

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

Hunts Senior Cup  
**Eynesbury Rovers 2 St Neots Town 0**

Three second half incidents proved to be the defining moments in this Senior Cup shock result. Two of those in the space of ninety seconds were outstanding saves by Eynesbury keeper Dave Beeney that kept his side in the match and the third was the sending off of Ben Dyett and subsequent penalty award that put the home side firmly in control. Just fourteen minutes were remaining in a match looking destined for extra time when Dwayne Rankin's electric burst of pace took him clear of the St Neots defence and Dyett's last ditch tackle took down the striker. As he was the last defender Referee Colin Reeve had no option within the law and the St Neots man had to go. Jamie Graham's 22nd goal of the season from the penalty spot was to prove pivotal as Eynesbury progressed to their first Senior Cup semi-final for five years. St Neots were again left rueing missed chances – one especially in the first half when James Hall contrived to shoot wide from just six yards. Eynesbury now travel to last seasons' runners up St Ives in the semi-final.

Eynesbury began the brighter of the two sides with a blend of inventive attacking football and solid defence but apart from one early effort when Jamie Graham just failed to get on the end of a Mark Davis cross there was little goalmouth action. St Neots first real attempt on goal arrived after 19 minutes when a Declan Rogers free kick was comfortably saved and four minutes later Hall's glaring miss came from a Matt Kenneford cross with the home defence absent. Sam Kingston almost played Graham clear but he was unable to control the cross and the game became over competitive and untidy with Tim Lenihan and Chris Brown (Rovers) and James Hall (St Neots) all booked. The goalless first half was a true reflection of much misplaced effort by both sides with neither looking in control.

The first twenty minutes after the break saw St Neots in control. They settled quickly with a Parys Okai free kick over the bar and Beeney saving well from a rising shot by Kenneford. The two Beeney saves saw St Neots unlucky not to go ahead. First Hall and Rogers cleverly combined to set up Josh Sozzo but on his line Beeney made the save of the match and less than two minutes later Sozzo went clear of the defence after good work by Matt Bannister and as he attempted to go round the advancing keeper Beeney swooped to take the ball off his toes. Sozzo then set up Rogers but his finish was wild and high and as the tempo eased Rovers seemed to find a higher gear. Dwayne Rankin and Graham were proving a lively handful for the St Neots defenders and the penalty incident changed the course of the match. St Neots with little to lose opted to play just three at the back and sent on Pete Okechukwu to boost their attacking options. However they left themselves defensively exposed and three minutes from time Rankin went clear only to be impeded by goalkeeper Lee Crockett who had rushed from his area. The keeper may have been lucky only to be booked but two minutes later Kingston's perfect through pass freed Jamie Graham and he calmly slotted the ball past the exposed goalkeeper to clinch his sides' victory.

**St Neots:** Crockett, Bannister, Okai, Hoggett, Dogbe, Dyett, Kenneford, Knight, Sozzo, James Hall, Rogers.

**Subs:** Okechukwu (for Kenneford 82 mins), Thomas, Jon Hall, Ridgway & Smith.

**Man of the Match:** Matt Bannister