

Amateur Football Combination Report – 24th November 2007

In the FA National League System Cup, for leagues at Step 7 and below, the Amateur Football Combination travelled to play the Sussex County League, the prize being a quarter final tie away to the Guernsey Football League.

In a hard fought contest, and the Sussex County League opened the scoring after 22 minutes slightly against the run of play as a long throw from Darren Mansell was met unchallenged by Christian Sorensen to crash a header past Jason Sudan. The goal knocked the stuffing out of the AFC who took time to regroup, but just before half time drew level as Colin Gardner latched onto an inswinging corner to volley home at the near post.

With the momentum at the start of the second half, the AFC flew at the Sussex League, and camped in their half for the first twenty minutes, finally making the pressure tell as Leon Smith and Peter Eguae combined down the right to cross for Dave Harding to tuck in from six yards to take the lead. Sussex threw an extra man forward, but the AFC looked the likelier to add to the score, Smith and Eguae both spurning chances, but at the death Sussex looked to have found the equaliser, but Gary Holmes' shot flew back off the crossbar to leave the AFC 2-1 winners.

The only Premier Division fixture saw Albanian trounce Enfield Old Grammarians. Albanian opened their account quickly as Joe Lyons' corner fell to Salvatore Ciniotti six yards out, and soon after they extended their lead as Ciniotti's shot was parried, Steve Lenehan pouncing to score the second. Enfield soon pulled one back, Mark Partridge's free kick volleyed in superbly by Mat Williams, but Albanian immediately hit back as Eamonn Keane took the ball from half way, beat three or four men, and following a one-two with Squirt tucked home. Before half time Keane added his second following another mazy run, firing home low inside the left hand post.

4-1 up at half time, Albanian extended their lead as Lenehan half-volleyed a mishit clearance home, and completed their scoring as Adrian McMorrow won a penalty conceded by Neil Jackson, converted by Ciniotti. Enfield grabbed a late consolation, Neil Tilley firing home from twenty yards, but Albanian fully deserved their 6-2 victory.

In the London Old Boys Cup, UCL Academicals continued their recent impressive run with a 3-0 over Sinjuns Grammarians. At a cold and windswept London Colney, Accies opened with some purposeful football but took half an hour to open their account when Andy Crotty tapped in Gareth Jones cross at the far post. Into the second half and Sinjuns Grammarians had the best of the opening exchanges, and Chris Birch won a disputed penalty following a challenge from Dan Chantler, only to see Dave Heard's penalty hit straight at Accies keeper Mark Dawson. With quarter of an hour to go, Dave Jenkin's through ball opened up the Sinjuns defence, Jones tucking home. Ten minutes later Accies sealed the result, Steve Hair setting up Jenkin to stab home at the second attempt to complete the scoring.

Also in LOB action, William Fitt sneaked a five goal thriller against Leyton County. Leyton opened the scoring after five minutes, a Danny Richmond cross falling to Mark Offord to fire home, but chances were few and far between for the rest of the half as the two sides cancelled each other out. After 10 minutes of the second half, Fitt drew level as Vinny Durant broke down the left and crossed for Steve Clerkin to tuck home with his right foot. Leyton bounced back quickly, retaking the lead through Richmond, but Fitt again drew level as Durant broke down the left again, and set up Clerkin for a carbon copy second equaliser. With five minutes left and extra time looming, Durant intercepted a crossfield ball, drew the remaining defenders and found Adam Gregory to slot in comfortably to clinch a 3-2 win.