

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

### Eagle Bitter United Counties League Premier Division

St Neots 0 Holbeach 2

Holbeach renewed their credentials as potential league champions with this victory that lifted them to within nine points of leaders Cogenhoe with three games in hand. In the end it was a routine enough victory but there were two contributory factors that had a great bearing on the result. After an hour St Neots keeper Steve Corry sustained a serious knee injury when he collided with Tom Gosling as he attempted to block an angled shot. After a delay of more than ten minutes Corry was stretchered off to be replaced by veteran Barry Cavilla who was on the bench. After making one outstanding save Cavilla was at fault with the second goal that sealed the result. In addition St Neots were the architects of their own downfall because despite having at least their share of play they seemed unable to pass the ball accurately and constantly gave it back to their very experienced opponents.

St Neots thought they had got off to the perfect start for in the second minute Pete Saunders netted with a header from an Adam Smith cross but the effort was ruled out because one of his colleagues was in an offside position. However St Neots dominated much of the first half with the free scoring visitors restricted to only two real chances. A poor back pass by Nicky Hurst forced Corry into a hasty clearance that struck an oncoming forward and tricked just wide of the empty net and then Holbeach leading scorer Shaun Keeble shot tamely at goal when clear. Meantime at the other end St Neots were creating several good chances with Barry Dellar robbed by an outstanding save by visiting keeper Kevin Cross before he glanced a header agonisingly wide of the far post. Pete Saunders also had two shots off target after good approach play and it was some surprise that Holbeach were still on terms at the break. In the first period after half time both Saunders and Hurst might have put St Neots in front but both blazed over the crossbar to the relief of the visiting side. Holbeach then took the lead with a soft goal when Nick Keeble's free kick from fully 40 yards lobbed into the goalmouth was misjudged by both defenders and goalkeeper and it crept almost apologetically into the far corner of the net. Corry's unfortunate injury saw the game take on a different complexion.

St Neots became more cautious no doubt aware of the need to protect their replacement keeper and Holbeach began to take the initiative for the first time. Shaun Keeble and Tom Gosling both had chances to extend the lead and Cavilla pounced on a close range effort but three minutes from the end of the routine ninety a shot was blocked and fell to David Cobb whose shot deflected off Cavilla's body into the net with the keeper appearing to be unsighted. There were more than ten minutes added time to compensate for the delay but St Neots failed to create a goal scoring chance and skipper Russell Lawes saved further embarrassment with a goal line clearance to deny Steve Barnes and third goal for the visitors.

**St Neots:** Corry (Cavilla 60m), Matthews, Lawes, Taylor, Hurst, Claridge, Clark (Woodland 76m), Hobbs, Saunders (Flack 83m), Smith, Dellar.

**Subs not used:** Bryant and Mannion.