be worth more than 3 points, this was it. It's still early days in the season but we now have to lose matches to let Cray overtake us. We have won another game without being at our best or having a full squad to choose from. At this time of year some pitches are like glue bogs and I sometimes think that we have trouble adapting to these pitches after having been spoilt with the Princes Park Stadium and Community pitches. We only know how to play football one way and that is to pass, pass and pass and obviously this isn't suited to the sticky, winter pitches. But we're battling well and picking points up and I'm very pleased and proud of the way the players are dealing with the varying conditions that they are being asked to play on. We now have a break from league action when we entertain Ramsgate FC on Sunday 28th December in the Kent County FA Cup at Princes Park – another competition that we want to do well in.

Team: Molloy, Issuree, Eves, Evers, Heather ©, Nash, Crouch, Bent, Walter, Heffernan (Nye 70), Sutherland

MOTM:- Adam Molloy



Pos	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	Dartford	9	8	0	1	28	8	20	24
2	Corinthian	8	5	2	1	26	12	14	17
3	Ebbsfleet	6	5	0	1	22	10	12	15

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