



Broad Town Colts **V** Stratton Juniors



U11 League Cup, 13th November 2011

Can it really have been a week since we gallant few stood beneath the foreboding overcast, hearts pounding, scarce daring to breath lest the weight of our collective sighs tipped the delicate balance of what shall go down in history as 'The Battle of Beversbrook Field'?

If so, then that can mean only one thing; I have been slacking in my duties as official post match diarist (A deliberate ploy I can assure you. With the passage of time, so clarity of the true facts is dulled and leaves me more artistic licence). Although I'm sure I could say whatever I like and none of you would notice. I bet you haven't even noticed that I'm already two paragraphs to the good and I haven't even mentioned a football yet!

And so to matters at hand. An experimental starting line up saw Ski starting at right back, whilst Tom, the left wing dynamo, got altogether confused and rather carelessly found himself in goal.

A rather lacklustre start to the game saw the Broad Town boys trailing by a goal inside 10 minutes, their lack of cohesion being exploited by the Stratton Juniors attack.

5 minutes later and once again the ball found it's way to the back of the Broad Town goal, thanks in no small part to our boys displaying an uncharacteristic lack of awareness. Cue much running into one another, many people chasing after the ball, and much space for the marauding Stratton to make full use of.

At least it appeared that for once, Matt's pre-match brief had sunk in. I distinctly remember hearing him tell the boys not to give a goal away before they started to play. However, the boys obviously misinterpreted Matt's intentions, and made life even more awkward than usual. Note to Matt... Be less ambiguous!

But then, from the ashes, from the depths of touchline despair, rose the merest hint of hope, the faintest glimmer of possibility, as Wadders managed to get the toe of his big pink dancing shoe in the way of the ball, and prod it into the back of the Stratton goal.

From this, Broad Town seemed to swell with confidence, and burst forth with an onslaught on the Stratton goal that finally bore fruit just five minutes before the end of the half, when Captain Cam once again led by example and emphatically drove the ball home for Broad Town's second. "That's how it's done my boys. Follow me, for where I go only victory lies. Today is a day for heroes. ATTACK!" Cam was heard to say.

But despite the stirring speeches, and Matt's gentle persuasion from the technical area, Stratton Juniors stood fast and soaked up the pressure until half time, leaving both sets of parents hoarse of voice, moist with the perspiration of anxiety and elation, and tense with anticipation. Is anyone else imagining a moist, elated horse? Just me then. What in heavens name am I rambling on about?

Take two. The second half saw a much more composed Broad Town, finally moving the ball around as we know they can, and continuing to exert pressure on the Stratton Juniors goal, but all to no avail.

The now customary Mad Max pile driver from the half way line was tipped over the bar by the hard worked Stratton keeper. The Stratton post was hit. Back came Stratton juniors, leaving the Broad Town post in need of a lick of paint. Tom the stunt keeper was certainly made to earn his keep, fearlessly flinging himself into harms way in defence of the precious point that was presently in our grasp.

At times, Broad Town were penned in their own area, having to dig the ball out like their lives depended on it. At others, Grumpy Grindle would twinkle (it's nearly Christmas) up the right to play in a challenging cross, or cut inside to unleash a shot, and yet nothing, it seemed, would find it's way past the Stratton keeper.

Until, with the dying moments of the game palpably tick....tick.....ticking away, a Broad Town break from deep in their own half finds Cam drawing the Stratton keeper, and then selflessly putting the ball out to his left, straight into the path of the monster feet of Crusty the Clown, cunningly

disguised as Liam.

The ball hit the back of the net; half the crowd roared in relief as half an hours pent up tension became exultation, the other half withered in abject despair as the sweet nectar taste of once certain victory made way for the bitter bile of defeat. In an instant, all of the hopes and deep held dreams that had dared dwell within the hearts of Colts supporters since, well, probably since just before kick-off, blossomed into fruition.

And so to the victors, the spoils; another three points in the bag and a very well earned three points they were boys. You were the very epitome of plucky. In fact, such an overwhelming display of pluck has rarely been witnessed outside of the Bernard Matthews pluck display team!

Sadly I shall not be available to report on what I feel certain will be an exhilarating League and Cup double header weekend; somebody else can take my seat on that rollercoaster.

Also in my absence, there will be no ropey photography. Instead, I would like each of you supporting to capture your favourite moment from either of the two games in the medium of your choice, and forward them to me for scrutiny. There will be a biscuit based prize for the offering that best conveys the true essence of the touchline.

Disclaimer - all similarities between the actual game witnessed by you all and the rambling waffle to which you have just been subjected are entirely unintentional.