

Eagle Bitter United Counties League Premier Division

St Neots 2 Newport Pagnell 2

Only in the job for one week St Neots Manager Kenny Davidson faced an immediate problem with the departure of goalkeeper Matt Finley who had moved to play in the Southern League with Oxford City. However he managed to obtain the services of the experienced Steve Corry who has been playing in the Football Conference with Kettering Town. Corry's debut contribution was critical as he made a handful of great saves contributing in no small part to St Neots point from their midweek game with Newport Pagnell.

Overall a draw was a fair result but having come from behind to lead 2-1 St Neots might have expected to hold on for full points. With two key players out injured St Neots still looked a balanced side but after just a couple of off target shots at either end they were further hampered when the lively Danny Griggs limped off with a calf injury. Before the break both goalkeepers made impressive saves – Corry from Michael Lyon and visiting keeper Lee Ward from a Steve Jelley snap shot. Five minutes before the break Pagnell went ahead after another good save by Corry. He parried a Lee Tinsley shot at full stretch but the ball fell invitingly to Ben Hill and he finished well.

However the visitors' lead lasted just ninety seconds and then acting skipper Russell Lawes curled in a 30 yards free kick to level the scores after Vince Petty had been fouled. Petty was booked just 25 seconds after the restart for careless use of an arm and Pagnell had a purple patch in the first fifteen minutes of the second half. Corry went full length to push away a shot from Lyon but his best save was from a Tinsley back header that looked destined for the back of the net. St Neots then broke away to snatch the lead when after the second of two corners Lawes unselfishly set up Vince Petty for his second goal in successive matches. However Pagnell were still having the greater share of second half play and Ben Hill's second goal from the edge of the area after 77 minutes squared things up again. After that either side could have won but a share of the points was a fair outcome as neither side deserved to lose.

St Neots: Corry, Clark, Lawes, Griggs (Webb 259m), Taylor, Gatti, Mannion, Jelley, Dellar, Cumberbatch (Hobbs 81m), Petty.

Subs not used: Kingsbury and Bryant