

WEDNESDAY, 22 AUGUST 2007

TIVERTON TOWN 1-1 YATE TOWN

BGB Southern League Premier Division

Tiverton Town started the match against Yate Town pinned to the bottom of the Southern League Premier Division table. Granted, all but three teams had played an extra game, and granted again we were still in the foetal stage of the campaign, but Tivvy were bottom all the same, and with defeat that is where they would stay. The game started and it looked like Tivvy would do well to avoid anything but defeat as Yate Town raced out of the blocks at breakneck speed. Indeed, they were so zippy that they could have, perhaps should have been ahead inside the first sixty seconds. Aaron Blakemore escaped down the left but could only drag his shot wide of Ray Johnston's right-hand upright. Just minutes later Blakemore again had an opportunity; this time released by the excellent Ashley Williams, but again pulled his effort wide of the mark.

Lady luck was hovering over Ladysmead, and almost made her presence felt when James Palmer's deep free-kick was only parried by Yate's Martin Horsell. However, the loose ball was scrambled clear without an effort ever being fired in, and Yate once again took the upper hand in what became a battle of midfields, a battle of attrition, and a battle of flying tackles. One of those flying tackles upended Chris Young; former Tivvy midfielder Paul Chenoweth making himself known to the Yellow's new striker. If Chens set the tone then Matt Villis soon followed suit with a poorly timed tackle on Matt Rawlins, timed poorly enough to earn the centre-back a yellow card.

The home side edged their way on top for a short spell, and a goalmouth scramble in the Yate area was eventually cleared, again with no meaningful shot on goal, before Carl Cliff-Brown and Paul Wyatt combined neatly to release Luke Clarke through the inside right channel. Clarke eventually lost the ball somewhere between his feet and the feet of the covering defence, and another opportunity was snuffed out before it was realised. On the half-hour Chris Young shot weakly allowing Horsell to gather with ease, and Clarke saw yellow along with Chenoweth for a moment of hand-bagging. The first half ended with Scott Brice nodding wide for the visitors following a tidy cross from Williams. Scoreless but boreless. Technically not great but enthralling as a game of will power.

Mat Rawlins opened the second period by putting one into orbit, and followed it up by doing exactly the same a minute later. The visitors were on top, and even after Dave Elsey was booked for a scything tackle on Cliff-Brown they still managed to finally break the deadlock. Jason Wood was the benefactor of loose marking in the area; a harmless cross from the right wasn't dealt with and became harmful, Wood was in the right place and prodded the ball home from close range. By this stage Tom Knighton had already replaced Young and it was the former Bitton striker that was to have the final say, slotting home an equalising blow with nine minutes remaining.

However, Tivvy wouldn't have been back in the match had it not been for the introduction of Lewis Irish. The midfielder-come-striker replaced Richard Lamacraft and slid the perfect pass between the Yate centre-backs, allowing Knighton to race on and beat Horsell's outstretched right hand. The ball barely crept inside the post to make the score 1-1, and five minutes further on the ball barely crept over the crossbar as Wyatt wove some magic in midfield before unleashing a left footer with 'Goal' written all over it. Sadly for Tivvy the American's didn't get their way and crossbars are still only eight feet high rather than ten.

The Bristolians may have pinched all the points at the death, but Adam Sims' cross from the right was hacked away by Villis, and Rawlins sent a side-footed volley into the heavens when it would have been easier to score. 1-1 it ended, meaning Tivvy were off the mark. In a complete reversal of Saturday's match the Yellow's played better after the break, but it is still a long way short of the level that needs to be reached to achieve anything more than a low-to-mid table finish.

Tiverton Town: Ray Johnston; Luke Clarke (Glenn Gould 60), Chris Vinnicombe, Matt Villis, Richard Lamacraft (Lewis Irish 78), Tom Gardner, Jak Martin, James Palmer, Chris Young (Tom Knighton 54), Carl Cliff-Brown, Paul Wyatt

Goals: Knighton 81

Booked: Villis 16, Clarke 30

Sent Off: None

Yate Town: Martin Horsell; Ashley Williams, Dave Elsey, Scott Brice, Lee Bridson, Adam Sims, Aaron Blakemore, Paul Chenoweth, Matt Rawlins (Matt Prosser 80), Jason Wood (Gavin Eyre 86), Danny Maye

Goals: Wood 64

Booked: Chenoweth 30, Elsey 61, Wood 72

Sent Off: None

Attendance: 318