

Wednesday 22nd October 2008 – John Ullman Memorial Cup – Round 2
Holland & Blair 0 Dartford FC 2
Princes Park Stadium – 7:30pm k/o
Weather:- Bit chilly!

This was a game that was originally scheduled to be an away fixture for Dartford, but due to the host grounds lack of floodlights, the game was reversed and played at Princes Park. A big thanks to Dave Skinner who was a big help in getting the game on. The visitors to PP were Hollands & Blair, who play their football in the Kent Youth League – South Division.

Coming off of the back of a great win at the weekend, and having to rest many players due to other playing commitments, the side saw quite a few changes to the starting line-up. Out went Tom Eyers and Connor Heffernan, who scored four goals between them in the last game, out went Lewis Sutherland due to injury and Karl Dent had to make do with a place on the bench. Also out was keeper Adam Molloy, who was replaced by last years 18's keeper, Deren Ibrahim. However, added to the squad was the returning Callum Nye and Ben Wilson & Liam Heather. Ben & Liam play for the 16's but were recommended by Manager Martyn Heather as players capable of competing at this level.

As with most first-time visitors to PP, H&B upped their game when they saw the facilities! I sensed before the game that we were in for a tough game. Dartford made the better start and pinned the visitors into their own half for the first 5 or 10 minutes. H&B then started to push Dartford back and the contest became fairly even. After 20 minutes James Jordan attacked down the right, cut in to the box and with everybody expecting a pass or shot across the keeper, fooled everyone and put the ball past the keeper high inside the near post. This was just reward for JJ who had really put himself about and worked hard in the early stages of the game.

H&B maintained their threat and Deren was called in to action to make some routine saves and claims from crosses, but it was the home side that looked more likely to score. H&B were a very hard working side who competed for everything and this kept Dartford's chances down to a minimum. However, an excellent piece of football resulted in a great attempt by Danny Crouch. The ball was played forward from the back in to midfield and then played wide out to the right. The ball in, found Crouchy 35 yards from goal and he let fly with a powerful dipping shot. Such was the power of the strike, the ball cannoned off of the cross bar and out of the ground!

H/T Score: Dartford 1 – Hollands & Blair 0: *At half-time we spoke about being more patient with the ball and retaining possession in our attacking third. Everyone seemed a little deflated at only being 1 up but perhaps it was the realisation that we hadn't perhaps played as well as we could have in front of between 80 – 100 spectators.*

Dartford were forced in to a change when Sean Heather succumbed to a foot injury and was replaced by Karl Dent. This was the only change.

H&B got the bit between their teeth and were working hard to get something from the game. Deren was called in to action when the dangerously fast H&B no 10 cut in and shot from 10 yards. Deren did well to push the ball away at the second attempt and the visitors had to settle for a corner. To be honest, the visitors were having to resort to long shots. Soon after this, Billy Eves had to be replaced due to injury and 15 year old Ben Wilson came on to replace him. Ola Ayoola moved in to centre back and Ben

slotted in to his natural position of left back. This balanced the Dartford side up and we continued to push for a second goal. We made our last change of the evening in the 65th minute when Callum Nye replaced Danny Nash on the right hand side. This change soon had the desired effect when Karl Dent released Callum who squared the ball in to the box for the on-rushing Crouchy. Dan put the ball past the keeper in to the net and took a painful blow to the leg in the process. Whilst we were all celebrating, I don't think Dan had realised he had scored!

This naturally came as a blow to H&B but to their credit they continued to push for something from the game but we played well enough at the back to repel their advances.

The game finished at 2 – 0 to the young darts and we progress to the next round. We didn't play particularly well but we were never really allowed to by very industrious opponents. This was a good game of football played in an excellent spirit, good luck to H&B for the rest of their season.

This Sunday sees us return to PP for our second successive cup game when we take on Bredhurst in the KCFA Youth Cup. It would be nice to do well in this cup as you can draw anyone from across the county and allows you to play against opponents that you wouldn't face in a league fixture.

On a final note, thanks to everyone who came to watch on Wednesday evening, I hope you enjoyed the game and I hope to see you at PP this coming Sunday for an 11am k.o.

Team:- Deren Ibrahim, Jack Walter, Ola Ayoola, Rob King, Billy Eves, (Ben Wilson 60), Sean Heather (C) (Karl Dent 45), Danny Nash (Callum Nye 70), Ashley Issuree, Frazer Bent, Danny Crouch, James Jordan

Subs:- Liam Heather, Connor Heffernan

Goals:- James Jordan, Danny Crouch

Joint MOTM:- This week sees a joint award. JJ was excellent in his work rate and a great technical finish for his goal where as Ola contained the threat from the impressive H&B No 10.



James Jordan – JJ



Ola Ayoola

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