

SATURDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2007

## **BRACKLEY TOWN 0-2 TIVERTON TOWN**

**BGB Southern League Premier Division**

The setback of losing in the FA Trophy is difficult to quantify, but besides the obvious financial loss in must pale into relative insignificance compared the problems encountered in the lead-up to the league match last week against high-flying Brackley Town. Jak Martin would miss the game through suspension, Matt Hewlett picked up a niggle against Burnham and was also ruled out, as was Luke Clarke. To further add to the Tivvy woes Lee Groves was absent for personal reasons, Carl Cliff-Brown has seemingly done a runner and was not considered for selection, Jamie Mudge was but at Dawlish, Lewis Irish on loan and seeing red at Barnstaple, and most worryingly Ray Johnston suffered a shoulder injury in training as would also definitely miss out. This left Tivvy without a goalkeeper and with just ten players available for selection. No worries though; promoted from the youth team were Sean Szabo, prolific in front of goal for the Under 18's, and Richie Emmett while Steve Winter made a welcome one-off return having missed the last four weeks of action with his regular Almondsbury team. Tom Gardner took the gloves, and with Radley Veale making his debut Tivvy was able to field a scratch side, with one substitute.

Gardner did everything you could wish for, pulling off a number of saves, including a brave smother at the feet of Danny Spencer as early as the second minute of the game. To his fortune he wasn't actually tested as much as one might have expected from a free-scoring Brackley team but made an excellent save with his feet from Lee Tomlin to maintain a lead that Tivvy had gained fifteen minutes into the game. That goal came via the boot of Chris Vinnicombe from the penalty spot; Winter and Veale had combined neatly on the right flank and the latter was upended carelessly by Andy Williams leaving the referee with no choice but to award the penalty. Vinnicombe blasted the ball low to Richard Knight's left, Knight fell clumsily backwards to his right and Town were ahead against all odds.

Williams was denied by Gardner just before the half-hour mark, his header being held easily and then the stand-in 'keeper was alert to punch away a ball bobbling in the area as Brackley rallied with little effect. Tivvy, playing a rigid and unaccustomed 4-4-2 system were happy to play on the counter and twice went close to doubling their lead before the interval. Tom Knighton raced free only to see his powerful effort scrambled clear by Knight, while neat interplay between Szabo and Paul Wyatt resulted in Wyatt, employed wide on the left to bring Knight back into the action, the custodian making a neat diving save to divert the ball out for a corner.

Brackley were in the ascendancy as the second half got underway but failed to force Gardner into action; Jamie Kearns shot wide after being set up by Spencer and then skied a side footed effort well over the top from the edge of the area. Josh Green and Knighton, who had been tussling for long periods of the game both earned themselves yellow cards as things boiled over - Knighton was lucky to stay on the pitch having aimed a friendly slap at his marker that turned out to be a little more vigorous than was original intended. But stay he did, and two minutes after being cautioned he doubled the Tiverton lead and effectively sealed an unlikely victory for the Yellows. Chris Vinnicombe and Matt Villis combined to set up the young striker, and from eight yards Knighton drilled a low shot that gave the goalkeeper no chance.

Veale had settled into Tivvy life well and showed glimpses of excellence, including a powerful run that culminated in a good save from Knight, and a 25 yard effort that sailed just over the top. Brackley were flat and deflated and it was difficult to see how they could force their way back into contention; indeed it was the Devon side that looked more likely to increase their lead, and Wyatt headed wide from Vinnicombe's corner, while Veale scuffed a shot inches wide of the upright. Knight against denied Veale late on and Winter lofted the rebound over the top, but Tivvy had done enough to secure the points, and Emmett replaced Szabo as the clock ticked away to make his first appearance for the senior side.

**Brackley Town:** Richard Knight; Guy Hadland (Robbie Beard 69), Phil Murphy (Mick Love 78), Jamie Kearns (Scott Hadland 69), Josh Green, Andy Williams, Craig Farley, Dave Savage, Lee Tomlin, Danny Spencer, Tom Winters  
Booked: Green 59  
Sent Off: None

**Tiverton Town:** Tom Gardner; Steve Winter, Chris Vinnicombe, Matt Villis, Nathan Rudge, Will Gardner, Glenn Gould, Radley Veale, Tom Knighton, Sean Szabo (Richie Emmett 90), Paul Wyatt  
Goals: Vinnicombe 16, Knighton 59  
Booked: Rudge 30, Knighton 59  
Sent Off: None

Attendance: 303