

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

UCL Reserve Divisions One
Woodford res. 0 St Neots Town res. 5

With several of the Reserve side rested ahead of their midweek Cup Final, St Neots Manager opted to field his senior team defence in this match at Woodford. As expected they conceded nothing to a very youthful home side but it was pleasing to see the performances of the younger players in the St Neots side. However a summary of the overall team performance might read as follows: Skill and quality – excellent; approach play and general control – impressive; Finishing – not up to required standard. The visitors totally dominated the match and carved out chance after chance but some wayward finishing coupled with some good goalkeeping by home keeper Andy Humphries left St Neots having to settle for five goals – three of which came in the last ten minutes.

From the start St Neots laid siege to the Woodford goal. Humphries saved a sharp shot from Chris Johnson and John Hall shot just wide but after 10 minutes the visitors went ahead as Johnson and James Hall shredded the home defence with three precise passes and Johnson's low shot beat the keeper. Dean Hamilton then joined the attack but saw his shot rebound from a post and Andy Wale saw his effort deflected over the bar by a defender. James Hall then rounded the keeper but contrived to shoot over the empty net from six yards and from a narrow angle Johnson struck the woodwork. Then after 33 minutes a superb forward pass from Mark Burrows played Chris Johnson clear of the defence and his delightful lob gave the advancing keeper no chance. From a set piece Mark Burrows should have increased the lead but his free header passed the wrong side of a post. Right on half time Woodford manager their first serious attack but the under employed Jon Chatfield saved at the feet of Sam Haynes.

After the break James Hall set up his brother whose shot from ten yards was too high and then substitute Tony Russell fired over the bar from close range. Substitute Stuart Pink had only been on the field for 15 minutes when he suffered a recurrence of his ankle injury but this only let on Charlie Farmer for his senior debut. The home side tired very quickly and St Neots camped in the Woodford half in the final fifteen minutes. John Hall twice missed his chance of adding his name to the score sheet and Dean McElroy became the third St Neots player to be thwarted by the woodwork. Then after 80 minutes a scintillating burst of pace by James Hall saw him leave two defenders behind and his unselfish cross set up Andy Wale for his goal to extend the score to 3-0. A minute later the lively Dean Hamilton added his name to the scorers list after more impressive work by James Hall and it was appropriate that the final goal right on time should come from James Hall set up by his brother and Hamilton.

Reserves: Chatfield, McElroy, Bloss, Hamilton, Burrows, Dogbe, Marlow, Wale, Johnson, James Hall & Jon Hall.

Subs: Russell (for Burrows 46 mins), Pink (for Johnson 55 mins), Farmer (for Pink 70 mins).

Man of the match: James Hall