

Herne Bay 3 Dartford FC 1 8pm K/O

John Ullman Memorial Cup - 3<sup>rd</sup> round

When we saw the team who we had drawn in this round, we knew it wasn't going to be an easy game. Herne Bay are currently top of their league and like the young Darts, were also on a winning streak. However, what with injuries and other commitments, we only had 12 players to take down on what turned out to be an evening where everything seemed to go wrong! Firstly, due to Dartford's roads now becoming gridlocked most evenings, the minibus didn't get out of Princes Park until 6:30pm. Poor Cen was frozen solid at Nell's Café Lorry park for an hour waiting to be picked up and declining offers of a lift from lorry drivers! We managed to get to Herne Bay 15 mins before kick off and due to residents surrounding the ground, the match had to kick off no later than 8pm, giving the young Darts hardly any warm-up or match preparation. Sean Heather (Captain) was going to take it easy due to his injury but as the squad was so light, ended up playing the full 90 minutes. Herne Bay started off much more physical and focused but it was Dartford that had the chances to score but just couldn't find the back of the net and we knew then it wasn't going to be our night. Herne Bay had three attempts on goal during this half and scored 2 goals due to some lapses in defence.

**Half-time score:- 2-0** The players were told at half-time to keep their shape, play more as a unit and match the opponents physically.

The Darts came out making one change, JoJo off for Grant Wilks. They started the half much better and started passing the ball around and challenging for everything. A good attack by James Jordan, where the keeper made a good save, only for the ball to come back out 30 yards and Grant Wilks to knock the ball over the goalkeeper to bring the Darts back into the game. Some unpleasantness from the Herne Bay defender saw him kick out at Wilks as he bent down to pick the ball out of the net and he was given a red card and Herne Bay were now down to 10 men. This then started a very tense and unpleasant atmosphere both on and off the pitch. All credit to the Darts and the spectators who kept their cool. Jordan Keenleyside was then fouled in what can only be described as one of the worst tackles I've seen during my time as a Youth coach. It was such a high challenge that it cartwheeled him and all we could hear was the cry out. Jordan came off but was so determined to get back on, hobbled back on (seeing as we didn't even have a sub and the offender only got a yellow card). Herne Bay were then awarded a penalty, but couldn't get it past our goalie Deren Ibrahim who made a great save, only for the Herne Bay forward to scoop the ball with his hand into the back of the net. The goal didn't stand thank goodness! However, Jordan then suffered more verbal abuse from the same player and the match became very nasty. The officials really didn't have any control over the match and perhaps if they had it wouldn't have got this bad. Jordan was then given a red card for allegedly hitting out at the Herne Bay player, which from where we stood was definitely not the case. The player walked away and then fell to the ground clutching his face. We all stood in disbelief that they were resorting to these tactics. Jordan then had to come off to the jeers from the Herne Bay support and was extremely upset with the decision. Herne Bay then scored an absolute screamer into the far corner of the net. At that stage in the game, we just wanted to go home! The lads did themselves credit out there in what wasn't the most pleasant of games! Thanks to Alan Nye (our minibus driver) who got us all home safe and sound despite a detour around Meopham & Sole Street because of some confusion with the A2 roadworks!

**Team:-** Deren Ibrahim, Jack Walter, Luke White, Ashley Issuree Harley Forbes, Sean Heather (C), Jordan Keenleyside, JoJo Baiden (Grant Wilks 45), Danny Crouch, James Jordan, Callum Nye.

**MOTM:-** Jack Walter



Goal Scorer:  
Grant Wilks

Minibus Driver  
- Alan Nye!

MOTM:- Jack Walter

Next U18's match: Princes Park, 16<sup>th</sup> December  
Kent Youth League - vs Lordswood 11am Kick off.