

Sunday 23rd March Thamesmead 3 Dartford 4

On a wet, windy & snowy day in Thamesmead, Dartford set about picking up a much needed 3 points against a side which they had both beaten and lost to. The loss coming in the Plaaya cup earlier on in the season. The pitch was always going to be difficult for both sides and the conditions did their best to conspire against a good game of football. Dartford started ok but it was the home side that took the lead early on when a flat, static backline was undone by a simple through ball. Dartford struggled off the setback and continued to pass and play but the homeside doubled their lead when despite great efforts by Luke White to block the shot a home side player was able to rifle home from the edge of the area following a Thamesmead corner. This was against the run of play and I always had the feeling that we would get back into the game. This proved to be the case when Luke White shot home from the left to make the score 2-1. Danny Crouch then added his umpteenth goal of the season to level the scores. This was no more than Dartford deserved and at half-time we spoke about starting the game again with a more determined attitude and a greater sense of positional awareness. Ashley Issuree replaced Harley Forbes at centre back. The 2nd half started and two minutes into the half, Ibrahim threw the ball to Sutherland who fed Luke White on the left-hand side. The ball found it's way to Danny Crouch 40 yards from goal and he ran the ball into the area to slot cooly past the goal keeper to put Dartford ahead 2-3. To both sides credit the determination was there for both teams to win the game but it looked as though the draw was on the cards when a Thamesmead player was allowed to get a shot away in a crowded area and not for the want of trying and despite the efforts of Dartford players the ball squirmed it's way into the goal to make it 3-3. Dartford seemed the little bit more hungry for the win and a great run by Danny Crouch, who was on a hat-trick, selflessly squared for James Jordan to score the winner with 2 minutes to go. The introduction of McNeill-Nash and Baiden was the catalyst for this win but each and every Darts player played their part today, in terrible conditions on a boggy, sticky pitch. Final score 3-4.

Dartford competed very well today and could have won by more but a win is a win is a win and hopefully this will provide some confidence to take into the next game against Crockenhill on Tuesday 25th March.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the whole U18's set-up to wish 'Chairman Dave' a full and speedy recovery.

Team: Ibrahim, Walter, Sutherland, Eyers, Forbes (Issuree 45), Heather, Heffernan (McNeill-Nash 75), Crouch, Jordan, Nye (Baiden 75), White

Goals: Crouch 2, White, Jordan



MOTM:- Deren Ibrahim - for some safe handling and commanding his area in difficult conditions.