

RAF FA VETERANS - 27/28 October 2018 Double Header



Here we are at St George's Park again for another double header, the first one up being against England FA Vets.

In what was to become a sad weekend for football (we didn't know at the time what was to occur with Glenn Hoddle and the Leicester City owner), we had our own memorial with a minute's silence for Colin Burns, RAFFA Life Vice President and former Chairman, who sadly passed away on 23rd October. Colin was one of life's gentlemen, always having time to talk to you whomever you were, very knowledgeable about football and an excellent servant to RAF Football. He wasn't a bad

goalkeeper either. Colin will be sadly missed and our thoughts are with his family. The minute's silence was impeccably observed by both sets of players and supporters alike. RIP Colin.

RAF FA Vets vs English FA Vets – 27 Oct 18

Then it was on to the game. England kick off but they don't have the ball for long as Schofield wins it back again and plays the ball forward to Seddon. His square ball to the far post is tapped in by Young and its 1-0 RAF in the first minute. Good work from Young in midfield sees his pass played out to the left corner of the penalty area and the incoming Schofield curled a beauty, right footed, into the bottom corner. 2-0 RAF and just 16 minutes on the clock. The RAF Vets were dominating proceedings in terms of possession as they harried and chased every ball with England struggling to find any rhythm whatsoever and losing the ball quite quickly. Schofield, Young, Seddon and new boy Watkins were defending from the front and it was a pleasure to watch as time and again the lads in white surrendered possession within 25 yards of their own goal. Shots were raining in on the England goal but hitting the target remained the problem. Yorkie Bryan, one of our own, was captaining the England side and he must have wished that he was wearing blue instead as England struggled to cope with the pace of the RAF.



Young then got his second of the game to extend the lead after some great chasing back, and winning the ball by Seddon, saw the RAF launch a quick counter attack. 3-0 RAF. This is great stuff from the RAF. Brilliant football, pass and move and a will to win every tackle...a joy to watch. This wasn't all about the front four though. Every one of the RAF lads was putting in a shift here. Macek and Stewart in midfield were immense as were the back four of Clarke, Bartley, McCormick and Martin. Algar in the RAF goal however was just glad he was wearing

gloves as it was mighty cold just standing around although he did get the odd pass back. HT 3-0 RAF

An early chance for England at the start but the forward was stretching for the ball and couldn't keep his effort down before the renowned left foot of Watkins let him down drastically as he forced his way to the edge of the box before blasting his shot miles wide!! England were a much different proposition in this half. They were playing some nice football now and creating chances of their own but a long ball over the top from the RAF defence found Seddon through on a 1v1. It looked as if he was going to go round the keeper before he nonchalantly put his foot under the ball and lobbed him. The ball bounced into the back of the net. 4-0 RAF and a couple of minutes later Seddon is at it again when he smashes it in after brilliant work by Barker bringing the ball forward before passing to Edwards whose cross was gratefully accepted by the inrushing forward. 5-0 RAF. England then scored from a free kick when a weak free header was allowed to squeeze through/under the body of Laurie. 5-1 RAF.

Seddon then had a chance for his hat-trick in the 83rd minute but he too was denied by a great save from the keeper. He didn't have to wait much longer though as he took a corner. The kick was headed back out to him and he fired in another curling cross then went high over everyone including the England keeper and found its way into the back of the net. 6-1 RAF and Seddon will claim he meant it. He then got onto the assist list again as he pulled the ball back for Schofield to smash it home. 7-1 RAF. Great work at the back from the RAF defence in winning the ball back then sees Edwards come forward. With players either side, he slots a lovely ball in behind the England defence and Seddon is there to slide it past the keeper. 8-1 RAF and 87 minutes gone. Laurie was called into action one more time with another great save before the referee blew for full time.

RAF FA Vets 8 – English FA Vets 1

Starting XI: Algar, Clarke, Bartley, McCormick, Martin, Macek, Stewart, Watkins, Young, Seddon, Schofield. Subs: Laurie, Rooney, Barker, Edwards, Richards, Robinson, Butt.

Other RAF FA Vets family members: Sir Chris Coville (Chairman), Hancocks (Mr A), Beattie (RTM), Salkeld (Coach), Wilkinson (Coach), Robison (Coach), Milam (GK Coach), Payne (Therapist), Reeves (Fundraising), Sheehan (Comms), Bones (Photography), Jones, Peel, Pettitt (Super Vets), Robertson (Support).





There was a presentation after the game, as usual, but we also presented the RAFBF with a cheque for £10,666.61p which was our contribution to the Benevolent Fund throughout the year of fundraising. Massive thanks to Tony Reeves and his team for pulling that all together.

