

SATURDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2007

## RUGBY TOWN 2-2 TIVERTON TOWN

BGB Southern League Premier Division

Tivvy's next challenge came seven days later with the trip to Butlin Road, where last season they had been given a lesson in finishing as Rugby Town eased to a 4-1 victory. In a game that tested the mettle and resolve of the Yellows a much improved performance saw them make the long journey home with a hard earned point thanks to Glen Gould's first goal for the club. Lee Groves, recently recruited from Bideford made his second Tiverton debut some sixteen years after his initial handful of appearances for the team, and his guile in midfield was perhaps the key to what was a much more balanced looking display.

Groves' first major impact on the game was to nod away a goal bound effort from Tom Breward on twenty minutes, but by this time the lively attacking duo of Wyatt and Tom Knighton had already combined neatly, only for the latter to see his shot bravely blocked. Wyatt and Knighton again scythed apart the Rugby defence midway through the first half; this time releasing Gould, and the sixteen year old made no mistake when he found himself one-on-one with Simon Lynn in the Rugby goal. The lead lasted only thirteen minutes, though as David Staff scored direct from a free kick after Rudge had upended Ashley Blake on the left edge of the penalty area, and the home side were unlucky not to find themselves ahead on the half time whistle as another Staff free kick was headed off the line by Rudge.

An end-to-end second half ensued, with Wyatt twice denied by Lynn and Chris Vinnicombe seeing his header just evade the crossbar on the high side. Knighton and Will Gardner both had weak shots saved as the away team continued to lay siege on the Rugby goal, but a rare break from the home side led to them taking a somewhat surprising lead. A long ball through the middle caught the Tivvy defence napping and David Stone stealthily stole in to slide the ball low and beyond Johnston's left hand.

Tivvy were given a lifeline moments later when the otherwise excellent Dave Kodolynski was given his marching orders for a petulant kick at Rudge. The extra man barely had time to take effect before Town were back on level terms; a flowing move starting with Vinnicombe took in Gould, Jak Martin and Chris Young before finally finishing courtesy of the boot of Aaron Stringfellow, the luckless defender deflecting the ball away from Knighton and into his own net.

Tivvy pressed in vain for a winner with Stone and Staff in particular looked dangerous on the counter. It was one of these attacks from deep that saw Rudge foul Stone and earn himself a second yellow card and an early visit to the shower blocks. Back to even numbers the game eventually petered out as both teams exhausted themselves, each other and all avenues of attack. The final result of two-apiece was fair, the game was entertaining, and the memory of Shortwood had been consigned to the past.

**Rugby Town:** Simon Lynn; Aaron Stringfellow, Stephan Morley, Craig Herbert, Leigh Plautner, Tom Breward, Ashley Blake, Scott Musgrove, Akin Aladetoun (David Kolodynski 59), David Stone, David Staff

Goals: Staff 36, Stone 67

Booked: None

Sent Off: Kolodynski 90

**Tiverton Town:** Ray Johnston; Jak Martin, Chris Vinnicombe, Matt Willis, Nathan Rudge, Tom Gardner, Lee Groves, Will Gardner, Tom Knighton, Glenn Gould (Lewis Irish 84), Paul Wyatt (Chris Young 64)

Goals: Gould 23, Stringfellow 75 (og)

Booked: Rudge 35

Sent Off: Rudge 90

Attendance: 288