



Tel: 01799 516161 email: sport@waldenlocal.co.uk

FOOTBALL

PROMOTION CHANCES KEPT ALIVE

■ **Needham Market Res 0 Saffron Walden Town 2**
Thurlow Nunn League First Division

ONADIFFICULT PITCH, and in windy conditions, the Bloods kept their promotion chances alive with a relatively comfortable 2-0 away win against Needham Market, who two months earlier gained a draw at the Meadow. Fielding a strong looking team, Walden worked hard throughout the first half closing the Needham Market players down quickly, and effectively had the match won by the interval.

The Bloods could have scored as early as the third minute, when a Matt Snelling shot from 20 yards out was tipped round the post for a corner, from which Ben Lawrence headed just wide of the post from a good position. Nine minutes later a long throw from Ben Lawrence fell to Jamie Solkhon, whose shot was deflected over the crossbar. Walden took the lead in the 18th minute when Spike Bell broke clear on the left and hit a fine cross for Craig Calver to score with a well executed volley.

Straight from the restart Walden won the ball quickly, and set Shaun Avis up for a shot which just missed the right hand post. In the 22nd minute Graeme Turner rose highest to a Spike Bell corner, but glanced his header inches over the crossbar, from a nice move.

A second goal looked imminent, and came from another nice move in the 32nd minute. Craig Calver twisted and turned on the left flank before getting in

a superb flicked cross which Shaun Avis scored from with an acrobatic back heeled volley into the top right hand corner of the goal.

Two minutes into the second half Craig Calver shot wide, and two minutes later Graeme Turner set up Shaun Avis with a good chance, but his shot was saved low down by James Bradbrook in the home goal.

New signing Paul Abbot, had an impressive game at right back, got into the opponents penalty area in the 54th minute, but put a pass from Matt Snelling over the bar from 15 yards out.

Walden had a warning in the 63rd minute when substitute Billy Holland broke clear on the left, but shot well wide from an angle, in the only moment of real danger for the Bloods defence.

Play became a bit scrappy in the closing stages, as Walden seemed to settle for the win. The introduction of James Crane livened up proceedings a little on the right flank, but there were no further clear cut chances, and the final whistle brought a welcome three points.

The forthcoming Easter weekend brings another couple of important games when the Bloods will be looking for two victories to boost their promotion hopes. On Saturday they play away to Leiston for the first time, and on Easter Monday a large crowd is expected at the Meadow for the visit of near neighbours Haverhill Borough, in a much anticipated game.

RUGBY

Tough game for determined Walden

■ **Norwich 24 Saffron Walden 10**

WALDEN TRAVELLED to Norwich more in hope than expectation as the Easter Holidays and injuries meant several players were unavailable and others playing out of position.

Norwich were first on the score board with a well worked try. Following a penalty they worked the ball wide out passing through hands to score in the corner after 15 mins. Walden best moment of the half was spoiled when having worked the ball through some good running they found themselves at a ruck only five metres out but stand-in scrum half Paul Marshall was unable to clear as a Norwich player cynically left his boots on the ball and he was given 10 mins in the bin, however Walden could not make the extra man count and Norwich cleared their lines.

Walden were reduced to 14 when after half an hour they were defending their line and as the ball came out of the base of the ruck the Norwich scrum-half dallied on the ball and finally passed it out but Marshall was deemed to be offside as the referee missed that the Norwich scrum-half had both hands on the ball. Then when a Walden prop was also given 10 mins after several collapsed scrums. With Norwich restored to their full compliment finally they managed to break through after some valiant defending and scored their second try. 10-0 after 32 minutes.

Then on the stroke of half time they found a gap in midfield and scored a well-worked try under the

posts to leave the half time score at 17-0.

Walden finally found some rhythm and put together some good attacks and after 6 mins of the second half some quick passing down the blind side saw left winger David Patch just manage to squeeze over in the corner to narrow the gap to 17-5. Walden were having most of the play at this point but could not break through as Norwich defended stoutly in front of the large home support. It was Norwich who scored next as they pounced on a loose ball and exploited a gap wide out against Walden's defence and after couple of good passes they scored under the posts 24-5 after 64 minutes.

Walden did not let their heads go down and some determined play in the last 15 mins saw a well worked line out pay off as they set up an unstoppable driving maul and No 8 Nik Baker had the ball in his hands as the pack drove over the line. 24-10 with 10 mins still to go. Despite further huge efforts to get the 2 scores needed to draw level it was not to be and Norwich came out deserved winners.

Their lots of positives can be taken, all 18 players put gave their all and the travelling supporters fully appreciated the team's efforts. A couple who deserve a mention were full back Billy Powell making his first start in the 1s and second row Brad Baker marking his return to the 1s after breaking his leg in only the second game of the season.

