

Halstead Town 1
Tilbury 4
Tuesday 20th February 2024
Essex Senior League
ATT - 201
Report by Mason Hutchinson

Following a first win in three for The Dockers, we were given a chance to play one of our games in hand with a Tuesday night trip to Halstead. Marc and Liam fielded a side with just 1 change to the starting 11 as Dean Hall slotted into the defence, replacing the injured Jack Hayes.

Tilbury almost took the lead in the opening few moments, as Dan Trendall chased down a pass and beat the defender to the ball. Trendall then chopped back across to open the space for a shot but was denied by the crossbar.

What followed was 6 minutes of pure domination for the visitors as they found the net on three occasions. The first two both came from corners, with Jack McQueen beating the keeper to the first and Connor Martin sitting unmarked at the back post, before nodding home from close range.

The Dockers were able to further extend their lead through Oli Spooner. The captain danced past two challenges and tried his luck with a strike from distance, which flew past the keeper and into the bottom right corner.

Halstead were pinned back in their own 18-yard box and another Tilbury corner was almost their demise once again. The hosts failed to clear, and the ball fell to Sam Carter. The midfielder saw two attempts on goal cleared off of the line before being brought down in the area. However, the referee was not convinced by Tilbury's claims.

The home side's best chance of the half came in stoppage time, when Joel Older collected a ball on the left-hand side. Older cut back onto his favoured right foot and attempted to whip the ball into the far corner, but he could not get enough curl on the effort.

The night went from bad to worse for The Humbugs, when Macauley Joynes played a through ball to release Roman Campbell making a run behind the defence. Campbell was forced wide by the defender, but that was not enough to prevent the left boot of Tilbury's number 9, who blasted the ball into the net at the near post.

Halstead were able to find a consolation though, courtesy of Kane Gilbert. The league's top scorer kept his cool in the box and managed to find a way past the Tilbury resistance.

However, it was too little too late as the game drew to a close at The Millbank. Despite a nervy finish to the game, The Dockers will be pleased with their first half dominance and the team will be even more pleased that the result gives us an 11-point cushion at the top of the Essex Senior League table.

The Dockers are back in action on Tuesday 27th February with a trip to Great Wakering Rovers for a 7.45pm kick off.

SQUAD: North, McQueen, Hall, Martin, Carter, Spooner, Joynes, Marlow (Clark), Donovan (Salter), Trendall (Browne), Campbell (Knight).

SUBS UNUSED: Hayes.

GOALS: McQueen, Martin, Spooner, Campbell.