

Mildenhall Town 2

Tilbury 1

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Isthmian League North

Report by Mason Hutchinson

Following our final pre-season test against Brentwood, Tilbury kicked off their 2025/26 campaign with a trip to face Mildenhall Town. The starting 11 consisted of just two players who finished last season with us, Connor Martin and Jamie Reynolds.

Mildenhall started the game the much stronger of the two sides, nearly taking the lead after just 3 minutes. An inviting delivery from the right wing was attacked by Tanner Call, who had a free header from 5 yards out, but Harry Fairs dove across, putting his body on the line, to make an incredible save.

Fairs was called to action again just 2 minutes later, making another great save at his near post to deny the hosts taking the lead with a header following a corner.

Tilbury survived this early onslaught and managed to craft an attack of their own. The ball was fired into Juwon Akintunde with his back to goal, as the striker set a lovely cushioned pass to the arriving Jamie Reynolds. Reynolds struck the ball first time on the volley and his effort flew just over the crossbar.

The hosts would eventually take the lead on the half-hour mark when Tanner Call beat his man on the left before drilling a low cross towards the edge of the area. Ryan Sharman was the target, and the striker calmly fired into the bottom right-hand corner to open the scoring for his side.

The Dockers almost found a swift response as straight from kick-off, Max Appauh found space to run through the heart of the Mildenhall defence, but his shot was well saved by Finley Iron.

In the 60<sup>th</sup> minute, Tilbury looked to come alive as substitutes, Oli Spooner, Dan Trendall and Darren Phillips made their way onto the pitch.

And they almost made an instant impact, as Jamie Reynolds chopped back onto his right foot to dig out a cross towards the back post. Darren Phillips rose well to meet it, but his header bounced agonisingly wide.

Still pushing for an equaliser, Max Appauh was brought down as he broke away from the last defender. However, the winger was up on his feet straight away to release Dan Trendall with a quick free kick. Trendall ran through one-on-one, but Finley Iron guessed the right way early and made a very good save.

The Hall had a chance to kill the game off when Ryan Swift was gifted his own one-on-one opportunity, but once again, the keeper would come out on top as Harry Fairs stood tall and made another brilliant save to keep Tilbury in the game.

And it proved to be vital as in stoppage time, Oli Spooner took a touch around the corner and unleashed a rocket on the swivel that flew past the keeper and into the top right-hand corner. A real fairytale ending as Tilbury rescued a point away from home.

But fairytales aren't real... and with the last chance of the match, Mildenhall launched a long throw into the area where it was flicked on towards the back post. Ryan Swift was the man waiting as he emphatically fired home to snatch back the points and keep them firmly at The Riverside Stadium.

That was all the action in Suffolk, and another opening weekend for Tilbury ended in defeat. The Dockers have a chance to put things right as they are back in action on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> August when we host Concord Rangers in a 7.45pm kick-off. Make sure to get down to Chadfields and support the boys in our first home match of the campaign.

**SQUAD:** Fairs, Aderibigbe (Jones), Martin, Wallace ©, Reeve, Carter, Konte (Spooner), Reynolds (Best), Nicholas-Davies (Trendall), Appauh, Akintunde (Phillips).