

Amateur Football Combination Report – Saturday 12th April

In the AFA Senior Cup Final, Old Meadonians faced Nottsborough seeking their fourth win in seven seasons. Nottsborough opened the scoring in the first half as Nick Stavri headed home Nathan Violet's cross, and looked likely to hang on for a tight win, but with two minutes to go as the ball ping-ponged around Nottsborough's area, Colin Hawkins crossed for Pete Lovell to head home the equaliser. Into extra time and Nottsborough took the lead early in the second period as Violet again crossed, Alex Ewin flicking home, but Meads fought back and with five minutes left Lovell for his second. Neither side could find a winner, so with the game finishing 2-2, the tie went to penalties. The first four were all converted, only for Lovell to miss his, but Nottsborough's advantage was short lived as their fourth was blazed over the bar, and Shannon Toyne saved Nottsborough's final penalty to clinch the shootout 4-3 for Meadonians in a perfect finale for management duo Rory Vermuelen and Paddy Rumley, going out in a blaze of glory.

Needing a win to cement their position at the top of the Premier Division, Albanian fell behind early to HAC. After a tight, scoreless first half, HAC opened the scoring after seventy minutes as Steve Watson crossed for Nick Koutoufidis to head home. With five minutes to go, Salvatore Ciniotti broke into the box, only to be hauled down by Simon Ball. Ian Leneghan stepped up to convert the penalty and grab a share of the points, but the 1-1 draw opened a chink of daylight for Albanian's rivals.

With Albanian slipping up, third placed Old Parmiterians faced second placed Bealonians at Douglas Eyre. The first half was fairly even, with Parmiterians opening the scoring after twenty minutes, Jay Abberley chipping the defence for Shawn Evans to run on and tuck home. Beals had their chances to equalise, but Alex Salmon dragged his first wide and saw the second well saved by Paul Holland. Into the second half and Parms extended their lead as Evans capitalised on a defensive mistake to fire home his second. Beals fought back, and finally broke their duck as Adam Gray crossed from the right for Salmon to head home. As time ran out, Beals pressed for an equaliser without ever creating any clear chances, and Parms hit them twice on the break, Barry Stevens breaking from defence, feeding Scott Lewis who crossed for Evans to complete his hat-trick, and Evans completed the scoring with his fourth, heading home Abberley's long throw to complete a convincing 4-1 win.

Playing catch up after long cup runs, outside title challengers Old Aloysians travelled to already relegated Enfield Old Grammarians and ran out comfortable 4-0 winners. The first half was tight, Aloysians scoring the only goal as Damien Swann set up Terry O'Neill to lash home, though Enfield looked dangerous on the break. Into the second half, and Enfield continued to press, only to be hit on the break as Charlie Taylor crossed for Chris Thomas to tap home and double Aloysians lead. Enfield continued to press, and in the final five minutes Aloysians scored twice more, Thomas crossing for Daniel O'Donoghue to blast home, and in the final minute Thomas saw a mishit cross sail in at the back post to complete the scoring, and leave Aloysians title hopes still alive, albeit with ten games to go and most of their rivals with a handful.

Needing a win to stave off relegation worries, Old Hamptonians took the lead early in the first half against UCL Academicals through Matt Harrison's fortunate scuffed shot, but Accies quickly equalised through Adam Stainsby. Early in the second half, Hamptonians retook the lead through Andy Gibbons, only to see Ned Carabine cross for Neil Gillard to equalise again. With ten minutes to go, Hamps again took the lead, Max Barron firing home but in the final minute, Simon Sly was brought down for a penalty, and Rick Hirst slotted it home to give Accies a 3-3 draw.