

FRY CLUB COLTS U13 MATCH REPORT

Number 3

29 September 1999

Colts shatter Shire with eleven-goal glut

COLTS CANTER TO CUP VICTORY

An early (2.15) start in case of extra time being needed. Colts eventually lined up in 4-4-2 formation, but not before giving Clive a bit of shock – 2.20 and still only eight players against a team that had defeated St. Nicks 3-1 the previous weekend. Shire kicked off, eight minutes late, but at least we had a full team, but no substitutes:

Sam Johnson; Mark Webb, Jason McCrossan, Tom Hamblin, Phil Knight; Ashley Rowe, Colin Stallard, Craig Palmer, Dan Payne; Gareth Smith, Jay Beale.

At this stage I would point out that Steve (Dan's dad) declared himself unfit to run the line so I took on the chore. This meant that most of my comments had to be recorded whilst the ball was in Shirehampton's half, This means that I haven't given the defence the number of mentions they deserve for their rock-like performance. Well done Sam, Mark, Jason, Tom and Phil.

It took ten minutes before we had our first clear cut chance, Jay's shot being blocked by the 'keeper and Gareth's goal-bound rebound being chested off the line by a defender at the expense of a corner. A minute later and a left wing cross from Dan was cleared only as far as Colin whose 25-yard shot was only just over the bar.

However, after twelve minutes a long clearance from Sam found Ashley and although the 'keeper saved his effort the ball fell to Gareth who knocked the ball into the back of the net (1-0). Ashley then had a shot narrowly wide from the edge of the area and Colin fired over, again. We were not to be denied a second goal for long – an excellent through ball from Mark found Jay and he crashed the ball past the 'keeper (2-0).

With only a quarter of an hour gone an interception by Phil set up Dan whose shot was saved well by the 'keeper. Two minutes later and Craig's persistence in the challenge won the ball for Dan to cross, only for the ball to be deflected in to the 'keeper's arms. Dan then had another shot just wide. At this stage it was clear that he had his shooting boots on, it just needed a twiddle of the rangefinder.

Jason then intercepted a through ball and set off upfield in a powerful run that culminated with a through ball in to the area that Jay was just unable to reach before the 'keeper. Shire's relief was short lived as Dan broke in to the area and shrugged off two challenges to slot the ball in to the corner of the net, under the 'keeper's diving body (3-0).

With twenty-three minutes gone an incisive through ball from Craig again found Dan galloping through to shoot past the 'keeper (4-0). Two minutes later and another pass from Craig to Dan allowed Dan the opportunity to cross for Gareth to firmly hit a shot that the 'keeper did well to turn round the post. Although the corner was cleared it was only as far as Phil who played the ball wide for Dan to centre for the unmarked Jay to nonchalantly put it past the 'keeper (5-0).

With five minutes until half time Jay turned the ball out to the wing where Colin centred for Gareth to deftly head in at the near post (6-0). Two minutes later and we were nearly cheering number seven. Mark intercepted the ball and played an intelligent ball over the top of the advancing Shirehampton defence for Craig to run through and lob the 'keeper. We couldn't believe, after all the rain we've had, that the ball could have bounced so high as to just clear the bar. However, Shire were still looking to break forward, and a piece of untidy play in midfield saw them outpace the defence, only to shoot wide of the advancing Sam.

HALF TIME : SHIREHAMPTON 0 COLTS 6

Clive decided to ring the changes at half time but, with no substitutes to give a run-out to, was reduced to tinkering with the formation. Jason was going to show his pace down the left whilst Phil was going to provide some trickery down the right flank. Meanwhile Ashley would play as a striker whilst Jay would be at centre half and Dan at left back. If you're still managing to follow the plot, read on!

Three minutes gone and the plan seemed to be working. Jason stormed down the left, cut in, and unleashed a shot that skimmed narrowly wide of the far post as Phil valiantly tried to get a foot on it to divert it in to the net. Meanwhile at the back Dan's clearance rebounded off the back of Jay and nearly let a Shire striker through. Tom came to the rescue to show them how defending should be done.

Craig then had a shot held just underneath the bar by the 'keeper and another run from Jason provided a cross that Ashley just failed to connect with. Mark then had an attempt to get his name on the scoresheet but his shot, following a short corner, flashed over the bar. A bit of trickery from Gareth then allowed Ashley to nip in and hit a half-chance just wide.

With nearly a quarter of an hour of the half gone Craig dropped back in to the centre of defence to allow Tom to push up in to midfield. Almost straight away this brilliant tactical manoeuvre brought a goal. Shire's attack was broken up by Mark who played a ball over the top for the onrushing Ashley to slide the ball past the 'keeper (7-0). Straight from the kick-off two Shire attackers broke through. The first had his shot blocked by Sam; the second hit the rebound against the post. Dan arrived in time to knock the ball behind for a corner. Shire then forced a second corner from which Colin headed clear and Jason stormed down the length of the field before crossing to Ashley who saw his shot just clear the angle of bar and post. Half way through the half and the Shire 'keeper came out bravely to defy Ashley, but a minute later Colin crossed from the right and Ashley knocked the ball past the 'keeper (8-0).

Comedy defending then at our end as a hopelessly over-hit backpass from Craig left Sam stranded. Fortunately the ball went narrowly wide of the post. The corner was cleared and Gareth hared down the right before unleashing a tremendous shot from the edge of the area (9-0). From the kick-off Ashley nipped in to rob the ball and Phil made ground down the right before sending over a cross that the

'keeper palmed round the post. Colin spotted Craig sneaking up from the back and played the corner back to the edge of the penalty area from where Craig lifted his shot over the 'keeper to take us into double figures (10-0).

With ten minutes left a corner from Colin was headed fractionally wide of the far post by Tom. Again Phil dangled a foot at the ball, but got no contact. Dan then advanced and, with various options to the left and right, elected to shoot weakly. Shire then forced another corner, which we cleared and we broke quickly. Ashley moved the ball on to Jason who ran most of the Shire half with it before crashing the ball low past the 'keeper (11-0).

The last five minutes involved some prattling around by Sam at the back, electing to pass the ball out to defenders rather than pick it up and punt up field. Shire got the goal that their spirited resistance deserved when, in the last minute, having managed to break through a Shire forward was bodychecked by Sam, who was easily beaten by the resultant penalty.

I know we were winning the game easily and that conceding the goal made no difference – other than it's always nice to keep a clean sheet. However, although Shirehampton were well beaten they'd played with spirit and didn't deserve to have the mickey taken out of them. Also, do it in a league match that you're winning easily and think how gutted you'd be to miss out on promotion, or the division title on goal difference. On days when things don't go right for you in front of goal, and goals are hard to come by, you'll be glad of the clean sheets you've managed to keep. So, just a small grouse (you should see the Under-14 report after their 6-0 defeat for a big grouse).

Overall, a great performance. Well played, all of you. On a weekend when the U-14s lost, City only drew at home, and the other team in Bristol topped Division Two it was the only event to provide some enjoyment!

FULL TIME: SHIREHAMPTON 1 COLTS 11

Next week I'll do a league table and update the match statistics.

About last week's newsletter....

After mentioning the chances we missed last week it was nice to see so many goals scored. I know we can't convert every chance but we certainly got on the end of most of the crosses today. I'm sure Andy will be pleased with the results and performances you've achieved while he's been away. Now if he can only maintain Clive's 100% record! Over to you Andy.