

## Tilbury 0 Barking 1 ATT 170

Following a 4-0 defeat away to champions Aveley, Tilbury went into the final day of the season with nothing to play for whereas their opponents, Barking had to win if they wanted to have a chance of safety in the division. The Dockers hoped to end the season on a high and this set up for an exciting end to the season.

Barking started the game lively as right from the off had a chance down the left-hand side, but the cross delivered couldn't find a teammate and trickles out of play. Tilbury began to create chances in the 12<sup>th</sup> minute with Sam Jeremiah, who took the ball down and played an outside of the foot pass out wide to Charles Brown in space. After dribbling across the edge of the box trying to find space for a shot, his strike was unable to hit the target.

Just 2 minutes later Roman Campbell received the ball on the right-hand side, and he was given space to drive forward. He reached the by-line before chopping inside past the defender to open up for a shot, but he was denied by the feet of goalkeeper, Finley Thackway. The action continued to roll in as in the 16<sup>th</sup> minute Barking whipped in an in-swinging corner to the front post which found the head of Ayodele. His glancing header looped over everyone and hit the crossbar before cleared it to safety.

The game was becoming a battle of the midfielders as neither team were able to create any clear-cut chances, then in the 28<sup>th</sup> minute Brown won the ball back in his own box before showcasing a brilliant solo run, shrugging off two defenders on his way. This allowed Tilbury to kickstart a counterattack, but the shot was eventually blocked and put out of play. 10 minutes later Jeremiah made good advancements down the left wing, and he found Chris Millar in space on the other side of the pitch. Millar cut inside on his left foot and shoots for the near post. Unfortunately, Thackway pulled off an exceptional save to keep the game level. The resulting corner was whipped in by Lee Noble and found Jamal Allen, but his header was fired just over the crossbar and meant that somehow, Tilbury hadn't taken the lead.

The Dockers started the second half positively as a free kick, put into the box by Lee Noble, found the head of Jeremiah, who was unable to direct his header goalward. As Tilbury were unable to convert any of their chances, it allowed the visitors to grow into the game and create chances of their own.

The 56<sup>th</sup> minute saw the Blues dispossess the Dockers defence and helped the ball onward to Walters, who tried to find Okoye running down the right-hand side, but his pass was too heavy and allowed Scammell to retrieve the ball. Barking continued to apply pressure to home side and in the 63<sup>rd</sup> minute they won a penalty after causing a scramble in the box which resulted in Okoye being bundled to the ground. Charlie MacDonald stepped up and put the visitors ahead to keep their dreams of survival alive. As it stood Witham were 2-1 down to Romford, which meant that if results stayed as they were Witham would be relegated and Barking would go to the relegation play offs.

Not long after Tilbury had a couple chances through Campbell and Jeremiah, but they were unable to convert any of these due to a few stunning saves from the Barking keeper and some determined defending from the visitors. The Dockers continued to attempt to spoil the Barking party with a few half chances coming from Lee Noble set pieces that were unable to come to anything worthy of an equaliser.

However, in Romford, Witham had equalised through former Tilbury man, Josh Osude. Barking would still survive if results stood like this, but this added another level of worry for Barking as if

they won this game, it would be out of their hands. Barking had one final chance in the 88<sup>th</sup> minute as MacDonald found Jumo running toward goal in space on the right-hand side, but he closed down and was unable to fire off a shot.

That was all the action at Chadfields as everyone silently awaited news on the Witham match that had gone deep into injury time. The news was looking positive until Barking's celebrations were cut short as in the 97<sup>th</sup> minute, former Docker, Josh Osude had scored to confirm Barking's relegation from the division and had given Witham a lifeline to possible safety through the play offs.

Late drama was the perfect way to give a perfect finish to the 2021/22 season in the Isthmian North Division. Thank you to everyone for your support this year and we hope to see you next season for more football in the EMR Stadium.

**SQUAD:** Scammell, Anderson, Alatise, Millar, Allen (Metalia), Shogbeni, Harris, Noble, Campbell, Brown, Jeremiah

**SUBS UNUSED:** Brown, Upton, Nelson

Report by Mason Hutchinson