

FRY CLUB COLTS





HAPPY NEW YEAR

8thth January 2001

Well, after an impressive turnout at training the previous night — one player excused and the rest all present — I thought that everyone would be really up for the game. Jeff and Steve were almost competing to run the line, and as a late Christmas goodwill gesture I'd even put warm water in the First Aid bucket. Actually, I'd forgotten that Jay was rested and that the bucket wouldn't be needed.

Nice to see that Jay and Mark came to support the team even though they weren't playing. Rich was demoted to the subs bench for being a wuss and wearing gloves, along with Sam for having Del Pierro sideburns and Zolly in case it was him that the Wolves' scout had come to watch.

We welcomed Steve Bacon for his debut and hoped that his playing ability would at least match his sartorial elegance – cries of "Why are you wearing your Dad's shorts?" greeted him as the pre-match warm-up commenced. Anyway, on to the match.....

U15MATCH REPORT U15MATCHREPORT FRY CLUB COLTS

BRISLINGTON
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Tom Hamblin S

Greg Tucker Steve Bacon

Phil Knight

Jack Gooding Lee James
Jamie Bryant Dan Payne
Ross Ashman Chay Welsh John Pitt

Substitutions Zolly Vanyai (Ross Ashman, 60), Rich Healey (Jamie Bryant, 65), Sam Jones (Dan Payne, 70).

We kicked off and a flowing move down the right flank early on was, we thought, the harbinger of good things to come. Tom, to Chay, to Ross, out to Jamie, and John laid the ball back for Chay to shoot. Unfortunately he couldn't get enough power in to the shot to trouble the 'keeper. Straight back on the attack again, and a cross in from Jamie was met first time by Ross, on the turn, but the shot was wide.

Brislington did manage to break forward, and from a throw-in Greg pushed a shot from outside the penalty area round the post. Mostly, though, it was one-way traffic. Chay was wide with a volley and Jamie just failed to get sufficient direction with a header from Dan's cross.

Our best chance came after ten minutes when a cross in from the left by Dan was met by John who shot straight at the 'keeper. The ball rebounded back off John, agonisingly on to the post, and back in to the hands of the grateful 'keeper.

A quick break by Brislington saw Greg out quickly to boot clear, only for the ball to cannon goalwards off the Brislington forward. Fortunately Steve was on hand to clear the danger.

With 20 minutes gone, Jamie met a long throw from Dan. Although he was unable to get a shot in the ball broke for **Ross** to swing the old right foot and plant the ball in the back of the net (1-0).

Although we had had much the lion's share of the play, some of our passing was not of the highest calibre – either too straight or too deep – and with Brislington defending in depth our front three were not getting the quality of service that they might have liked. So, with 25 minutes done, Jack – playing now almost as a sweeper in front of the back three – went on a mission, steaming through to unleash a left foot "Twickers" thunderbolt – about 50 yards over the bar. He did manage to get a right foot shot on target a couple of minutes later, following a one-two with Lee, but the 'keeper managed to palm the ball away. From the corner Jamie headed wide.

Just as half time beckoned John latched on to a through ball from Jack only to be deprived of a shooting opportunity by a fine tackle by a defender.

HALF-TIME: FRY'S 1 BRISLINGTON 0

Surely it was only a matter of time before our superior skills brought us more goals? Dave obviously thought so, resisting the urge to panic and make sweeping substitutions.

Well, a speculative 40-yarder from Jack whistled just wide, and Dan curled a shot from the edge of the area just inside the post – only to see the 'keeper get his fingertips to it and claw it away. From the corner Dan lunged and failed to score from less than a yard out.

Six minutes in to the half and as a Brislington defender dwelt on the ball, Ross got in a tackle to dispossess him — allowing Jack to play a one-two with Jamie before driving in a low shot that the 'keeper fumbled. John and a defender both hacked at the ball as it ran along the goal line. **John** won (2-0).

Ross took a throw in the left corner and Lee and John worked the ball back for Ross to cross only for a defender to clear over his crossbar as Jamie was waiting to pounce. Jack played the corner short to Chay, took the return and crossed for Ross to flick a header just wide. Another parry by the 'keeper from a shot by John bounced off a defender and on to the post, and then a mazy dribble down the right wing by Tom ended with a half-hearted collapse in a tackle – looking for a penalty I reckon!

Twenty minutes of the half gone, and Zolly came on to play wide on the right, with Jamie taking Ross' place up front.

Our back three were looking pretty comfortable, and Greg was mostly spectating, but a long through ball saw him need to rush out and attempt to clear. Instead he crashed the ball against the attacker, and gained a goal kick.

With 25 minutes gone, Jack's corner kick was cleared back out to him by a defender and he delivered a pinpoint cross for **Jamie** to head home (3-0). Rich now came on to replace Jamie.

Dan got the ball on the edge of the area and with players calling for a centre yelled "It's my turn now" and proceeded to screw a left foot shot well wide.

With 10 minutes remaining Sam made an unexpected appearance on the left wing, replacing Dan. Five minutes left on the clock and Steve marred what was otherwise an impressive (apart from the shorts) debut with a late, high lunge at a Brislington player, and was booked.

Into the final minutes, and the magic moment of the match. A quick throw from Phil saw Sam dummy himself and his marker before scooping a crossfield pass for Zolly. Unfortunately the shot was well wide. Chay then had a shot saved, and Rich was off target with a header from yet another corner.

FINAL SCORE: FRY'S 3 BRISLINGTON 0

Afterthoughts.....

Well, by no means one of our better performances. Still, given the lack of match practice I suppose this might have been expected. I was surprised though at the laid-back attitude that we seemed to adopt. There seemed to be no real direction to the game, it seemed at times almost like a friendly training game rather than a competitive match. So, perhaps it was best that we didn't have to come back from the two-month lay-off with a game against stiffer opposition. From now on it gets harder!

