

Sunday's Match Report: Ruscombe 0 v 1 Bethel

Bethel gave the right response to last week's fiasco as they bounced back with a professional 1 nil win and get their first 3 points on board.

After having the distraction of refereeing last week, this was Manger Greg Lyford's first chance to concentrate purely on getting the team set and tackling head on the challenges of Division 1 football.

With Richard Gosden & Dominic Atherley-Smith not available this week and Tim Gash not fully fit, in came Adi Vaughan on the Left Wing, Saul Peedell at Left Back and debut for Michael Haynes at Centre Back.

Team: Kevan; Torres, Adrian "H", Michael, Saul; Oli, Stu, Louis, Adi; Serge Shane

Subs: Sean, Ali, Tim, Greg

The game got off to a steady start as both teams seemed not to know much about each other, so were just probing away for the first 15 minutes or so, as each made sure they didn't give anything away.

As the half wore on, Bethel soon started to find space in behind the Ruscombe wing-backs, especially as all 3 of their centre-back had to concentrate on dealing with Shane Newton, who was proving to be a bit of bull in china shop as he contested & muscled for every ball Bethel played forward.

Saul Peedell pushed forward well from left back as did Torres down the opposite flank and although the crosses into the box weren't bad, they didn't really lead to any clear cut chances for any of the Bethel attackers.

Bethel continued to dominate possession with Ruscombe only really looking dangerous in counter attack situations.

Louis McClean struck a left footed shot wide after being teed up by Captain Stuart Newton, Serge also tried his luck from the edge of the 18yrd box that flew wide and Stuart Newton also let fly from distance which swerved just wide of the angle of post and crossbar.

A good passing move down the right between Oli Gash and Paul 'Torres' Alexander allowed the ball to be shifted inside to McClean who in turn moved the ball quickly to his midfield partner Newton. Stuart took one touch before playing in Peedell inside the penalty area to control and steady himself but unfortunately, fired his shot disappointingly wide.

Half-Time

The second half started off a little scrappy, but soon it developed into a more open game as both teams seem to go for it more, although to be honest for every Ruscombe wave of attack, there would be four Bethel waves, especially down the Left Wing where Adi Vaughan was having bit of purple patch. The best of chances came from Torres, again motored down to the by line and produced a pinpoint cross onto the head of Stuart Newton who headed downward towards the corner only to see keeper react quickly and stop the ball from crossing the line.

With the team needing a little lift on came Ali to Right Wing, with Oli Switching to LW and the knackered Adi coming off.

Bethel were now attacking at will, especially with the fresh legs down the right, and should have taken the lead after calling on Ruscombe keeper to make a double save.

With Ruscombe firmly on the back foot, Greg brought on striker Sean De'Oliveira for his Sunday League debut, with Serge Bahdanovich, who had put in an excellent shift helping out both up top with Shane and dropping back to pick up the extra Ruscombe midfielder, coming off.

Goal 1.0 - The change brought about immediate success as Torres broke up a Ruscombe attack in the right back spot, travelled forward, played the ball out to Ali on Right wing, who then played in Sean. Sean then ran diagonal across the pitch before playing the ball out wide on the left to Oli Gash who was in yards of space and had time to look up and play the ball back across goal right onto the head of **Shane Newton**, who headed in the winner and rounded off an excellent counter attacking move.

With just under 15 minutes to go, Ruscombe really went for it and tried to get themselves back in the game but the centre-back partnership of H & Michael proved too solid. And behind them Keeper Kevan was clearing up everything that did manage to get through.

De'Oliveira then did well to nick the ball from the Ruscombe CB and advanced goal ward only to be denied by a good save from the goalkeeper. The ball then deflected to his strike partner Newton, who stayed composed and teed up De'Oliveira again but the Ruscombe defender managed to get back on the line and clear the danger.

Although in the last 5 minutes Ruscombe created two of their best chances, with one effort crashing off the cross bar after a great block from Torres and the other right at the death when 2 Ruscombe attackers broke forward and with just the keeper to beat, lifted the ball over the advancing Kevan who managed to backtrack before acrobatically palming over the bar.

MoM – It was really hard to single any one player out as everyone put in a real professional performance and more than did their shift. But for today keeper **Kevan Tampling** just edge it as although not under constant pressure, was kept busy enough and dealt with everything that came his way, whether it be rushing out off his line and clearing the ball, collecting crosses, and right at the end a fantastic save that secured all 3 points that every one worked so hard for..