

RAF SRT Team Match Report



5 December 2017 – RAF Cosford Stadium

RAF SRT – Halesowen Town FC
2 - 0



On a cold and clear evening, the RAF SRT took on a Halesowen Town FC. Halesowen play their football in the Evo Stik Northern Premier League team. The match was played under the floodlights on a well prepared surface at RAF Cosford in front of a reasonable crowd.

The match started at a good tempo with both sides probing down the flanks. With only a few minutes on the clock, the RAF were the first to test the keeper with Mike Campbell shooting straight at the Halesowen keeper who gathered with ease. Not long after Alex Woodhouse played a telling pass between two defenders for Campbell to chase but before he could get a shot away, he was tackled with the ball rolling out for a corner. Claisse drilled the corner across the goal and Liam Corrigan met it with a firm but controlled side footed effort that looked goal bound, unfortunately the Halesowen keeper got down quickly to save.



Halesowen responded to this early RAF pressure, forcing an error in the middle of the park and then forcing RAF keeper Mike Carr into action with a firm strike which was destined for the bottom corner. RAF Keeper dived full stretch to his right and got a strong wrist to the ball to keep the match 0-0.

Halesowen's Agbor tried his luck a minute later but his effort went high and wide. Agbor was starting to influence the game and went on a run into the heart of the RAF defence, unleashing a strong effort but RAF keeper Carr again was a match for it, pushing the ball wide for a corner.



The match ebbed and flowed for a period with neither side creating much. On 22 minutes Campbell changed this with an effort from 10 yards out forcing the keeper to divert his on target effort wide for another RAF corner. Both defences were communicating well and mopping up danger.

Halesowen's Haylor was making use of his height with a number of aerial clearances but play was being mixed up for both sides with a mixture of short and long balls. Halesowen's Steele also looked lively whenever he got the ball. In the space of a few minutes he saw one effort go high and wide and another shot blocked. Up front for the RAF, Campbell and Webb were linking up well but the Halesowen centre backs (Haylor and Morrison) were reading the game well and stemming the danger.

Just before half-time Steele went on a surging 30 yards run down the RAF left, progressing into the box but before he could get an effort off, he stopped in his tracks by a great tackle by RAF captain Evans.

Half time – RAF SRT 0 – 0 Halesowen Town FC.

The second half started without any significant action. On 53 minutes the RAF earned a corner after some good interplay saw them progress up the pitch. Woodhouse delivered a lovely cross to the far post which evaded everyone, except Campbell who met it with a cushioned side foot effort, which made the net ripple. Unfortunately, it was the side netting but it suggested that the match would see a goal.



Minutes later Webb nearly opened the scoring, after the ball somehow fell to him in the box, he met the ball at full stretch but saw his header loop over the keeper but wide of the target.

The RAF were now on top, spending more time in their opponent's half and when goal keeper Tom Parsons attempted clearance was charged down by Campbell, the RAF were soon in the lead as Campbell placed the ball into the empty net from 7 yards out. 1-0. This was a little harsh on the Halesowen Keeper who until that point was looking confident.

Halesowen rallied and good play down their left saw a lovely cross reach Bragoli who was 15 yards out, he controlled the ball well and then launched his shot just over under pressure from two RAF defenders.

The RAF freshened things up with Campbell coming off after a good shift and Norton coming on. Morris then went on a good run before playing in Webb on the right flank but Webb mishit his cross.

The second goal arrived on 67 minutes. A RAF break saw Norton and Webb exchange a couple of short, quick passes before Norton's shot was blocked. However, Webb was alert and managed to tackle the defender before he could clear the ball, clipping the ball back to an on-rushing Rhys Harbottle, who finished well from 10 yards out, leaving the keeper without a chance.



An injury forced the next RAF substitution with Greenwood going over on his ankle when he attempted cross from the Halesowen goal line whilst at full stretch and under pressure. RAF sub – Mike Atkinson on, Ben Greenwood off.

Halesowen responded with another surging run down the right but the RAF defence were resolute and were nullifying the threat. After a lot of running, Webb was replaced by Brownhill to ensure fresh legs continued to take the game to Halesowen.

RAF sub Webb off, Lewis Brownhill on.

Halesowen keeper Parsons nearly gifted the RAF another chance with a poor clearance which went straight to Norton. Norton, steadied himself 30 yards out and hit his effort back towards the goal but it curled off target much to his disappointment but the keeper's relief. Not long after this effort the Referee brought the match to an end. A great result for the SRT and a decent match.

Final score RAF SRT 2 – 0 Halesowen Town FC.

SRT Manager Kev Barry said of the victory –

'This was a great fixture to finish the calendar year off with. To have a club of the stature of Halesowen Town FC take time out from their busy Evo Stik Premier League programme is commendable to them as a club. They made 3 changes from their team that won against Whitby Town, so I knew we would be in for a tough test as they have a strong step 3 squad.

My lads are in a very good place at the moment, so I knew they would be right up for this challenge. We spoke earlier in the day regarding a few areas we needed to put right after the Guernsey fixture and my challenge to the lads was to try and work on putting them right. Individually they did this and collectively we carried out our game plan. I felt we controlled the game and should have took an early lead, however, Halesowen always looked a threat on the break and with the quality they had on display, defensively we had to be right at it.

I was pleased for Cpl Alex Woodhouse as he played his civilian football with Halesowen. A player in that position will always have a few variables going around his head before kick-off. He gave a MOM performance and along with Cpl Tom Claisse and LCpl Liam Morris totally controlled the midfield areas, especially in the 2nd half.

We have now gone 315 minutes without conceding a goal (since the own goal against Boldmere) which is always pleasing for a manager. There will be tough tests coming thick and fast in the New Year but momentum is good, so we must make sure we keep it going!

RAF Squad:

1. Mike Car – GK
2. Ben Greenwood
3. Rhys Harbottle
4. James McGowan
5. Carl Evans – Captain
6. Liam Corrigan
7. Liam Morris
8. Tom Claisse
9. Dave Webb
10. Mike Campbell
11. Alex Woodhouse

- RAF Stafford
RAF Odiham
RAF Boulmer
RAF Brize Norton
RAF Brize Norton
RAF Coningsby
RAF Honington
RAF Brize Norton
RAF Shawbury
RAF Honington
RAF Brize Norton

Subs

12. Dan Gorman – GK
13. Steve Norton
14. Danny Dixon
15. Lewis Brownhill
16. Andre Williams
17. Mike Atkinson

- RAF Coningsby
RAF Coningsby
RAF Waddington
RAF Benson
RAF Odiham
RAF Honington

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