

ST. NEOTS TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

EAGLE BITTER UNITED COUNTIES PREMIER LEAGUE MATCH REPORT – TUESDAY 16/10/01

ST. NEOTS TOWN 1 DEEPING RANGERS 0

Saints started this Eagle Bitter United Counties Premier League game with a determination not seen in their previous encounters. Both wingbacks Andy Grieve and Paul Bloss were rampant down the flanks providing good early service for the two front runners. Manager Chris Howell made a bold statement by pairing Steve Kuhne and Vince Petty as the Saints strike force leaving Wes Byrne on the bench. These two made an early impact on the game especially with the service they were receiving from both the flanks and midfield. Kuhne and Petty both fired in a number of shots, during the first 20-minute spell, keeping the visitor's keeper on his toes.

Deeping looked equally as threatening, especially down their right flank, with the pacey John Paul Duncliffe providing most of the ammunition for the visitors. Saints break through came four minutes before half time. The ball was worked from a throw in, deep into the visitors half, to Vince Petty; his good first touch allowed him to set the ball up and volley into the right corner. This goal was well deserved and much needed considering the amount of possession Saints had during the first period.

Vince Petty almost doubled his tally, five minutes into the second period, with a strong header, which was equally well saved by the visitor's keeper Gianni Salerno. As the game progressed the challenges, from the visitors, became more unsavoury. Trevor Smith limped off after a late over the ball challenge, from Mark Drake, and Paul Bloss received lengthy treatment after an equally viscous challenge after passing his defender down the flank. Both players are now doubtful for the important FA Vase game at Wembley. Needless to say both incidents went un-punished by the out of touch, Bedford based, referee Charlie Ross.

Deeping probably edged the second half but Saints determination allowed them to hang onto their slender lead until the final whistle. As Andy Chapman and Brett Fairholme were both unavailable for this game Justin Hicks, a successful recruit from last season's youth team, was given the chance of a first team start as one of the three centre backs. The manager will be delighted with his performance and it should give him further team selection problems for the future.

Team: Young, Smith, Bloss, McCreanor, Hicks, Grieve, Petty, Brown, Kuhne, Claridge, Buckland.

Subs: Byrne, Carey, Dear, Atkins.

Subs Used: Dear for Smith.

Goals: Saints: Petty (42 min)