Magnificent seven for Dynamos

■ **Saffron Dynamos 7 Lakenheath Casual 5 Res 2**
NMC League Division 5A

SAFFRON DYNAMOS continued their great end-of-season run as they recorded their fifth consecutive win with the demolishing of Lakenheath Casual 5 Res to maintain fourth place in the table. The game started with the Dynamos kicking off with the advantage of a very strong wind as they put the pressure on the visitors early. With the home side having the majority of the ball they could not make the break though. At last on 17 minutes a precision corner from Steve Wiseman was met perfectly by Alex Paskins to thunder in a header. Despite having the wind advantage, Dynamos just could not capitalize on it, as chances went begging with shots being over hit. It was with relief on 44 minutes as Daniel Rouse put in a great cross for Dan Clark to head in to make it 2-0. Second half the visitors were fired up and had the wind behind them and that the Dynamos had only managed the 2 goals. But Dynamos came out with great confidence to up

the tempo and they gradually became stronger as they played some good football. They were rewarded on 58 mins as centre back Alex Paskins rose again to head in another corner to grab his brace. Winger Andy Sell grabbed the fourth on 65 minutes, followed by a superb free kick from the manager Daniel Rouse from 28 yards out to nestle the ball in the top right hand corner of the net. Daniel Rouse put in another good pass to put Ben Start through to finish well on 72 minutes. Substitute Dan Wiseman went on a superb run on the left to beat defenders and hammered in a superb shot to make it seven on 76 minutes. In the last five minutes the visitors grabbed two unlikely goals as sloppiness crept in when the defence should relay have kept a clean sheet.

Saffron Dynamos now have to wait four weeks to finish the season as they will travel to unbeaten and champions elect Tuddenham 08 on April 25.

INDOOR BOWLING



● Turpin's Indoor Bowling Club proudly display their new club shirts sponsored by local financial advisors Walden Capital. Turpin's welcome any new members so do feel free to go along and see their facilities based behind the Lorn Butler Leisure Centre, Peaslands Road, Saffron Walden.

ATHLETICS

WaldenTri's international duo

TWO OF WALDENTRI'S top duathletes took part in a double international qualifying race last Saturday at Clumber Park, near Nottingham. Team GB places were up for grabs for the 2015 World Duathlon Championships to be held in Australia, and the 2016 European Duathlon Championships. The race also incorporated the British Championships. Because of this, the race attracted a field of the highest quality from all over Britain across all of the age groups.

Michael Buchallet was competing over the Standard distance course made up of a 10k run, 40k bike, then 5k run, while Sprint distance specialist Pete Thompson competed over the shorter distance of 5k run, 20k bike, and 2.5k run. The pressure was particularly on Thompson, as Buchallet already had his world championship place in the bag, having achieved the qualifying standard a couple of weeks early. This was Thompson's one and only opportunity, and a top 4 placing was the requirement for selection. The weather conditions were cold and very windy, and both the bike and run courses were quite hilly.

Thompson's race went off first, and at the end of the first run he was in second position within his age group. He then put in a solid bike leg before completing the second run, and ended with a finishing time of 1:09:32. It was a very close race, he was just 61 seconds behind the winner of his 55-59 age group, but was narrowly squeezed out of the top 3 places to take 4th. However, this 4th place assured him of a place in the GB team for Australia.

Buchallet, was competing in the 40-44 age group, and completed the course in an excellent time of 2:06:34 to take 11th place in his age group.

The pair now have a series of international events to prepare for. At the end of April they travel to Spain for the European Duathlon Championships.



● WaldenTri's Michael Buchallet (left) and Pete Thompson

In October it's the World Duathlon Championships in Adelaide, Australia, and then in the new year, the 2016 European Duathlon Championships. In addition to these, Thompson, who is sponsored by local construction company, Ford Wells, has the European Triathlon Championships, in Geneva, in July.

SCHOOL SPORTS

St Thomas Moore have do the double in Uttlesford AND Essex

LAST WEEK, students from St Thomas Moore School were the first to win both the 7 aside Hockey the level 2 tag rugby tournaments in Uttlesford and Essex.

In the Uttlesford Hockey championships, led by Jackie Coleman, the students finished first before they went on to beat Essex's top schools in the level 2 competition. Following this win, the St Thomas Moore travelled to Howe Green School for the level two tag rugby tournament, where they came top amongst the best 16 teams in Uttlesford.

Finally, the school travelled to Southend Rugby to compete in the level 3 rugby

Premiership Experience for Wendens Ambo U12s

HE MAY have missed out on the chance of walking out at Twickenham, but Wendens Ambo Under 12 starlet Hunter White insisted he had still loved every minute of his Land Rover Premiership Rugby Cup experience.

Launched during the 2008-09 season, the Land Rover Premiership Rugby Cup is the first national grassroots tournament officiated by Premiership Rugby and run in conjunction with all 12 clubs. It was the turn of Northampton Saints on Saturday to host their Under 12 rugby tournament at Franklin's Gardens.

And while White was not able to lift the Under 12s Cup trophy for a spot at Rugby HQ, his team leaving the tournament after the group stages, the 11-year-old remained proud of their efforts.

"These tournaments are great because you can improve as a team but still have fun" said the Saffron Walden County High pupil. We don't have one captain - we're all captains - and that's why we stand out as a team".

Casting an eye over proceedings were Northampton Saints stars Tom Collins and Matt Williams who stressed the importance of playing in competitions like the Land Rover Premiership Cup at a young age.

"I think these tournaments where youngsters have a chance to play in games with big clubs like Saints watching on are fantastic opportunities."

KEEP IT BRIEF! Because we have only one sports page we ask our correspondents to keep their match reports to a minimum so that we have a chance to include everyone.