

SATURDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2007

## CIRENCESTER TOWN 3-2 TIVERTON TOWN

BGB Southern League Premier Division

Things change so fast in the topsy-turvy world of non-league football. Players come and players go, and sometime, like Chris Vinnicombe they come back again. In rare cases they come back again, then disappear without indication, but we will try not to mention Carl Cliff-Brown again in future. When Tiverton made their first trip to the Corinium Stadium in February 2005 Stewart Yetton made a double-scoring debut as Tivvy came away with a 2-0 victory. Less than three years later Yetts is enjoying life further down the peninsula, and Tiverton fielded just one player who was involved in the inaugural visit to the Cirencester home. Chris Vinnicombe, who had been and returned was not joined in attendance by Nathan Rudge, who also played on that Blustery winters day, thanks to the five-and-out yellow card rule, while Tivvy's remaining survivor, Mike Booth, is still a tad on the sore side. For their part Cirencester have undergone even more drastic a facelift and only Michael Jackson remains. So all these changes in such a short space of time, and also a marked change in fortunes too...

Tivvy looked to be playing a game foreign to them as they lined up in an ever more familiar 4-4-2 system but failed to make the formation work with any success until it was far too late. It was probably too late midway through the first half when Cirencester had eased their way into a two goal lead, the first a bobbling, deflected freak of a goal, which, while lucky to eventually find the net was deserved on two counts - firstly the domination the Centurions had shown for the first twenty minutes, and secondly the static defending that allowed the chance to rear its head. Matt Willis was the unfortunate one with whom Steve Robertson and Ray Johnston played ping-pong, Robertson got the final touch and the hosts were ahead. And they were ahead even further just three minutes later; Andrew Chapman, who played far out free on the left throughout the first half was found in his usual acre-and-a-half of space, and his pinpoint cross was met on the volley by Robertson six yards from goal. Simple side-footed effort, two-nil, curtains.

Chapman continued to play a lonely and unmarked role, with the Gardners of Tom and Will betwixed and between. Neither wanted nor really felt it was his job to pick up the nippy winger, but luckily for Tivvy the home midfield was unable to feed the ball out wide quickly enough. Chapman did, however, get a sight of goal when, aided by the omnipresent Corinium wind he let fly a rasping free kick from the other side of town which flew not all that far over Johnston's crossbar. Tivvy players barely got a sight of goal between them; Paul Wyatt stumbled over the ball when fed by Radley Veale, Veale himself scuffed a left footer after a neat run, and Knighton chose to ram the ball into the legs of a defender rather than laying it off to Wyatt who had darted in from his left wing position to take up a good position inside the Cirencester area.

Tiverton improved in the second half, but not by enough, and were three in arrears with twenty minutes still to play. Chapman curled in a free kick from wide (this time on the right) which bobbed around a little and fell perfectly at the feet of substitute Nick Stanley to prod home from inside the goal area. It really was curtains now, but before they were drawn there was still time for the Yellows to give a little false hope to their travelling support. Chris Young and Lee Groves were introduced and they turned Town from a team without an idea into a team with every idea. Groves spread play intelligently enough to warrant a starting berth tonight, and Young scored Tiverton's first goal of the afternoon. It was a fine team goal too - Knighton and Wyatt exchanged passes and Young split the home defence before sliding the ball beyond the under-worked Matt Bulman. A glimmer of hope became a bright ray of hope minutes from the end when Wyatt grabbed another one back - A quick free kick by Groves, another assist for Knighton, and some exquisite skill to create space and ram home by Wyatt.

Alas! Time runneth out. "Six minutes, lads" said the referee, a late replacement from Windsor, who for much of the afternoon treated his whistle with all the fondness of a new toy. Blow, blow, blow. The six minutes never transpired. Luke Clarke was given his marching orders for a tussle off the ball just ten minutes after his introduction, tempers began to fray a little, and the referee blew up a minute or two earlier than he had vocally indicated. "Things were beginning to get out of hand", he claimed after the match, "plus I quite like Cirencester", he failed to add. So it ended, 3-2, home win. Lot's of Tiverton positives to take out of their rallying final twenty minutes, but by then the curtain had already fallen.

**Cirencester Town:** Matt Bulman; Chris Collins, Alex Stanley, Nathan Haisley, Lee Molyneux, Mike Taylor, Matt Shaxton, Michael Jackson (Harry Etheridge 72), Steve Robertson (Rhys Carpenter 82), Chris Davis (Nick Stanley 58), Andrew Chapman  
Goals: Robertson 20, 24, Nick Stanley 69  
Booked: Alex Stanley 28  
Sent Off: None

**Tiverton Town:** Ray Johnston; Jak Martin, Chris Vinnicombe, Matt Willis (Luke Clarke 80), Will Gardner, Tom Gardner, Radley Veale, Sean Szabo (Chris Young 59), Tom Knighton, Glenn Gould (Lee Groves 65), Paul Wyatt  
Goals: Young 79, Wyatt 90  
Booked: Will Gardner 30, Vinnicombe 43, Young 88  
Sent Off: Clarke 90

Attendance: 160