

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

FA VASE ROUND ONE
St Neots 2 Blackstones 1

St Neots produced what will be regarded as a surprise result as they toppled the in-form visiting Blackstones side to progress to the Second Round of the FA Vase. Blackstones were surprisingly easily contained by a St Neots side showing four changes from that which had played at Buckingham in midweek. The match was a personal return triumph for Russell Lawes who had missed the last five matches through injury for he laid on both goals that game in the opening 24 minutes of the match. A feature of the St Neots performance was their individual and collective effort throughout the ninety minutes against a side fourth in the league table whose free scoring record had seen them knock in twenty one goals so far this season – almost twice as many as their hosts. However the St Neots defence were so effective that the visitors substituted both of their striker's midway through the second half.

St Neots looked determined from the start and created two early chances but Robbie Blowers cleared off the line from Joe Jordan and Mark Franklin looked to be brought down in the area but his penalty appeals were waved away. However after 19 minutes a carefully flighted cross from Russell Lawes picked out the unmarked Ashley Deverall at the far post and his clinical volley from twelve yards put St Neots ahead. Five minutes later the score was doubled as Deverall was fouled just outside the area and Lawes' stinging free kick was dropped by Ian Flavell and Sean Murray was quickly in to stab the ball home. Richard Jones wasted Blackstone's best first half chance heading wide from a Kevin Ainslie corner and the first half was marred by an unsightly flare up. With Sean Murray lying injured from an off the ball incident Ashley Deverall got too involved with a group of defenders and was booked by the Referee. The match then became rather flat until the break but the resumption produced a change.

Blackstones looked really fired up and for ten minutes or so they looked the better side. After 48 minutes they bundled the ball into the net but an eagle eyed Assistant Referee flagged for a push on a defender. However two minutes later a downward header from St Neots skipper Nicky Hurst had no length and the ball fell to Elton Holmes who hit an unstoppable half volley past the statuesque Martyn Patching who looked unsighted. St Neots had to substitute the injured Gary Hoy sending on substitute Kevin Ashby and gradually St Neots recovered from their setback and in the last quarter of the match they looked the more likely side to add to their tally. A close range Murray shot was pushed for a corner and Mark Franklin shot wide after drifting past two defenders. Craig Reynolds had a shot blocked on the line and Joe Jordan should have wrapped up the victory in injury time when he contrived to find the side netting from close range after skilful work by Deverall. Blackstones rather dismal FA Vase record continued and in addition they had Manager Tony Lowther sent off for abusing one of the Match Officials but for St Neots it was only their second win in eleven games and their first at Rowley Park since the end of August.

Team: Martyn Patching, Gary Hoy (Kevin Ashby 55 mins), Russell Lawes, Scott Grant, Nicky Hurst, Ben Singleton, Craig Reynolds, Joe Jordan, Ashley Deverall, Sean Murray, Mark Franklin.

Subs not used: David Coles, Ryan Hunt, James Warboys and Rory McKay.

Goals: Ashley Deverall (19 mins) and Sean Murray (24 mins))