

St. Neots Town F.C.
Season 2005-06 Match Report

UCL PREMIER DIVISION

St Neots 4 Potton 1

This was real Roy of the Rovers stuff. League leaders Potton came to St Neots looking for a fourth consecutive victory over the Saints but home player/manager Steve Kuhne himself a Potton player last season decided not to read the script. He contributed a personal hat trick as St Neots toppled their neighbours and now in just four days St Neots have beaten the top two sides in cup and league respectively. The wind made it difficult for the sides but St Neots always looked in control and Potton's ambitions were blunted when substitute Andy Carter was sent off for a reckless and dangerous tackle on Nicky Hurst after just twelve minutes on the field. In the end despite showing defiance when reduced to ten men Potton were a well-beaten side and really did not do themselves justice with their overall display. Although it was only St Neots second home victory of the season it will boost their confidence.

St Neots keeper Stefan Shamlian had to produce a full length save in the opening minute to turn away a Wes Byrne header but then there was a quiet spell before St Neots edged ahead. The goal came from a perfectly delivered Russell Lawes free kick headed back across goal to be swept in by Steve Kuhne. Shamlian then did well to leave his line to rob John Coley who was clear but clear chances were few considering that Potton are the leading divisional scorers with 31 goals so far this season. Both Byrne and Dave Brown wasted chances for the visitors and at the other end Brad Gilham produced a fine reflex save to keep out a powerful header from Nicky Hurst. With their Manager removed from the technical area for abusing an Assistant Referee Potton were showing signs of indiscipline as Luke Donnelly was booked for dissent.

The second half started in spectacular style after two minutes as Nathan Buckland freed Cameron Clark on the overlap and his cross to the far post was turned in by Mark Franklin to register his first goal in St Neots colours. Nathan Buckland then had a net bound shot turned over the bar by Gilham as St Neots pressed and after 54 minutes an electrifying run down the left flank by Franklin saw him leave two defenders behind as he crossed for Steve Kuhne to increase the lead to 3-0 with an unstoppable header. After 71 minutes there was a slight St Neots wobble when Nicky Hurst headed a Paul Donnelly cross into his own net but three minutes later Potton were reduced to ten men following that awful tackle. To their credit they threw caution to the wind and worked hard enough to make their player shortage not seem apparent. However there were gaps at the back and after Gilham had denied Gary Walker with a close range save Danny Griggs was hauled down in the area by Colin Shambrook and after a farcical delay in which Gilham was booked for ungentlemanly conduct Kuhne joyfully completed his hat trick from the penalty spot to take his goals tally to 18 this season in just 19 matches.

St Neots: Shamlian, Clark, Lawes, Matthews, Hurst, Hoggett, Griggs, Buckland, Kuhne, Walker (Weedon 90m), Franklin (Dellar 80m).

Sub not used: Brown, Moule, Fox

Goals: Kuhne (3) 13 min, 54m & 88m (pen) - Franklin 47m