

Sunday 30th November – KCFA Cup Competition – 3rd round
Dartford FC U18's 5 Thamesmead Town FC 3
Weather:- Cold & wet!

This game promised to be a stern test against the cup holders. Thamesmead had a number of senior players playing that also play for their reserve side. The North side last year, which included a number of this side, won both the league cup and the county cup so this was always going to be a tough test.

We persevered with our favoured formation but unfortunately a key player, [Ashley Issuree](#), pulled a thigh muscle during the warm up and couldn't take his place in the starting line-up.

I moved [Ayoola](#) over to the right hand side to accommodate Ben Wilson, a promising left footed defender. Ben plays for the U16s side at Dartford and this was only the 2nd time Ben has been included in the squad but I had no hesitation in chucking him in from the start after Ashley's injury. Also, in the squad for the day was Joe Foster, another promising player from the U16s.

Thamesmead came at us from the start and although we were comfortable, a defensive error on the edge of our box let Thamesmead in for the opening goal.

Then in the 25th minute we found ourselves 2 nil down when a free kick from 45 yards, beat our keeper [Adam Molloy](#).

This was obviously a bit of a shock as we haven't been 2 goals down all season!

[Callum Nye](#) pulled a goal back after 35 minutes when his shot from the edge of the area flew over the keeper and dipped into the net. Dartford had other chances but I felt that we finished the half in the ascendancy.

Half-time score Dartford 1 Thamesmead 2.

During half-time, I stressed the need for players to maintain their discipline and shape for the good of the team. [Sean Heather](#) had dropped into the back line and perhaps his presence was missed in the centre of midfield. That's not to criticise the midfield on the day, but their game is all about attacking and today what was asked of them was maybe a little out of the ordinary for them.

The young Darts returned to the pitch with the simple instruction of work hard, keep your shape and fight for everything. This obviously had some effect as [Connor Heffernan](#) pulled us level with an excellent effort from 30 yards. The keeper had no chance and I have to say this is not the first time Connor has scored this sort of goal – well done ☺.

5 minutes later, [Danny Crouch](#) got in on the action when he put us ahead from close range at a corner. The lead lasted 10 minutes, but we were pegged back when a near post flick left Adam helpless in the home goal. It's when you've been down, and then gone ahead only to be pulled back again that you can find out what your team is made of! To their immense credit, Dartford kept playing football and as Thamesmead started to tire, we got stronger.

[Lewis Sutherland](#) (Suvs) kept making his runs down the left hand side and one of a number of excellent crosses from him found Crouchy on the edge of the area. Dan chested the ball down and volleyed it into the top corner. This was an excellent team goal and started from the back and ended with an excellent cross and finish.

10 minutes later Dartford put the game beyond doubt. Another excellent cross by Suvs, was allowed across the area by the visiting defence and [Danny Nash](#) hit his first time shot across the keeper and into the bottom corner. This was a good finish from 15 yards as Dan had had what seemed like ages to watch the ball go onto his right foot but he struck it sweetly and it was never going anywhere else but in the goal.

This was a well earned win against a good side. We took the early knocks but came back stronger and we now go on to play Barming Youth or Ramsgate in the last 16.

Team:- Molloy, Ayoola, Heather ©, Wilson, Dent, Crouch, Nash, Nye, Jordan, Heffernan, Sutherland

Subs:- Bent, Eves, White, Foster, Evers

Goals:- Crouch (2), Nye, Heffernan, Nash

MOTM:- Lewis Sutherland – Excellent crossing from the left hand side.



Lewis Sutherland 'Suvs'

Unofficial website: <http://www.dfc18.co.uk>

Team Photo 5.10.2008:

<http://www.dfc18.co.uk/u18team051008/u18team.html>