

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

UCL Premier Division
St Neots 1 Wellingborough 3

If a week is a long time in politics it is certainly a long time for a goalkeeper and brings a dramatic change in fortune. Seven days before this match Ryan Hunt was feted as St Neots hero as he kept a clean sheet to earn his side a point at Stewart and Lloyds but in this match he finished as the villain – at fault for all three goals scored by the new Premier Division leaders. However the spotlight was taken by Referee Mark Glading who sent off St Neots Manager Steve Young and went on to book seven players –four from St Neots, and then after the final whistle he appeared to wave his red card at a St Neots player as he left the pitch. It was never a dirty match with most of the bookings for mistimed rather than malicious challenges but clearly the misconduct will feature in team availability early in the New Year. It took less than twenty seconds for the first yellow card to be waved as Ashley Deverall mistimed the first tackle of the match. Five minutes later there was controversy as a free kick was awarded on the penalty area and Tim Wooding floated a free kick into the net with Hunts looking out of position behind his defensive wall. The decision infuriated Steve Young and after an animated exchange with the Referee he was despatched to the stand. Hunt did make amends with a fine back breaking save to turn a shot from Malcolm Ndekwe over the crossbar and St Neots then dominated for the last twenty minutes of the first half with Wes Byrne heading wide from a Craig Reynolds cross when scoring looked easier, Richard Beckett sending a volley just inches wide and a close range effort from Byrne rebounded off the back to be scrambled clear.

Wellingborough were showing little to suggest that they are title favourites but in their first significant second half attack they doubled their lead. A long floated free kick by Tim Wooding reached a packed penalty area where Ryan Hunt called for the ball but missed his attempted punch and the ball fell kindly for Adam Hancock to head into the unguarded net. That served to inspire St Neots to an impressive spell of counter attacking in which Wes Byrne could have had a hat trick in four minutes. Twice he was clear of the defence with only John Hughes to beat but each time the keeper managed to spread himself to deflect the ball wide of goal and then Byrne rapped the post with a volley. Then after 69 minutes Ryan Nash crossed from the right and Ryan Hunt clearly misjudged the cross once again presenting a simple finish this time for Malcolm Ndekwe. Four minutes later Wes Byrne got an overdue reward for his efforts when he converted an Ashley Deverall through pass and at that stage Wellingborough decided to sit on their 3-1 advantage and see out the last seventeen minutes. A series of substitutions served as an effective time waster and although St Neots had the lion's share of possession they were unable to make any further inroads on the deficit.

Team: Ryan Hunt, James Dillnut, Rory McKay (Gary Christie 81 mins), Kevin Ashby, Richard Beckett, Craig Reynolds, Ben Singleton, Ashley Deverall, Wes Byrne, Mark Franklin, Joe Jordan (Sean Murray 46 mins).

Subs not used: Scott Grant, Tom Moran, Tom Mallins.

Goal: Wes Byrne (73 minutes).

Man of the Match: Ben Singleton