



FOOTBALL

Disappointing end to season for Bloods Res

Saffron Walden Town Res 0 Stowmarket Town Res 1
Thurlow Nunn Reserve Division One

IT IS DIFFICULT to believe that as recently as six weeks prior to this game that The Bloods' second string were top of the league and looking good for promotion. The horrendous recent run of results since late March continued in this fixture, in which the final result was particularly hard to take considering the match should have been played in April when Walden were at full strength and Stowmarket postponed the game. As expected, the opposition arrived with five regular first team players on this occasion and, with that in mind Walden produced a fine display with six of the promising U18 side all playing their part against much more experienced opponents. Walden included Paul Wood in goal and he became the fifth different keeper to appear in the last seven games. Also coming into the squad were Cameron Watson and Sean Kirk with skipper Dave Scraggs returning to action.

The first half was an even affair with both keepers having a comparatively quiet time with the bulk of the action being played out in midfield. Lee Barker was looking impressive in the centre of the Bloods midfield and he was ably assisted by Max Drane who was always probing for the killer ball. Not many opportunities were forthcoming although a Ben Weedon shot called the visitors keeper into action at the foot of his right hand post. Danny Manser then tested him with another snap shot following a fine through ball from Weedon, which also caused the visitors custodian to move smartly to his right. Stowmarket were always looking dangerous around the eighteen yard line and several long range efforts called Wood into action, although he comfortably dealt with the shots. The nearest effort to a goal was as a result of a huge throw from Manser that was headed on by J J Anderson and Weedon was inches

from finishing at the far post.

The second half began much the same as the first first half had ended. Walden were still giving as good as they were receiving and again both Manser and Weedon went close with efforts that the visitors managed to clear. Anderson too had an effort that flew wide of the upright before skipper Scraggs had to be withdrawn in the 65th minute with an ankle injury.

Just when a draw looked a sure bet, in the 85th minute Stowmarket produced a classic shot from the edge of the box into the top left corner of the home net.

Disappointing, most certainly can describe the recent results for the Walden second string and many excuses can be given, but out of the gloom there is reason to look forward to the next season with optimism. The young players recently included into senior football for the first time have all performed to a very high standard.

'Young Bloods' finish excellent first season 3rd in league

SWTFC U18s 2 Wisbech St Mary U18s 0
Thurlow Nunn Youth League North Division

SAFFRON WALDEN Town Under 18s completed their first season together, with a solid performance at Catons Lane, running out 2-0 winners against Wisbech St Mary to secure a third place finish in the league.

Both Walden goals came in the first half, the first after 15 minutes when good play from James Richardson created an opening for Machai Tolosi to coolly slot the ball into the bottom corner from just inside the penalty area. Just 10 minutes later James

Richardson found George Powell 10 yards out who, after seeing his initial effort rebound off the post, followed up well to make it 2-0. Sean Kirk nearly added a third before the break, but his dipping shot from 30 yards out, went just over the bar.

The second half saw less chances created and despite near misses from Dan Procter and Nick Cooper the score remained at 2-0. The win completes an excellent first season for the under 18 team and thanks

must go to the managers Mike Riccio and Pete Young, all of the supporters and the teams sponsors.

● A first trial will take place 10am-12noon on Sunday June 1 for any players interested in joining the U18 team for the 2014-15 season (players must be 15, 16 or 17 on September 1 2014 to be eligible). Any queries, or for further information, please contact the manager Mike Riccio on 07771 560459 or simply turn up at 10am at the Catons Lane clubhouse on June 1.



Passion and pride but no promotion for Crocus

Saffron Crocus 0 Bar Hill Saturday Res 1
MMC league division 4a

CROCUS were unable to spoil the visitors promotion party despite making a real contest of this match, but unfortunately lack of goals cost Crocus. Having lost 4-0 at Bar Hill in the previous fixture, the home side's promotion chances were over but still they played with passion and pride, pushing the visitors all the way.

