

St. Neots Town Football Club  
Season 2008-09 Match Reports

UCL Premier Division  
**Holbeach 2 St Neots 2**

With the first team squad stretched to the limit by suspension, injury and unavailability St Neots would almost certainly have been happy with a point from their Holbeach visit before the match but in the event they returned home thinking that they could have finished up with all three points. The result however stretched St Neots unbeaten run to four matches in league and cup and confidence appears to be growing after their bad run of results in late September. It was a goal in injury time at the end of the first half that saw Holbeach drag themselves back into the contest and then with a spirited second half performance they got the goal that earned them their point. St Neots gave Reserve defender Kevin Ashby his senior debut this season and he fitted in remarkably well alongside Ben Dyett in the absence of Steve Dogbe and Dean McElroy as defensively St Neots looked very sound. Conditions were never easy with a swirling wind and intermittent rain but the sides served up a very competitive game with a draw probably a fair result.

There was a scrappy start to the match with any rhythm by either side being upset by a string of free kicks. Eventually the Referee decided that a booking might settle the sides and Luke Knight was the unfortunate victim. However he was followed into the book by Adam Broom but then the match settled and St Neots had three good chances to take the lead. James Hall headed over the bar, Ben Dyett beat the home keeper in the air to a Declan Rogers free kick but saw his header loop over the bar and then Matt Kenneford relishing his chance to lead the line shot just wide. However St Neots deservedly took the lead five minutes before the break when Stacy Cartwright hauled down Luigi Rocco and Declan Rogers tucked away the resultant penalty kick – his third goal in four games.. Three minutes later the lead was doubled as Dean Elston misjudged a clearance and the ball squirmed loose to James Hall who tucked away a low shot to claim his first goal since the beginning of September. The time added on for injuries at the end of the first half proved unfortunate for the visitors as poor marking permitted Tommy Treacher to cross from the bye line for Ross Nichols to net with a crisp shot.

It was the home side who began the second half better. Nichols took a return pass from Liam Nimmo to go past the last defender but as he bore down on goal Chatfield left his line to block the shot with his feet. However Holbeach were not to be denied and Broom's cross found Nichols on the right and he wrong footed the defence by returning the ball to the far post for Tommy Treacher to angle a header just inside the far post. Back on terms Holbeach then seemed to lose the rhythm and St Neots almost regained the lead as Ben Dyett flicked a Knight cross into the side netting and Luigi Rocco shot narrowly over the bar. Home keeper James Doughty then produced the save of the match to push around a post a shot from Rocco than had been deflected by a defender and both James Hall and Jon Hoggett sent their shots wide. With Holbeach looking happy to settle for a point St Neots finished the stronger of the two sides but a third goal from them proved elusive.

**St Neots:** Chatfield, McElroy (K), Jon Hall, Hoggett, Dyett, Ashby, Rocco, Knight, Kenneford, James Hall, Rogers.

**Subs:** (neither used) Bannister & Johnson

**Man of the Match:** Ben Dyett