

St. Neots Town Football Club  
Season 2006-07 Match Reports

**Buckingham 4 St Neots 1**

Although the final score line only suggests a marginal improvement St Neots bounced back well from their weekend mauling at Cogenhoe to give a good account of themselves at Buckingham and there were two main factors behind this defeat. Firstly they were left rueing the squandering of three excellent first half chances whilst they were clearly having the better of the match and secondly they can justifiably claim to be unlucky with two of the goals coming from shots that were parried and a third resulting from an unfortunate deflection. New signings Wes Byrne led the attack with great enthusiasm but no luck and defender John Lewis settled in quickly to look a ready made replacement for the injured Russell Lawes. Byrne's pedigree and considerable UCL experience is well documented from his spells at Stotfold, Potton and of course at Rowley Park. He played in Saints colours for three seasons from 2000 scoring 56 goals and he is a prize signing for Manager Steve Young.

There was an explosive start to the match with Buckingham scoring after just 70 seconds but St Neots came back to level three minutes later. The first goal came from a Marcus Sawyer corner and a close range Rueben Max-Grant header well parried by Martyn Patching but the big Buckingham striker followed up to force home from close range. The equaliser came from Craig Reynolds who spotted Reece Kirk off his line and cheekily chipped the ball over his head from some 40 yards. St Neots then created three great chances but a Nicky Hurst set piece header was cleared off the line by Jamie O'Grady, Joe Jordan shot disappointingly off target after being played clear by Sean Murray and then Reynolds spurned his chance of a second goal heading wide with only Kirk to beat. The only other notable Buckingham chance came a minute before the break when Patching bravely blocked at the feet of Richard Smith.

The second half brought a distinct change in fortunes. Buckingham came out looking determined and positive and the St Neots defence had to work hard to contain their elusive and swift running attackers. Patching saved well from Ma-Grant but on the hour Richard Smith produced an electric burst of pace to beat patching to the ball to lob it over him and the retreating Scott Grant just failed to reach the ball as it crossed the line. Lewis then cleared a second Smith effort off the line and as the match went into the last quarter St Neots seemed to run out of steam conceding two further goals to give the home side a very flattering margin. Firstly a Marcus Sawyer cross was deflected to Richard Smith who was left unmarked to beat Patching from ten yards and then the keeper did well to throw himself to parry a Smith header from a corner but in vain as Dave Hocking followed in to drive the ball low into the net. St Neots were then denied a late consolation goal when Joe Jordan sent Wes Byrne clear but his shot just grazed the wrong side of the far post.

**Team:** Martyn Patching, Tom Moran, John Lewis, Scott Grant, Nicky Hurst, James Warboys (Tom Coles 83 mins), Craig Reynolds, Joe Jordan, Wes Byrne Sean, Murray, Mark Franklin.

**Subs not used:** David Coles, Ryan Hunt and Steve Young.

**Goal:** Craig Reynolds (4 mins)