

RAF Football Association - E-Bulletin

RAF FA VETERANS NORTH WEST DOUBLE HEADER – 15-16 SEP



First up was Rhyl on the Saturday. It had stopped raining but was still overcast as the players arrived at the Corbett Stadium Rhyl for what was going to be the first of annual games to be played for the "WO Kevin Walton Shield". Kev was a stalwart of RAF football during his 37 years' service and was also a son of Rhyl and he had been involved with his hometown club. What better way to combine three of his favourite loves as a lasting memorial...RAF, Rhyl and Football!!

The RAF had 5 debutantes in the squad and the first 10 minutes were a little scrappy as debutantes tried to impress whilst "old hands" tried to wrestle the rust from their own legs. Once the boys had settled, the play was effective, but the finishing was to let them down. Cooper, Young, Zenko and Dixon (all making debuts) had chances but it was not to be. A great through ball from Dixon saw Young away but, after rounding the keeper, he went too far wide and saw his shot nestle in the side netting. A couple of minutes later, only a worldly of a save from the Rhyl keeper kept the scores level as he brilliantly saved from a Young header. After 33 minutes the unthinkable happened. A soft free kick to the left of the penalty area was conceded and it was whipped in. The header from a striker was initially well saved by Laurie in the RAF goal but the ball went up in the air and another striker following up headed into the net. 1-0 to Rhyl and that was their first attempt on goal.



The RAF responded well and just four minutes later they were level when Young was brought down in the box after turning his marker. He took the penalty himself and struck it hard and low to the keeper's right. The keeper went the right way but was not stopping that and the ball nestled in the bottom corner. 1-1.



The RAF continued to press before the half time whistle signalled the end of the first half with the scores again level 1-1

The second half started with the same starting 11 before substitutions started taking place in the 55th minute. It didn't take long before the RAF were 2-1 in front. A ball down the left to Rooney was then played forward to Zenko just to the left and outside the box. He took it one way before coming back inside his marker and as another defender came across he shot into the far corner to put the RAF ahead.

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Now the RAF were playing some lovely football, crisp passing, fine movement of man and ball and keeping possession. Foster and Patterson came on, the latter also making his debut and still it continued. It was a joy to watch but the Rhyl keeper was keeping his team in the game with a string of saves. That was to change however when the RAF won a free kick about 22 yards out in the 75th minute. Robison and Dixon stood over it before Robison backpedalled and Dixon ran in to strike right footed. The ball stayed low, went around the wall and nestled in the corner of the net. 3-1 to the RAF and all goals scored by debutantes.

Suddenly, in the 87th minute, "Shock...Horror" ...Rhyl scored. The attacker was allowed to turn in the box and his shot was part parried by Laurie in the RAF goal, but the ball managed to cross the line and end up in the net. 3-2 RAF
Worse was to come...in the 89th minute the RAF stepped up looking for offside, but it wasn't given, and rightly so, as the defence was slow out. The striker ran through and slotted past the advancing keeper. 3-3 and that was how it stayed but as one comment from the sidelines said "Big Kev will be happy with that".



RAF Starting XI: Laurie, Robison, Laing, McLean, Rooney, Dixon, Stewart, Zenko, Edwards, Cooper, Young.

Subs: Algar, Dales, Patterson, Knox, Foster.

Management/Support: Beattie (RTM), Hancocks (Mr A), Sullivan (Match Liaison/Officials), Payne (Therapist), Sheehan (Comms/Photo), Reeves (Fundraising)

Onto the Sunday game...



This is normally a big fixture and the boys would have to be strong today. The game would now be played at the Liverpool County FA ground instead of at the Academy in Kirkby.

Only Stewart and Rooney started on both days with the latter taking over the Captain's armband for the day. A great pre-match team talk from Matt Beattie stressing that it doesn't matter about the facilities, it doesn't matter where a game is played, that it's about having a job to do and going out there and doing it certainly geed the lads up and they set off for the pitch in good spirits.