RAF FA Vets vs Essex FA Vets – 28 Oct 18

Onto Day 2 of our latest double header. Some players had left after the game Saturday so it would be a much changed side to take to the field for this game against a strong Essex FA Veterans League Select XI that contained a number of ex professionals in their ranks.



The RAF kick off. The first effort on goal came from Essex but it was high before sterling work by Stockport saw him win the ball and play in Wanless who held up the ball before firing a low cross back across the box where Stockport was waiting and he smashed the ball home. Seven minutes gone and its 1-0 RAF. The RAF boys were playing as they had the day before, a high pressing game and plenty of width and Pugh in particular was finding space out wide when the RAF won the ball back. After yet another cross caused problems, an Essex mix up in midfield saw Bartley emerge with the ball. He took one touch and hit a screamer from fully 30 yards. The keeper got a hand to it but could only push it onto the inside of the post and in. 2-0 RAF.

A good counter attack by Essex finally saw a through ball split the defence on the right of the box, Algar looked as though he slipped just before the shot came in and it left him helpless to stop the drive as it nestled firmly in the corner of the net. 2-1 RAF. The RAF responded immediately however, as just two minutes later, a lovely break down the left hand side saw



Watkins drill in a fabulous low ball across the six yard box. It defeated forwards and defenders alike except for Pugh who arrived wide and late and he smashed the ball home. 3-1 RAF.

Good work by Robison at the back, in intercepting a pass, saw the RAF on the attack again and Bartley decided to have another go from distance. Again, the keeper got a hand to it but this time he managed to steer the ball around the post and out for a corner. Again, the RAF were quick to punish any mistakes by the opposition as this high press continued to keep Essex on the back foot and they struggled at times to get the ball out of their own half. Once they did however, they looked quite good going forward and were denied a penalty appeal when an attacker ran into Robison.

The referee was having none of it as the player went down too easily and it's a goal kick to the RAF. The game was fast and furious and it made for good viewing for the spectators, quite a few of whom had travelled by car or on the team bus to support the Essex lads. After 39 minutes the RAF defenders went to sleep when a break down the left by Essex seemed to have been cut out. It hadn't and as the cross came in, the RAF lads were looking a different way as a midfield player appeared from nowhere to get his toe to the ball and send it into the net via the far post. 3-2 RAF. In the 40th minute, Watkins picked up a thigh injury and was replaced by Stewart and despite almost 6 minutes of time added on that's how it stayed until half time.

Almost straight from the kick off Stockport tested the Essex keeper with a blistering shot that he did well to tip over for a corner. Both sides were creating chances but as is the norm it seems, shots are high and wide. In fact, this first fifteen minutes of this half, the RAF are terrible. Yes, they are attacking at will but it seems the final ball is short, over hit, passed straight to the opposition or, if it is played right, the final shot is woefully high or wide or totally miskicked. Then, in the 61st minute, Wanless broke forward. A defender managed to get a toe on it but could only divert the ball into the path of Stockport who then played it straight back to Wanless and he slotted the ball home. 4-2 RAF.

After a couple of scary moments, the RAF then seemed to find their passing ability, keeping the ball for nigh on six minutes without an Essex player getting anywhere near. It only came to an end when the boys in blue changed momentum and attacked with pace but alas, Wanless struck his shot wide. Essex then had a couple of chances, the second of which came from a free kick in their own half. A long ball was played over the top of the RAF defence and the forward running onto it managed to lift it over Algar and into the net. 4-3 RAF after 77 minutes. Five minutes later, the RAF extended their lead again when the ball found its way to Stockport in the opposition box. He managed to turn and fire in a shot that beat all and nestled safely in the net. 5-3 RAF.

Amazingly, this game still wasn't over as two minutes later, Essex reduced the deficit again when a mistake saw the RAF give the ball away. A driving run through the middle then saw the ball passed out to the left edge of the box. The forward drew the keeper and calmly slotted. 5-4 RAF. Essex picked up the pace looking for an equaliser but the RAF defence stood firm. They continued to defend from the front and still created chances themselves although the RAF have Algar to thank for a couple of great saves.



The first majestically tipping over a long range effort and secondly, a double save the second part of which I'm unsure as to whether he knew what happened as it came flying back out off his backside.

RAF FA Vets 5 – Essex FA Vets 4

Starting XI: Algar, Robison, Taylor, Robinson, Rooney, Bryan, Bartley, Pugh, Wanless, Stockport, Watkins. Subs: Laurie, Green, Barker, Donnelly, Shanks, Butt, Stewart, Richards

Other RAF representatives: Hancocks (Mr A), Beattie (RTM), Salkeld (Coach), Wilkinson (Coach), Milam (GK Coach), Payne (Therapist), Bones (Photo), Sheehan (Comms), Robertson, J. Bartley, Ellis (Support staff).

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