

St. Neots Town Football Club
Season 2006-07 Match Reports

SATURDAY 26/8/06
EAGLE BITTER UCL PREMIER DIVISION
St Neots 1 Ford Sports 0

Some of Steve Kuhne's anxieties melted away as his side delivered its overdue first League victory of the season against a very average Fords Sports team. The three points and the clean sheet were very welcome but there are still issues to be sorted because this was nothing like the St Neots side that were beaten only once at Rowley Park in the last two months of last season. Defensively skipper Jon Hoggett and Nicky Hurst were sound but in midfield neither Ricky Dear or Simon Claridge looked fully fit and the service to the strikers was very poor despite St Neots having much the better of the possession. The goal was an oasis in the desert of a dour match with Matt Endersby producing an inspired finish to earn the victory and leave Fords pointless just one place off the foot of the table.

St Neots began well winning three corners in the first five minutes and from the third a looping header by Nicky Hurst beat the keeper and bounced on the crossbar to safety. The visiting goalkeeper was the busiest man on the field but never seriously tested as Steve Kuhne volleyed high over the bar but from an Endersby cross Rob Morgan misdirected a header and the keeper had to push away at full length. A Mark Franklin lob was gathered and at the other end debutant Ryan Hunt had little to do but looked confident dealing with crosses into the box. Kuhne had two further first half chances but was twice off target and towards the break both sides began to show frustration picking up a couple of unnecessary bookings apiece.

A rare Ford Sports opening saw Jon Crocket fire narrowly over the bar and at the other end Nicky Hurst headed wide from a Russell Lawes free kick. Just before the hour St Neots had their two best chances up to that point as Gary Walker angled a shot just past the far post after neat work by Simon Claridge and then from an Endersby corner Kuhne went full length to head goalwards but Roger Leeson pushed the ball for another corner – St Neots tenth indicating how much possession they were enjoying. However Fords were growing in confidence and Chris Trill should have scored with a free header from six yards but he put the ball wide. The introduction of substitute Sean Murray was a brave gamble by St Neots who had an extra forward reverting to three at the back. Murray upset the defenders and twice went close but the match winning goal came from nothing as a clearance found Matt Endersby 25 yards from goal and he pulled the ball down before unleashing the perfectly placed volley to beat Leeson. Fords had nothing to lose and pushed forward but the much criticised St Neots defence held firm and Ryan Hunts completed his first clean sheet in St Neots colours without having to make a serious save.

Team: Hunt, Grant, Lawes, Dear, Hurst, Hoggett (Murray 70 mins), Franklin, Claridge, Kuhne, Walker, Endersby.

Goal: Endersby (81 mins)

Subs not used: Sommers, Richardson and Hilton

Saints man of the match: Nicky Hurst