

SATURDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2007

BASHLEY 2-1 TIVERTON TOWN

BGB Southern League Premier Division

Zero points from a possible six became zero from nine at Bashley last Saturday. Bash, undefeated at home proved too strong for a depleted Tiverton team, the Yellows unable to name a single substitute for the trip to Hampshire, and despite a gallant effort never really a match for their playoff chasing hosts. With that said Tivvy were not without their chances, but again a shyness in front of goal would see them failing to take chances and ultimately failing to take anything from the match.

Sean Szabo, employed on the right side of midfield cut back a cross in only the second minute of the game, but the ball pinballed around a crowded area before being hacked away by Peter Castle, and before long Bashley were on top and dominating the game. Their forward momentum was relentless, and it was only a surprise that it took them until midway through the first half to break the deadlock. Jeremy Tarr and Richard Gillespie both shot wide of the mark in the early stages and the impressive Justin Keeler could only find the side netting when he latched on to Craig Davis' deep cross from the right flank.

When Chris Young grazed the outside of the upright from the edge of the area it acted as a wake-up call for the home side and they promptly broke down the other end of the pitch and took a deserved lead. A long ball into the corner was too tempting for Ray Johnston to leave, and as he raced to clear into touch Dave Wakefield snuck in and lifted the ball towards an unguarded penalty area. The ball broke to Keeler fifteen yard out and his powerful shot squirmed past Tom Gardner who had retreated to the goal line in an attempt to block.

Keeler was unlucky not to double his tally just three minutes later when Johnston partially redeemed himself with an excellent save, and the same player dragged an effort inches wide of the mark five minutes before the break. For their part Tiverton offered little in the way of attacking play, with only a weak effort from Tom Knighton which was easily fielded by David Elm, and a header from Matt Villis which went straight at the Bash custodian to show for their efforts. Lee Groves also shot wide after neat interplay between Szabo and Paul Wyatt, but if the scores had been level at the interval then it would have been a travesty of justice.

Town managed to raise the tempo a little in the second half, and once Tarr had been denied from close range by Johnston Tiverton enjoyed their best spell of the match. Chris Vinnicombe delivered an outswinging free kick which found Villis at the far post, and the Tivvy defender made no mistake to notch his first for the club to draw the game level, and just after the restart Szabo cut in from the right and got a shot away which was saved smartly by Elm. But Bashley weren't going to allow Tiverton any period of sustained pressure and soon set about restoring their lead.

When the goal came it was worthy of the applause it received; Johnston had made an excellent save from Gillespie, but only managed to push the ball upwards and Bash quickly worked it out to Keeler on the left wing. Keeler, the scourge of Tiverton sent in the perfect cross to the edge of the six yard box where Gillespie was waiting to acrobatically head into the top corner. Johnston got a good palm on the ball but the power of the header was too much, and Bashley were again in the lead.

Groves curled a shot high and wide as Tivvy looked to salvage something from the game, and Szabo was quick to capitalise on a poor clearance from Elm, only to see his attempted lob trickle agonisingly wide of the right upright. And with time running out Chris Young forced Elm into a save, and with the ball parried out Wyatt was only able to airmail the rebound. The match ended frustratingly for Tivvy who had run themselves into the ground, earned five bookings and no points. Against the odds they were unable to take anything from the game, but in fairness the better team won. Tivvy now need to dust themselves down and start picking up some points.

Bashley: David Elm; Ryan Hill, Chris Ferrett, Peter Castle, Paul Gazzard, Gareth Keeping, Dave Wakefield, Craig Davis, Jeremy Tarr, Richard Gillespie, Justin Keeler

Goals: Keeler 22, Gillespie 59

Booked: None

Sent Off: None

Tiverton Town: Ray Johnston; Lee Groves, Chris Vinnicombe, Matt Villis, Nathan Rudge, Tom Gardner, Sean Szabo, Glenn Gould, Tom Knighton, Chris Young, Paul Wyatt

Goals: Villis 53

Booked: Johnston 9, Vinnicombe 48, Villis 48, Groves 70, Rudge 85

Sent Off: None

Attendance: 319