MAN OF THE MATCH

Jack bossed midfield, but then spoilt an industrious performance with some poor options. Jamie too worked hard and had a lot of the ball but the final delivery let him down. Greg was sound in goal and Steve looked comfortable at the heart of the defence. However, the choice of Steve Payne and myself as Man of the Match — for a composed performance was **TOM HAMBLIN**. Well done, Tom.

U14CUPMATCHREPORTU14CUPMATCH ST ANNES RANGERS

FRY CLUB COLTS
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Andy used his weight and claimed first use of the only available pitch on Sunday, as St. Annes were unable to supply one. So, again our away match was played at home. Colin and Jason were the two to lose out in this week's selection process – lack of attendance at training I believe (Jason got a reprieve because Nick was ill). Indeed, Andy has asked me to point out that:

UNDER 14 TRAINING WILL NOW BE FROM 6.00 – 7.30 EVERY FRIDAY

The team will be announced at training. Anyone not attending or notifying Andy of their absence beforehand will not be considered for selection.

So, we lined up:

Nick Frost

Tom Hamblin

Joe Cook

Liam Kavanagh

Phil Knight

Dan Payne

Mark Webb Ian Field
Curtis Jack

Gareth Sm

Gareth Smith Ross Malone

We kicked off and gained an early corner. Joe met Curtis' kick with a firm header, but straight to the 'keeper. St Annes responded after five minutes with a corner of their own, after some sloppy defensive play from Phil and Joe. Nick punched weakly and the ball fell to a St Annes player who hammered the ball high in to the top corner of the net (0-1).

We came back with a good interception by Curtis and cross to the far post that Gareth headed narrowly wide. Play now settled down in to a familiar pattern. We were doing most of the pressing, but the opposition was looking to break quickly and hit us on the counter attack. However, Liam and Tom both got in good early tackles to let their opponents know they were on the ball, and Joe and Mark also both got in good tackles to halt promising moves, as the defence sorted themselves out.

St Annes were defending in depth and we struggled to create clear-cut chances. There always seemed to be a foot or body in the way.

Ross got in a tackle in the penalty area and the ball broke for Curtis to curl a shot goalwards only for a deflection off a defender to carry the ball wide. From the corner a flick carried the ball to the far edge of the penalty area. Joe retrieved the ball and laid it back for Phil to drive a low shot that the 'keeper got down to

An acrobatic volley from Mark and a languid effort from Ross were followed by a good low shot from Dan that whistled just wide.

With 20 minutes gone, Dan met Curtis' corner kick with a firm header that Joe, on the line, nodded past the 'keeper (1-1). Three minutes later and Curtis worked hard to win the ball in the St Annes penalty area, and it broke free for lan to nip in and steer the ball past the 'keeper (2-1).

Gareth was unlucky when the 'keeper just managed to get his hands to his lob shot. The ball was cleared and Dan was neatly nutmegged in midfield!

With half an hour gone we saw the best goal of the game - unfortunately to St Annes. Gathering the ball in his own half their forward broke through two tackles, outpaced our defence, and checked back before curling a left foot shot from the edge of the area, over Nick (2-2). A good through ball from Tom allowed Ross to make a forward run, hold the ball before releasing it to lan, who played it for Gareth to strike a shot that was held by the 'keeper.

HALF-TIME: ST ANNES 2 FRY'S 2

Jason and Craig came on to replace Tom and Liam respectively, lan also came off, Dan taking his place in the centre of midfield, Gareth dropped in to the right midfield slot and Jay came on up front.

We went straight on to the attack with Jay, Dan, Ross and Curtis combining before the 'keeper held Curtis' shot. A minute later and the 'keeper pulled off another good save from Ross, and Gareth followed this with another shot just wide.

Four minutes in to the half and a long throw from Jason saw Jay head for the goal line before pulling the ball back for Dan to shoot. The 'keeper saved but couldn't hold the ball and Jay knocked home the rebound (3-2).

Five minutes later and another long throw from Jason allowed Dan to bring the ball down and shoot, the 'keeper saving at the expense of a corner. Joe came in to meet Craig's kick with a firm header that was just over. Curtis then burst through to shoot over from 25 yards.

Play was almost entirely being conducted in the St Annes half now, although a rare break by St Annes saw an interception by Phil and lob forward by Mark for Jay to break clear. However, as the 'keeper advanced he crashed his shot against the 'keeper's legs. From another long throw Mark's shot was deflected on to the bar, but Dan was on hand to sweep the ball in (4-2).

This was quickly followed by a cross in from the right that Ross swivelled on and hit home with his left foot. Fifteen minutes gone and the game was effectively over at 5-2. We looked strong at the back and not much was getting past our midfield.

Another through ball from Mark again saw Jay break clear, but this time he slid his shot narrowly wide of the post. We continued to press forward and Craig advanced to drill the ball low in to the corner of the net (6-2). Craig then turned provider with a good through ball for Jay to run on to. From the edge of the area he shot across the 'keeper and Ross slid in to guide the ball over the line (7-2).

We continued to press forward and there was still time for Gareth to have a shot cleared off the line and for a centre from Craig to deceive the 'keeper and hit the upright before the game ended.

FINAL SCORE: ST ANNES 2 FRY'S 7

Afterthoughts..... St Annes managed only three shots, and only two on target. We created a host of chances and at times it was only individual greed in trying to run through defenders rather than release the ball - I don't remember seeing a single one-two played during the entire game - that prevented us having a hatfull of goals. With the Lewin Cup game next week all our players should have had at least one full game before the league games recommence, so - with training as well there'll be no excuses about rustiness after the lay-off!

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