



ESTABLISHED 1992

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Cross hat-trick inspires Broad Town to victory!

A wild first 10 minute hat trick from Tom Cross inspired Broad Town Colts to a 7-2 win over league rivals Stratton Juniors at Ermin Street's Premier Club.

On a cold morning both teams lined up for the 4th/5th place clash which, given recent history in this fixture, would surely be another cracker! Broad Town were missing influential and box to box centre midfielder Danny 'The Train' Houston due to family commitments, but were boosted by the return of the strong and influential George 'SatNav' Jarmolinski who had missed the last 2 games with a chest infection.

Right from the word go, Broad Town settled into their short passing rhythm, attacking down the right hand side with their tricky, speed demon Matt 'Beefy' Botham and captain Cameron Bell linking well and causing problems for the Stratton back line who were resolutely standing their ground and offering minimal space. The game seemed fairly even, both teams trading attacks, Broad Town staying nice and compact in their own half and looking to hit their opponents on the counter.

Broad Town opened the scoring when Danny 'Skilly Hilly' Hill made one of many key interceptions and linked with his central midfield partner George Jarmolinski before switching the play to the waiting Tom Cross, who kept his nerve, jinking inside out past his opponent and drove towards the box, firing under the Stratton keeper! Very Gareth Bale from our avid Spurs fan!

Broad Town's second and third came on the counter attack as expected as Stratton pushed forward to get the equaliser. Max Stokell, his usual tireless self, running back covering the Broad Town back line as Stratton attempted to get in behind them. Linking with long time defensive partner James 'The Beast' Davies and into midfield where inspirational Bell played a neat one two with lone forward George 'The Duck' Wadsworth, then found Cross who, after an outrageous 'reverse step-over, flick' nutmeg, again beat his fullback for pace and slammed a well placed cross towards the far post where an unfortunate Stratton defender turned the already goalward bound strike into his own net. The third goal came in much the same vein, this time great work down the right to beat his marker and get a cross into the box from Botham saw the ball bobble around the edge of the box, where Wadsworth and Bell calmly combined to find Cross who netted his third with style.

Stratton, to their credit refused to lay down and put Broad Town under considerable pressure with a flurry of half chances from the edge of the area and occasionally turning the Broad Town back line, but Jarmolinski, Hill, Davies and Stokell stayed strong, making a string of crunching and last ditch tackles and talismanic goalkeeper Nathan 'Brick Wall' Bowler was equal to anything that made its way goalward with a fine number of full length diving saves to keep his clean sheet.

Stratton clawed one back to their credit when, after another period of consistent pressure, a deflected shot off the knee of the impressive Hill wriggled past the unfortunate Bowler who was in position to make a comfortable save diving to his right.

Just before half time Broad Town scored their fourth when, after a corner and a good block from a Wadsworth shot, the ball fell to Bell on the edge of the box, who swept home for a well-deserved goal. It was nothing less than the Broad Town captain deserved for his tireless endeavour.

The second half saw a change on the left, when hat trick hero Cross was replaced by the skilful Ryan 'Grumpy' Grindle.

After a few minutes Wadsworth was replaced by Liam 'The Bus' Herbert. Fox in the box Wadsworth's classy link up play with his midfield formed the basis of Colts first half charge, and Stratton, recognising this began to man mark and get tighter to him, forcing the change to the big centre forward. Herbert had scored 2 in 2 up to this game and was in no mood to end that run, working hard and using his considerable frame to his advantage, bullying his opposition out of possession and linking the play. It was his chase and pressure that forced a Stratton defender to gift possession to the impressive Botham, who evaded 3 challenges and linked up to deliver a peach of a cross to the back post where Grindle was waiting to impressively cut the ball back first time to Herbert, who then volleyed home from 4 yards!

The final 15 minutes saw the visitors score another 2 goals. The first of which came after some good work to keep possession from Grindle through the middle saw a ball forward by Jarmolinski was moved skilfully on by Herbert to the feet of the dangerous Botham. With space in behind, tricking his way past his marker he cut in from the right and fired in at the front post, again no more than the tough, hardworking winger deserved for his rampaging runs and supply into the box.

The tide began to change with Stratton impressing themselves on the game as it became more stretched and Nathan Bowler had another spell where he kept the hosts to one goal, making a string of fine diving saves and a brave one on one saving with his legs only to quickly gain his feet to deny the Stratton forward a second time. Having seemingly weathered the storm, Broad Town conceded a second with 10 to go when after riding 2 challenges the Stratton forward slammed home from inside the box, despite Bowler getting a hand to the shot.

The scoring was wrapped up when Jarmolinski received the ball via a quick Colts throw in from Botham. With the Stratton back line caught napping; the pacy midfield dynamo cut in and fired in to make the score line 7-2.

Another 3 points and another great attacking team performance put in as well as looking solid and compact defensively.

Man of the match goes to Danny Hill, who despite a hat trick from Cross, showed why he is so important in the transition of possession for our side. Quietly going about his job, his tackling, reading of the game, organisation, calmness under pressure and superb distribution of the football kept us strong at the back and set us off on many attacks.