



Cobham Cruise Past Epsom & Ewell in 4-0 Chalky Lane Defeat

Epsom and Ewell FC 0 - 4 Cobham Combined Counties League Premier South. Venue Chalky Lane Chessington.

The Salts succumbed to their worst home defeat of the season, losing 0-4 to Cobham. The fact that Cobham are running away with the league (13 points clear with 2 games in hand on 2nd place) meant it would be a difficult game, but unfortunately a poor performance made it easy for them, and they didn't have to get out of second gear in order to claim the 3 points in front of 101 fans.

Injuries and suspensions meant we had to move players around again, although, after the fact, the suspensions were probably best today rather than Tuesday evening, with a more winnable game v Badshot Lea.

Sami Nabbad returned in goal, Shane Dunne came into midfield as Adam Green went to centre-back in place of the suspended Antonios Nazareth, Callum O'Keefe returned in place of Jason Bloor, Filip Ksaidz replaced Andrew Herring, and finally Karl Bailey came in for Ali Fofahan.

There was a little bit of hope in the early stages as Luis Oliveira managed to get to the goal line in the 2nd minute, but he was forced out by three defenders and unable to get the cross in, and the ball ricocheted off him, not even getting the corner. Cobham had the first chance of the afternoon when No. 9 Marklew had a shot across the goal after a good move down their left. Fortunately, there was no one coming in on the far post — something that was to change shortly. Nabbad was forced to make a couple of diving stops to prevent the ball going across the goal. He then had a poor kick-out and his ball went straight to a Cobham player who tried to play in No. 10 Hayford, but fortunately there was a bit too much on the pass and it ran out for a goal kick.

We then lost Shane Dunne to a knee injury after 15 minutes which would cause us problems as he holds the midfield together, and with Adam Green in defence, we were in for a difficult time. After 17 minutes Cobham got their reward for their control of the game. Again it came down their left with No. 11 Rule playing a nice ball across the goal, with Marklew running in unopposed and passing the ball into the net.

Epsom & Ewell 0-1 Cobham.

Cobham were now in control and on 31 minutes a nice ball was played into Marklew, and he found himself 1-on-1 with Nabbad, who had moved quickly off his line. Marklew attempted to lift the ball over the onrushing keeper and fortunately put a bit too much on it and it went over the bar too. Shortly after, we managed to put a nice move together and the ball was played to Oliveira who burst towards the box only to be brought down just outside. McVey, who normally takes the kick, stepped aside for No. 9 Robinson to have a go, but his shot hit the bottom of the wall and rebounded easily back to the keeper. On 36 minutes we gave away a free kick outside the box, which earned Nelson-Roberts a yellow card, in a similar position to our previous kick. Cobham No. 7 decided to go under the wall as well. He also managed to hit the bottom and it rolled easily back to Nabbad. Unfortunately, Sami managed to let the ball go through his hands and legs and it rolled into the goal. I don't even think it managed to hit the back of the net.

Cobham continued to create more and keep us pinned in our half and they had a couple more chances that didn't really trouble Nabbad, but a header in the box from Marklew appeared to strike an Epsom & Ewell arm. There was a big shout from Cobham players but the referee waved it away. Difficult to see from where we were standing but we went in 0-2 down.

HT Epsom & Ewell 0-2 Cobham.

There needed to be a big talk from the management to get the players focused for the second half. 2-0 down still means we are in the game, but our performance in the first half was poor and lacked any real energy. Hopefully, we would give it a go in the second. Alas, it was not to be and despite the fact we were playing down the hill in the second half, Cobham continued to exert pressure. Again they had a couple of chances and a third goal looked on the cards rather than us getting back into the game, and on 62 minutes we gave them a third goal. Trying to play out from the back, Nabbad played the ball to Green who attempted to play the ball across goal to Aiwone. He tried to let the ball run across his body whilst facing the goal, but No. 11 Rule anticipated the move and took the ball off Aiwone and slotted the ball into an empty net.

In the meantime, Oba Akinniranye had replaced Karl Bailey and, as always, he started to cause trouble on our right; however, he managed to get himself booked after a little bit of trouble with Cobham No. 4, and both ended up in the book. Oba did manage to



provide an assist for our first real shot on goal and good movement found Ryley Merritt (who had replaced Dunne in the 1st half). He had a good shot, but it went across the goal. As the keeper scrambled across it must have been close. Cobham seemed to think *we have to stop this* and on the 85th minute another move down the Cobham right had the ball played across goal and No. 14 Simpson had another easy finish at the far post.

We managed to create a couple of chances towards the end and finally their keeper had to make a save, after Oba again created problems and his shot was stopped just short of the goal. Jack Torbett, returning after another lay-off, hit the bar from a cross/shot. There was nothing really after that, and Cobham continued their march to the title.

After a great mid-week performance v Step 4 Bedfont Sports in a friendly, today's performance was disappointing and with only one shot on goal for the whole game it is probably the worst since we lost to Sutton Common Rovers. Losing to Cobham is also not the worst result either, but we need to gather ourselves for Tuesday night v Badshot Lea at Chalky Lane. KO 7.45, as some of the teams below us are putting in good results and we don't wish to be drawn into another relegation battle.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Team:

Nabbad, Oliveira, Nelson-Roberts, C. Green, Dunne, Aiwone, O'Keeffe, Murphy-McVey, Robinson, Ksaidz, Bailey — Subs: Gilfillian-Waul, Dundas, Akinniranye, Merrett, Torbett.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media

