

**Eagle Bitter United Counties League Premier Division**

**St Neots 3 Bourne 0**

The final scoreline only tells part of the story of this match. St Neots kept a clean defensive sheet that allowed them a final margin of victory that flattered them despite a good all round team performance. The other ingredient was the performance of goalkeeper Steve Corry who broke the hearts of the visiting team with four outstanding saves. Bourne like their hosts have undergone an almost complete change of playing personnel since the two sides met in November in the Hinchbrook Cup to the extent that only two of their November players were on show for this second appearance at Rowley Park. They are now a much better side and they can justifiably feel unlucky to have been beaten by a three goals margin.

The visitors started the better of the two sides and Simon Barrick shot wide when he should have opened the scoring and then Steve Corry dived bravely at the feet of Jason Harrison to save. By the half way stage through the first half the reshaped St Neots side had found a rhythm and Jason Gough had to turn a Barry Dellar shot over his own goal to prevent St Neots scoring. The visiting keeper then did well to parry a Dellar chip after Danny Griggs had played him clear. Bourne should have been ahead after 37 minutes when Ronnie Fortune was dispossessed in midfield and Richard Hutchinson crossed to the unmarked Matt Glen who saw his shot hit the post with Corry able to recover to dive on the rebound. Five minutes later St Neots capitalised when the non-stop Griggs was pulled down by Grant Neil and from the resultant penalty kick Ronnie Fortune put St Neots in front with the Bourne defender booked.

After the break with Bourne pushing hard for an equaliser and around the hour mark Corry produced two outstanding saves to go full length to first push over a blockbusting volley from Hutchinson and then push around a post from Chris Grey after the Bourne player had been allowed to go past two defenders. This seemed to shake St Neots back to life and Jason Doggett cleared off the line from St Neots debutant defender Nicky Hurst who had become the fifth player in the last seven games to wear the St Neots no.5 shirt. The points clinching second goal came on 74 minutes when Simon Claridge rose imperiously at the near post to head home a Russell Lawes corner. Four minutes later Danny Griggs justifiably reaped his reward for a lung busting performance to go past the visiting keeper for the third time but this time finishing with an acute shot into the roof of the net. There was still time for Corry to have the last word with another superb save to deny Chris Grey a late consolation goal.

**St Neots:** Corry, Clark, Lawes, Taylor, Hurst, Claridge, Mannion (Jenner 78m), Hobbs, Dellar (Cumberbatch 78m), Griggs (Woodland 85m), Fortune.

**Subs not used:** Bryant and Atkins

**Goals:** (all St Neots) Fortune 42m pen, Claridge 74m, Griggs 78m.