

St. Neots Town F.C. - Match Report 2004/05

Eagle Bitter United Counties League Premier Division

St Neots 3 Blackstones 2

St Neots staged a late rally to score twice in the last thirteen minutes to pick up all three points from an entertaining match. The winning goal came in the final minute of normal time and the result was a complete reversal of the League Cup match at Rowley Park earlier in the season when the visitors triumphed by the odd goal in five. With Cameron Clark and Danny Griggs passing fitness tests before the match the St Neots team was strengthened although still missing skipper Damian Matthews and they began brightly. In the first three minutes they created two good chances with Griggs snatching at a shot that went over the bar and Frank Atkins failing to get any pace behind a shot from ten yards. Steve Corry was then injured by a late challenge that went unpunished and after fifteen minutes he seemed unable to move freely across his line when Kevin Ainsley opened Blackstones account with a goal direct from a free kick that looked to be a very doubtful award. Nicky Hurst should have levelled with a free header from a corner that he misdirected after 28 minutes and then eight minutes later he dithered in midfield and was dispossessed. Ainsley took full advantage pinpointing a cross to find Gareth Williams at the far post whose low shot was deflected past Corry by a defender. Unusually St Neots main threat came from set pieces and on the stroke of half time Simon Claridge had a powerful header well saved by Ollie Faulder from a Russell Lawes corner.

If St Neots felt hard done by at the break they quickly got back into the game with a goal just two minutes after the restart. Tom Hobbs and Danny Griggs were both involved on the left before the final cross found Barry Dellar at the far post for a simple tap-in. St Neots then had an excellent spell creating chances but failing to capitalise. Griggs miskicked in front of goal and Dellar shot wide after being played clear by Griggs. Frank Atkins volleyed into the goalkeepers arms and the only real threat from the visitors came when Richard Nelson went clear and Corry had to save bravely at his feet. A double substitution by St Neots with fourteen minutes left further pepped up their efforts with Ryan Jenner and Clive Woodland introduced and a minute later Simon Claridge timed his run to the far post perfectly to head in a Danny Griggs cross to level the scores. Both sides went for a winner and Steve Corry produced the save of the match to push away a swerving shot by Nelson. With the game moving into added time substitute Ryan Jenner set up the winning goal with a cross to the far post for Claridge to slide in for his second goal of the game and take his tally to four goals in as many matches. In the five minutes added time Blackstones twice went close but Williams failed to connect with the ball in front of an empty net and Corry saved well from Ainsley. The three points lifted St Neots up one place to ninth in the league table.

St Neots: Corry, Clark, Lawes, Taylor, Hurst, Claridge, Mannion (Jenner 76m), Hobbs (Woodland 76m), Dellar, Atkins, Griggs.

Subs not used: Cumberbatch, Jordan & Holmes.

Goals: (St Neots) Dellar 47m, Claridge 77m & 90m.
(Blackstones) Ainsley 15m, Williams 36m.