

OH FOOTBALL REPORT No 7

Results for Saturday 1st November:

First Team: Away v Old Albanians (League) 2 - 0 victory (Harrison, Linacre)

Returning to league action again this week Gower took what can only be described as a Brian Clough approach to preparation with his full support of a midweek night out that not even Carlsberg could better - just ask Calv and Jacko. A massive thanks must therefore go to Phil Eckelamo for extending an invitation to the boys.

Regretfully, Albanians facilities, the weather and indeed a junior sized pitch were not as accommodating as Wednesday night's hosts but regardless Hampton got about their work in a professional manner. After some initial pressure from Albanians we were able to retain the ball for large spells and on the half-hour Harry scored in a goal mouth scramble emanated from one of Hampton's several corners / attacks. The interval score was 1-0 but it could have easily been more - a point to consider as stronger opposition are likely to present fewer chances.

Hampton's domination of possession continued in the second period with several chances going a miss or requiring a save from the Albanian keeper. Gower turned to the subs bench (again strong with Will Spencer, Jacko and Dan Linacre) to try and force our elusive second goal and indeed out of necessity as Phil Eckelamo appeared to have run his legs into submission and Jacko, only minutes on, sustained a dislocated shoulder.

During the closing minutes Albanians pushed forward to try and salvage a point but exposed themselves to further Hampton pressure. This finally paid dividends when Dan Linacre smashed a top corner winner from 20-yards with a wonder strike. Be in no doubt this was a character performance by all in tough conditions and we deserved every one of our hard earned 3-points. A speedy recover is wished to Jacko, Phil (damaged leg muscle) and Gower (fractured wrist).

Guys - Stay fit and train hard ready for the 15th Nov.

Team: James Holdsworth, Paul Gower, Adam Calvert, Richard Blakey, Matt Simms, Edward Holdsworth, Matt Brunwin, Richard Sexton, Leon Kew, Tom Jackson, Phil Eckelamo, Matt Harrison, Dan Linacre, Will Spencer

Top Scorers: Harry x 6 (2 in the cup), Sexton x 3, Calv x 3 (1 in the cup), Leon x 1, Linacre x 1, Yates x 1, Gower x 1

Second Team : Old Hamptonians II v HAC II (League) 2-1 victory (Sexton, Alan Dunn-Baker)

A welcome and well-deserved victory saw the 2's get their league campaign back on track at Dean Road following two successive defeats. The team was well aware that they needed to dig in, be more confident and most of all enjoy playing again if they were to arrest their recent mini-slump. The atrocious weather conditions probably aided us and we were able to use the wet but true surface to get the ball down and produce the type of football that had been lacking recently.

A positive start was crucial but unfortunately we suffered a blow after barely 30 seconds. Dan Sims, back in the centre of midfield, took a nasty blow just above his eye whilst contesting a throw-on and had to be taken to hospital in order to have it stitched up. Luckily for us we had a readymade replacement on the bench. Naidu may not have primed himself for 89 minutes in the middle of park when he woke up on Saturday morning, but 89 minutes he got and a good job he did; "eating" headers, winning tackles and using the ball constructively.

Following this initial early set-back Hampton started confidently with Sexton and Alan Dunn-Baker using their pace and movement to consistently get the better of a surprisingly pedestrian HAC back line. The first goal when it came was a peach as Holty released Alan Dunn-Baker down the left, he beat his man and fired a low ball across the face of the goal which **Sexton** slid in at the back post. The goal helped galvanize Hampton and we looked more confident for the rest of the half with all 4 members of the midfield getting their foot on the ball and playing the simple pass well. HAC were a decent side though and had their moments, notably when a rare defensive lapse saw their centre-forward through on goal but his deft finish fell agonizingly wide of the post.

The mood at half-time was far more positive and it was imperative that we began the second half in a similar vein. We continued to compete and battle under the deteriorating conditions and we looked the more likely to score next. The

second goal did arrive with about half an hour to go. Gibson launched a clearance up field that the HAC centre-half completely misjudged. Sexton pounced on the loose ball and made his way to the right-hand side of the box before crossing for **Alan Dunn-Baker** to finish confidently high into the net. More great work from the front two and a carbon copy of the first goal. In the 2nd half HAC never really threatened a far tighter Hampton back line from open play and they were limited to increasingly speculative long range efforts. However their strength and size meant that they were a constant threat from set-pieces and they forced a series of corners in the second half. From one such corner and with the score at 1-0 Nick Baker, deputizing for Comber in goal and nearly faultless throughout, made a tremendous double save by first tipping a header onto the crossbar and then diverting the rebound onto the post. HAC weren't to be denied though and they did pull a goal back midway through the half as their huge centre half rose well at the back post and headed powerfully down into the corner of the net.

The last twenty minutes would provide a real test of character for the side and it was a test that we passed impressively. Far from retreating into our shell, we continued to look the more likely to score as the front two continued to use their speed and fitness to repeatedly carve open the HAC defense. With a bit more composure and better finishing, we could have had three or four but that is nit-picking somewhat as both Alan and Mickey were excellent.

In the end, a much improved performance from the 2's with all 13 participants performing admirably and better than in the previous 2 weeks. We need to build on this and win our first game away from home at Mayfield next week in the cup – something we should be more than capable of. Final thanks to Dave Kavoussi who took Dan to hospital and in the process sacrificed his football for the weekend.

Team: Baker, Karski, Gibson, Dixon, Paul Dunn-Baker (c), Holt (Sainsbury), Phelps, Nabby, Sims (Naidu), Alan Dunn-Baker, Sexton. Sub not used: Dave K

Top scorers: A Dunn-Baker, Sexton: 4

Third Team : Home v Clapham Old Xaverians 3rds (LOB Cup 2nd Rd) 4-2 win (Sekhon 2, Lopez 2)

Revenge was in the air at the Fortress on Saturday as the 3s reacquainted themselves with their semi-final conquerors from last season. Unable to put out their strongest side in that fixture, the 3s were at last able to welcome back all the big guns for this one.

Aside from a couple of Clapham breakaways, the 3s dominated the first period, with the three man central midfield of Barron, Sekhon and Macdonald working neatly. The constant threat down both flanks of Gorczynski and Lopez pinned the opposition in their own half as shots began to rain in on the away goal. Wood, Sekhon and Lopez were all denied by some decent goalkeeping, with the addition of some wayward finishing leaving the scores level at the break.

After a very positive half-time chat, the floodgates opened soon after the restart. Baulk's marauding burst from left back saw the ball break to Sekhon, who shinned one into the corner from the edge of the box. 5 minutes later and Wood fed in the poison dwarf for a superb curler from 16 yards. 2-0. The astonishment on Sek's face was a sight to behold. Must have been a cross.

More flowing football saw a delightfully weighted pass from Patel put Gorczynski in down the left to flash a brilliant cross in for Lopez to tap home. A few minutes later and the Spanish Racist curled home with aplomb from 20 yards.

4-0 and cruising, the 3s gave away a couple of goals towards the end and proceeded to spurn another 35 goalscoring chances but the job was done comfortably and a confident group will move on to an important league fixture next week in good shape.

Team: Dix, Taylor, Wheeldon, Patel, Baulk (Green), Lopez, Sekhon (Hatton) Barron, Macdonald, Gorczynski (Hinton), Wood

Top Scorers: Wood, Lopez: 4

Fourth Team:

No game played – opposition could not field a side.

Top Scorer - Horne 11

Vets Team

Fixture: Unknown

No report received.

Team: Unknown