

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

UCL Premier Division
St Neots Town 0 Cogenhoe 0

This was the first 0-0 score line in a match at Rowley Park since August 2006 and it is only the second time this season that St Neots have failed to score in 33 league and cup matches. That said it would be wrong to heap all the blame on the strikers because although chances were missed the real reason for this rather boring draw was the lack of quality in the passing of the ball throughout the team. St Neots dominated for much of the match and their excellent defensive play meant that Cogenhoe's Rob Foster who is the leading scorer in the UCL with 26 goals was restricted to just one serious shot on goal. Behind the defence goalkeeper Jon Chatfield produced another solid performance making two outstanding saves and despite the absence of suspended regulars Danny Marlow and Luigi Rocco the overall shape of the side did not suffer. There was also a very promising home debut by Luke Maitland and as is obvious the only missing ingredient was a goal.

The first half started slowly and continued in the same vein but St Neots could have been ahead after just seven minutes when a beautifully weighted forward pass from Mark Burrows allowed Kevin Byrne to beat the offside trap but he delayed his shot and visiting keeper Darren Watts was able to push the ball for a corner. With the tireless Jon Hoggett and Ivan Finch imperious in midfield Cogenhoe seldom got far enough forward to create a genuine chance and from a Maitland cross following a neat move down the right Jon Hoggett's powerful header was just too high. Then after 34 minutes Maitland cleverly beat the last defender only to see Watts produce a quality save. Cogenhoe then came close to opening the scoring with a rare attack in which a low Ben Holley shot took a nasty deflection off the shins of a defender but Chatfield was able to change direction and push the shot away.

The second half was marginally better and after St Neots had failed to capitalise on two good openings on the hour Foster had his only shot from a narrow angle on the hour saved comfortably by Chatfield. It was time to shake up the home side and they send on two substitutes in Mark Franklin and Ryan Francis but neither made a significant impact. After 76 minutes in the same attack St Neots were pulled apart at the back for the only time and they owed a big debt of gratitude to Chatfield who bravely threw himself at the feet of both Foster and Malcolm Ndweke in swift succession to smother close range efforts. After that Cogenhoe looked happy with their point and although Luke Maitland had two shots that might have won the match both were well gathered by Watts. After playing so well against three top sides this stalemate was a real disappointment but it extended St Neots unbeaten run to six matches during which time four drawn results have cost them a possible eight points.

Saints: Chatfield, Russell, Bloss, Burrows, Dogbe, Hoggett, Barry, Fisk, Byrne, Finch, Maitland.

Subs: Franklin (for Barry 65 mins), Francis (for Fisk 65 mins), McElroy (for Russell 83 mins), Ashby & Cole.

Man of the Match: Mark Burrows