LFC to kick off. Nip and tuck to start but after 8 minutes the RAF get their first chance when a great turn and strike from inside the box sees Schofield's shot hit the post and roll across the box. Stockport followed up but from a tight angle he couldn't find the net. In the 15th minute a storming run by Wanless sees him barge through the Liverpool defence but as the keeper advanced and Wanless tried to slot home, the keeper managed to get a leg on it and it's a corner to the RAF. From the corner, a little flick on at the near post and there was Schofield at the far post to smash it right footed into the back of the net. 1-0 RAF

With 20 minutes on the clock, Schofield struck his and the RAFs second goal when the ball found its way through to him and he struck it first time past a despairing keeper. 2-0 RAF

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LFC finally got an attempt at goal in the 25th minute but it was a shot from 25 yards and it was wide. No trouble for Algar in the RAF goal. The boys in blue responded superbly with a sublime move involving Stewart, Stockport, Schofield and the Wanless but the finish was not quite there.

Another opportunity arose for LFC but a brilliant tackle, in the box, by McCormick saved any RAF blushes. Stockport had a chance quickly followed by another for Schofield but again, they were high or wide of target. The high line of the RAF midfield was causing problems for LFC especially the goalkeeper whose kicking was not the strongest and it kept landing at the RAF players feet and putting the Reds on the back-foot time after time.



The kicks were not even clearing half way inside his own half and Rooney got on the end of one striking a great shot that the keeper did well to scramble aside for another RAF corner. With 32 minutes on the clock, a good interchange of passing saw the ball finally ending up with Schofield. He went around the keeper and although he had gone quite wide, he managed to wrap his foot round the ball and steer it into the back of the net. 3-0 RAF and a hattrick for Schofield.

More chances came and went with the majority to the RAF but as the half time whistle went this was a solid performance by the RAF lads but too many chances were being missed and too many opportunities were being given to the opposition. HT 3-0 RAF

Following a reiteration of the "job to do" speech from before the game by Matt, the lads were tasked with going out for the second half and burying the opposition. Only time would tell if they listened.

Almost straight from the kick off the RAF attack down the right side and win a throw. Schofield takes it quickly and centre back Bartley waltzes past two defenders and the goalkeeper to slot into an empty net. I think they listened. 4-0 RAF



Apart from a goal for Liverpool that was given offside (it was by miles) it was all RAF now. In the 67th minute, good work by Arscott on the left saw his pass find Wanless and he cut back inside and smashed the ball left footed into the net. 5-0 RAF

Things stepped up a gear in the 68th minute!! Liverpool scored after a break down the right and as the ball came into the middle the attacker drew the keeper and slotted home 5-1 RAF

That only spurred on the RAF because things went ballistic from the 70th minute. A free kick to the RAF saw Bartley dink a ball over the wall straight onto the head of Schofield who powered it past the keeper. 6-1 RAF
In the 74th minute, Schofield got his fifth after dribbling his way into the box. He looked to pass it but was surrounded by red defenders and his pass struck one of them on the legs and

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bounced back to Schofield who was now on the floor. He picked himself up quickly and smashed it past the keeper again 7-1 RAF.

Schofield had time to miss another before good work and passing between Wanless and Schofield saw the ball end up with Arscott. He turned his man and struck home. 8-1 RAF 78th minute

A minute later, centre back Danny Bartley, who had already scored one, showed everyone how a storming centre forward should take his goals by charging through the LFC defence before drawing the keeper and side footing past him to make it 9-1 RAF

Stockport, who had worked tirelessly up front, then finally got his name on the scoresheet. A nice build up through the midfield then saw him through on goal and he calmly passed the ball beyond the keeper into the net. 10-1 RAF in the 80th minute

LFC had time to kick off before the officials decided that, like boxing, the opposition couldn't take any more and the game was over. A brilliant performance and I think the lads had listened...the opposition were well and truly buried!!

RAF Starting XI: Algar, Arscott, Donnelly, Bartley, McCormick, Macek, Wanless, Stewart, Stockport, Schofield, Rooney. Subs: Laing, Dales, Harris, Laurie, McLean, Robison, Cooper.

Management/Support: Beattie (RTM), Hancocks (Mr A), Sullivan (Match Liaison/Officials), Payne (Therapist), Sheehan (Comms/Photo), Reeves (Fundraising)

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