The best chances for Crocus included a Ross Millard close range effort that was ruled out for offside, Darrell Phillips breaking through only to have his shot well saved and Stuart Shepherd's close range header sailing narrowly wide. Bar Hill's goal came from a neat 4 man move that was forced past goalkeeper Scott Smith, playing his last game for the club. He was however equal to a rasping free kick that was pushed onto the bar and also did well to stay big and deny a 1-on-1 opportunity.

Chairman Mick Eldred said after the game "I am very pleased how the team has fared this season, the manager and players have done a great job and we look forward to the next season".

YOUTH FOOTBALL

Wymondley Park 2 Plantation Youth 3
Royston Crow Youth Football League U13 Div 2

PLANTATION failed to convert numerous first half opportunities and although dominating the half found themselves 1-0 down at the interval following a quick Wymondley break that resulted in a goal after 8 minutes. The second period started well for Plantation with a 41st minute equaliser. Four minutes later Wymondley were ahead again but a quick response from Plantation, within 60 seconds, made it 2-2. A draw seemed inevitable but then a ball from Matt Thomas, beating the home defence, was collected by the Eady to slot home from the edge of the box.

DARTS

Bright start for the pairs

THROUGH to pairs finals night: S Monk and T Bloomfield; T Bright and D Tees; R Watson and T Haywood; K Hill and N Dare. There were 2 180s from Trevor Bright and 1 each from Simon Monk and Andy Marshal. The first leg of cup final is on the 8th when The Crown is home to The Queen's Head. The second leg is on the 15th. Singles finals on the 22nd.

ATHLETICS

WaldenJNR Tri beat Cambridge Tri for the first time ever!

AFTER 5 years of trying WaldenJNR finally beat local rivals and possibly the strongest Junior tri club in the country, Cambridge Tri in the Annual Mob Match which took place recently at the Friends' School. There was a record turnout of 210 competitors with 74 competing in their first ever triathlon.

The youngest 8 year old Tri Start competitors got racing underway and there was early success with Millie Denyer, Marnie Dunlop and Beth Aris delivering a WaldenJNR clean sweep in the girls race. Lewis Buchallet and Freddie Wardle had another tight head to head battle and Lewis just held on with a great sprint finish at the end.

It was then the turn of the oldest groups, and it was the Passfield brothers who won through against some top quality Cambridge opposition. Charlie won the Junior category for 17 to 19 year olds, whilst Marco won the Tri Star 3 category for 13 and 14 year olds. There was further success for the boys with Ross Bromfield winning the Youth race for 15 and 16 year olds.

There were no surprises in the TriStar 2 category for 11 and 12 olds as Helena Dyce and James Fraser were the clear winners, but this was the age group which delivered the decisive win in the mob match as Cambridge struggled to match the strength and depth of the WaldenJNR boys and girls. Other notable performances came from Emma Sarginson and Ciara Broomfield in 3rd and 4th place and Luhan Bely and Charlie McNeil who were also 3rd and 4th respectively.

In the last TriStar 1 age group for 9 and 10 year olds, Elliot Wood, competing in his first triathlon, showed strength in all three disciplines to thwart the efforts of three strong Cambridge athletes to record a narrow win. In the girls race Evie Upton recorded the fastest swim and bike times to finish first just ahead of the fast finishing Innes Dunlop.

The club were lucky enough to have Pro Ironman Triathlete Lucy Gossage on hand to present the prizes during which she delivered an inspiring speech to the children. She explained that she only took up the sport for fun at the age of 26 as a break from her work as a doctor,



no mean achievement for someone who was always last in races at school.

Head Coach and race organiser Geoff Jones said "We were all delighted with the result. When we lost last year for the fourth time in a row there was a feeling that we would never beat them, so to finally do it was tremendous and a credit to all the hard work put in the children and coaching teams".

