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Away win for Epsom and Ewell FC

28 September 2022

Godalming Town 1-3 Epsom & Ewell FC. Tuesday 27th.

After a ten day break, a strong Salts line up had to work extremely hard to secure victory at Weycourt on Tuesday evening. It wasn't pretty for large periods of the game and the hosts certainly had at least as much possession as we did, but we held out well defensively and maybe for that reason alone deserved the points from this attritional contest.

For the first time this season, and unsurprisingly following our 6-1 win over Wick, we kept an unchanged starting eleven and won an early free kick, but Nick Wilson's delivery was off target. The hosts then attacked and from a corner Matt Walton had to claw the ball away from under his bar.

However, we then took the lead in the 17th minute and it was a great move, started by Athan Smith-Joseph, who beat a couple of men on the left before delivering a low ball in from the left. Alfie Mickley in the Godalming goal was able to push the ball away, but it fell to Ricardo Fernandes, and as he had his back to goal, he laid it back into the path of Wilson who chipped Mickley from eighteen yards to register his first goal for the club.

Godalming fought back and forced a good block from Walton after we had lost the ball in defence, but we extended our lead in the 24th minute. A clever ball over the top of the defence was controlled beautifully by Jaevon Dyer whose touch took him past his defender, and his second touch cut outside onto his right and took the keeper out, leaving him the simple finish into the net from ten yards. It was an extremely skilful goal and Dyer looks like a real prospect. Expect him to be playing at a higher level in the not too distant future.

Dyer received a bit of treatment as a result of taking a knock during his run to the goal and another injury would require him to leave the field for good after 42 minutes. This was a real shame as he looked in excellent form and we weren't quite the same after his departure. Fernandes missed a good chance after he had broken through, while Rob Parrott was booked for diving in our penalty area. It was hard to see whether this was the right decision as the lighting was rather poor. What was clear though, was that our opponents were beginning to look more dangerous and a close range finish from Sam Boultwood from a good low left wing delivery reduced the arrears in the fifth minute of first half injury time.

The second half was a tight and competitive affair with little in the way of goalmouth action for either side. Walton chased a wide ball, which he was unable to reach first and the ball was then delivered back into the danger area before he could recover; fortunately Brad Peters was there to block the header on our goal line, before another dangerous ball in was headed just wide of our far post, but very little of real note happened in the second half and we were gradually beginning to see the game out. However, the hosts weren't done yet and an excellent close range save from Walton denied a Godalming equaliser with just a couple of minutes of normal time remaining.

We then had another scare in the 91st minute when a low cross from the right was met at the far post, but despite being only a couple of yards out, the ball was placed wide of the goal. This was a major let off and we made the hosts pay in the 96th minute when Johnny "Sonic" Akoto made a great run all the way down the right touchline, being brought down in the penalty area just as he was about to deliver a cross. If I'm honest, it was a bit of a soft decision, but we've seen them given against us too, so this time it was our turn and Richard Pingling stepped up to deliver a clinical finish from the spot.

The final whistle blew shortly after this and we were able to secure our sixth league win in a row. For those who are interested, the club record is 13, set in 2012/13. Without a doubt though, it was a tough challenge and we really couldn't have complained had this match finished even.

They say it is a good sign if you can still win without playing particularly well, but we will have to improve notably if we are not to face a similar set of challenges on Saturday when the club makes its first ever visit to East Preston for another tough looking league match.

Epsom & Ewell: Matt Walton, Johnny "Sonic" Akoto, Zach Powell, Ryan 'Butch' Smith, Brad Peters (c), Aaron Bogle, Athan Smith-Joseph, Nick Wilson, Jaevon Dyer, Gavin Quintyne, Ricardo Fernandes

Subs: Richard Pingling for Dyer (42), Josh Owen for Fernandes (75), Adam Grant for Smith-Joseph (75), Gideon Acheampong for Smith (90), Jubril "Jibs" Adamson for Quintyne (90)

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