

DARTFORD 0 HARINGEY BOROUGH 1

Dartford's hopes of progressing further in the Buildbase FA Trophy were dealt a hammer blow, as a last-minute goal sent Haringey Borough through in a rather lacklustre game at Bericote Powerhouse Princes Park.

French Winger Nassim L'Ghoul, who has signed from National League side Bromley, was thrown straight into the starting eleven for the game, as his new manager shuffled the squad a little.

This wasn't a game that will remain in the memory for long, unfortunately, as goal-scoring opportunities were few and far between. And neither side were able to summon any kind of rhythm during the opening exchanges, as they both struggled to gain control. In fact, it took until the 23rd minute for the hosts to register an attempt on goal. Luke Allen, starting just his second competitive game of the season, was the player who tried his luck, shooting over Jonathan Miles' crossbar from distance.

The effort did light a little spark in the Darts though, and they should have taken the lead two minutes later. Debutant, L'Ghoul was guilty of not hitting the target on this occasion, as he arrived in the box to get on the end of a terrific ball after some neat passing play from the hosts. Unfortunately, he couldn't quite direct his back-post header towards the goal.

There were some periods during the first-half where the Darts passed the ball well, and one such moment should have resulted in the opening goal with two minutes of the half remaining. A good build-up saw Jacob Berkeley-Agyepong collect the ball, before pulling the trigger. Sadly, the in-form midfielder's strike found the arms of the scrambling Miles.

The visitors, on the other hand, offered very little during the first forty-five, as they defended in numbers. The one real opportunity fell in the 37th minute, when Craig King was adjudged (and booked) for handling the ball outside his area. The resulting free-kick was subsequently dealt with by Tom Bonner's defence.

Soon after that scare, Steve King was forced into making a change in personnel, as Jack Jebb had to go off due to injury. His replacement was Jazzi Barnum-Bobb, who slotted into his usual right-back position, while Jordan Wynter moved into the midfield.

The second forty-five was equally poor, as neither side seemed able to grab the game by the scruff of the neck. However, the visitors looked a little more confident when venturing forward, and registered their first real shot on target in the 57th minute.

With Haringey offering more of a threat the further the game progressed, the Darts made a double substitution as we reached the 65th minute. Nassim L'Ghoul and Moussa Bakayoko left the field to be replaced by Jack Barham and Ky Marsh-Brown.

Sadly, that much needed spark on the pitch never materialised, and the next few minutes became rather scrappy and frustrating for both sides. Even the prospect of another penalty shootout didn't ignite any fires, despite end-to-end football in the last ten minutes or so.

However, the longer the game went on, there was always the possibility of a threat from the Isthmian League side, and that's exactly what happened as we reached the 90th minute. Haringey picked up the ball and broke down their left, before a seemingly harmless ball was sent into the Dartford box. And there was Bobson Bawling to head the ball home with ease to send his side through to the next round.

And so, Dartford exited the Buildbase FA Trophy after a rather disappointing performance at Bericote Powerhouse Princes Park. Tom Bonner and Co certainly won't be taking this result lying down, however. Instead, they'll accept responsibility and be determined to make amends in the next match.

TEAMS

DARTFORD: Craig King, Jordan Wynter, Craig Braham-Barrett, Jack Jebb, Connor Essam, Tom Bonner ©, Jacob Berkeley-Agyepong, Luke Allen, Elliott Romain, Moussa Bakayoko, Nassim L'Ghoul

SUBSTITUTES: Ky Marsh-Brown, Ethan Wady, Jazzi Barnum-Bobb, David Ijaha, Jack Barham, Callum McCallum, Josh Hill

HARINGEY BOROUGH: Jonathan Miles, David Olufemi, Michael O'Donoghue, Rakim Richards ©, Claudiu-Octavian Vilcu, Jorge Djassi Sambu, Roman Michael-Percil, Georgios Aresti, Jamie-Lee O'Donoghue, Sami Bessadi, Bobson Bawling

SUBSTITUTES: Mekhi Leacock-McLeod, Anthony McDonald, Scott Mitchell, Laste Dombaxe, Daniel Akindayini, Callum Ismail, Arthur Leblond

By Chris Palmer