

St. Neots Town Football Club
Season 2007-08 Match Reports

UCL Premier Division
Potton 1 St Neots Town 1

After being outplayed for the first half Potton mounted a very impressive comeback after the break to deservedly prevent St Neots from another three points haul. It was the second successive time that St Neots had led only to surrender a draw away from home and it now seems that Manager Scott Houghton must turn his attention to the ability of his players to turn possession into goals. He made two team changes from the side that had completed the match at Sleaford bringing in John Coley for Ryan Francis and recalling Mark Franklin for David Fisk. It was a very competitive match with both teams creating chances in the final stages of the match that could have seen them finish with all three points.

After some early skirmishes that were very even with few direct attempts on goal it was St Neots that began to dictate the pattern of play. Steve Kuhne had a good header blocked by a defender and he then volleyed spectacularly over the bar from a cross by the lively Barrington Belgrave. Apart from one deflected cross from Craig Lanham Potton produced little to bother their former Manager Roy Bloxham in the St Neots goal until Shibli Miah forced him into an important tip over the bar with a well placed shot after 22 minutes. St Neots were enjoying far more of the possession but their finishing was poor with both Jon Hoggett and Steve Kuhne shooting over the crossbar after good crosses in both cases from Mark Franklin. Five minutes before half time in a concerted period of St Neots pressure Belgrave brought a good save at full stretch from home keeper Aaron Loney at the expense of a corner from which Steve Kuhn's header beat the goalkeeper but Potton's man of the match John Mulholland cleared off the line. However St Neots did get their reward for their first half performance in the final minute of the half. Kuhne was brought down two yards outside the penalty area and whilst the home defence were attempting to organise a defensive wall Russell Lawes placed a quickly taken free into the corner of the net beyond the keeper's reach.

The match took a dramatic turn with two minutes of the restart. First the under employed Bloxham did well to block a shot from Miah with his feet after the striker had got behind the defence but in their next attack Potton equalised as John Mulholland used his height to out jump his marker and head a Miah corner into the net at the near post. Now Potton looked to have the initiative and Jason Thomas brought a good save from Bloxham. The match then developed into a very tactical contest with far fewer direct attempts on goal at either end but it was Potton who looked the more dangerous with far too many of the St Neots moves breaking down as a result of inaccurate passing. The introduction on the left of Ryan Francis for Mark Barry gave St Neots a more attacking shape but the match began to look like finishing in stalemate. However there was a late flourish by both sides as they sought a victory. Belgrave was denied what looked like a penalty when he was brought down and then Bloxham made an important save from Thomas. St Neots had the final word with two more potential match winning chances. First Francis rounded a defender and cut in to bring the save of the match from Loney and then a strong header by Nathan Buckland from the resultant corner was cleared off the line by Mulholland.

Saints: Bloxham, Finch, Russell, Hoggett, Buckland, Belgrave, Franklin, Lawes, Kuhne, Coley, Barry.

Subs: Francis (for Barry 46 mins), Fisk, Ashby, Fehmi & Patching.

Scorer: Russell Lawes (45 mins)

MOM: Russell Lawes