

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

Hunts Senior Cup: Quarter Final
Potton United 1 St Neots Town 0

St Neots final interest in cup competition this season was snuffed out at Potton in a very disappointing midweek match in the Hinchingsbrooke Cup. It was all frustration for St Neots as their side significantly weakened by injury to four players enjoyed the bulk of possession and created two scoring chances to every one by their hosts but still achieved very little. The only time they got the ball in the Potton net midway through the second half the effort was cancelled out by an offside flag and the overall performance underlined just how limited their ability is in front of goal. Just one moment of defensive weakness in the first half was exploited by a struggling Potton side as they clinched what proved to be the winning goal and now in the crucial run in to the end of their league programme St Neots must rebuild confidence and rediscover their goal scoring touch.

Both sides created an early scoring chance with home keeper Joe Pursell saving a header from Jon Hoggett after a penetrative cross from Mark Franklin whilst at the other end Jon Chatfield tipped a dipping shot from Mark Boland over the crossbar. The sides continued to swap openings as Michael O'Farrell split the St Neots defence with a clever back heel to release Nathan Frater and Chatfield had to be alert to parry his shot and as play switched to the other end St Neots debutant John Bitting produced a rising first time shot well saved by Pursell. As half time approached a low shot by Kevin Byrne was blocked by a defender but with less than a minute remaining with St Neots looking defensively short John Mulholland released Michael O'Farrell and he slid his shot past the advancing Chatfield for a sucker punch goal.

St Neots came out on the offensive after the break and for ten minutes the Potton goal led a charmed life. Ryan Francis and Kevin Byrne combined cleverly to set up Jon Hoggett but his header was disappointingly high, Francis then wriggled past the last defender and goalkeeper only to see Nick Doherty clear off the line and then a near post flick by Ivan Finch was also cleared off the line by Dean Chapman with the keeper beaten. John Bitting then sent a shot past both the keeper and the far post but was then replaced by Barrington Belgrave as St Neots strove to maintain their grip on the game. Potton briefly threatened but only in breakaway attacks and Michael O'Farrell should have clinched the result when played clear by Frater but he sent his shot high over the bar. The closest St Neots came to levelling the scores was when a deflected shot from Ivan Finch was kept out by the outstretched hand of the home keeper and Potton packed their defence to survive the last five minutes. It was an overall performance that deserved at least extra time but as one disgruntled visiting supporter remarked 'if you can't score goals you will win nothing!'

Saints: Chatfield, McElroy, Bloss, Russell, Dogbe, Hoggett, Finch, Bitting, Franklin, Francis, Byrne.

Subs: Belgrave (for Bitting 59 mins), Ashby, Fisk, Fox & Parr.

Man of the Match: Jon Hoggett