

**Match Report** – 6/01/08 by Andy the Manager

## **Ebbsfleet 3 Dartford 1**

### ***Kent Youth League - Central Division***

After beating Tonbridge Angels 3-0 in a mid-season friendly the week before, the U18's were hoping to start the new year where they left off. Having played and beaten Ebbsfleet already this season, the young Darts, sitting 2<sup>nd</sup> in the league, were hoping to continue their good run.

The first half an hour was keenly contested with chances for both sides. With the Darts playing a more attacking formation, we didn't get the ball out wide enough or hold onto the ball well enough to really dominate. Given that Ebbsfleet were playing some of their 2<sup>nd</sup> year U18's from their Conference Youth League side, we got out battled and out fought and this made it difficult to get the ball down and play. But get it down and play we did and this led to James Jordan opening the scoring in the 30<sup>th</sup> minute. A ball into the Ebbsfleet half, left JJ with a defender and a goalkeeper to beat and although he was forced wide to his left, he calmly took the ball round the keeper into the empty net. Illness then forced a change and Ben Jones replaced the ailing Callum Nye. Other chances were created namely a one on one that Grant Wilks narrowly put wide and another chance for Grant that resulted in a rather tame shot straight at the keeper.

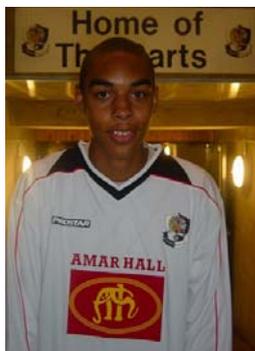
### **Half-time score 0-1.**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> half was a completely different game and Ebbsfleet made far more of the downhill advantage than Dartford did in the 1<sup>st</sup> half. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half started with a succession of corners and chances for Ebbsfleet then the pressure finally tolled when some poor positional play and marking allowed a parried shot to be tapper into an empty net. Ebbsfleet then took the lead in a similar fashion soon after, and this wasn't against the run of play. The home side then wrapped up the points and on reflection this was a deserved win by a far more hungrier and older side. The only two souring notes were an absolutely stonewall penalty, that for some unknown reason, the referee saw but did not award, when Grant Wilks was upended by an Ebbsfleet defender. Dartford's frustrations mounted further when the Ebbsfleet goalkeeper pushed and kicked Danny Crouch who unfortunately retaliated, the ref didn't need asking twice to pull out a card and whilst the instigator got off scott free, Crouchy received a red card. This put a sour note on the game and was difficult to accept given that other offences of a more cynical nature went unpunished. Whilst no team can win every game, such was the desire of the Ebbsfleet side to win the game, they simply outplayed us in all departments and got the deserved win.

Despite this reverse, other results went in our favour, which leaves us 4 points behind the league leaders with a lot still to play for. We are a little over half way through the season and there are so many games between the top sides yet to be played, the champions could come from any one of four sides. This young and new side have done well to remain in contention. I am sure that we will soon get back to winning ways to keep the pressure on the teams above us.

**Team:-** Deren Ibrahim, Jack Walter, Lewis Sutherland (Sami Kadri 85), Ashley Issuree, Mat Wanless, Sean Heather (C), Jorden Keenleyside, Danny Crouch, James Jordan, Callum Nye (Ben Jones 40), Grant Wilks (JoJo Baiden 80)  
**Subs not used:-** Dan McNeill-Nash, Luke White

**Goal:-** James Jordan (30)



**Man of the Match:- James Jordan**

**Next match:-** Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> January  
**Dartford vs Folkestone Invicta**  
**Ground: Princes Park**  
**K/O:- 11am**