Striders travel far and wide to rack up superb race results

STRIDER Nick White powered home to a silver medal in the Stratford Shakespeare Marathon, completing the 26.2 mile course in a blistering 2hrs 48mins 44secs for an incredible second place out of 732 runners. Rebecca White also had plenty to celebrate, claiming a new personal best time of 3hrs 27mins 7secs for 125th position.

Off-road endurance specialist Steve White and fellow club member Seth Kennard took on a monumental challenge, competing in one of Britain's toughest races - The Fellsman in the Yorkshire Dales. This 61 mile off-road race attracted 285 hardy souls, with Steve finishing in 82nd position in 16hrs 46 mins and Seth coming 188th in 20hrs 46mins.

James and Helen Hewlett headed south to join Claire Waters in the Plymouth Half Marathon, with Claire completing the 13.1 mile route in 1hr

42mins 56secs, making her the fifth female over 40 to finish. Strider of the Year James easily beat the two hour barrier, with a finish time of 1hr 54mins 49secs for 1,560th place out of 4,267 runners. Helen completing the race in 2hrs 12mins 23 secs for 2,931st position.

Closer to home, the Ickworth House 10K saw three club members in action, with James Norman coming a superb 6th in 40mins 55secs. Will Leonard was close behind in 12th place and a time of 44mins 9secs and Helen Howard completed a good day's racing for the Striders in 58mins 26secs for 137th out of 288 competitors.

Meanwhile the Newmarket Heath and Sky Line 120 Braintree five mile races each attracted a single Saffron Striders entrant. Club chairman Nigel Coates came a commendable 35th out of 190 finishers in Newmarket, with a

time of 22mins 19secs, while Gavin Long completed the Skytrain race, which took place near Great Notley Country Park, in 31mins 53secs for 56th out of 402 runners.

New members are always welcome at the Saffron Striders. Group runs are held every Tuesday, leaving the Lord Butler Leisure Centre at 8pm.

The club is also about to launch its sixth annual beginners course, designed to help people who are new to running or who have not run for a long time. The 10-week course starts on Tuesday, 13 May and costs £40, including a T-shirt and membership of the Saffron Striders for the remainder of 2014. Each session starts at 6.30pm at the Lord Butler Leisure Centre and lasts about an hour. Application forms are available at www.saffronstriders.org.uk. For more information email course coach Keith Savill kdsavill@gmail.com

GOLF

Unbeaten pre-season means Scratch team are ready!

Walden 3.5 Bourn 0.5

SAFFRON WALDEN Golf Club scratch team are ready for the start of the CAGU scratch league Division 1 after completing an unbeaten pre-season friendlies programme. Last week they beat Bourn in the home fixture 3.5-0.5. It has been a successful week for Walden's marquee pairing of Olly Tuck and Mark Reeve; they finished 4th out of 42 pairings in the recent CAGU foursomes championship and trounced the Bourn pairing of Sutherland and Edwards 6 and 4, going through in 5 under par. Ross Fraser and Callum Brookes went 4 down early on to Watson and Reid but fought back other the closing holes to win 2 up. Walden's other top pairing of Richard Southall and Cam Brown rattled up the birdies to go to 3 under and beat their opposition 6 and 5. Bringing up the rear team captain Graham Goodman and James Goodfellow, fresh from their credible 14th place

in the county foursomes, managed a half with Lydon and Simpson.

Both Mark Reeve and Cam Brown have been selected to represent Cambridgeshire in the forthcoming fixtures against Northamptonshire.

The scratch team finished their pre-season unbeaten and now the real action starts this week with their first away fixture against Links Newmarket in Division 1.

● 47 Players from the Seniors Section of SWGC competed for the Michael Noakes Trophy. Scoring proved difficult in this annual Stableford Competition, however Hugh Jenkins with a very credible 36 points crowned the day and took the Trophy. Simon, son of the late Michael Noakes kindly donated prizes for nearest the pin on all the Par 3s and presented the Trophy after a splendid celebratory lunch.