

TT No.280: Bob Davies - Saturday Soccer **FOUR Match Special** - Sat 14th May 2011 feat. games at: **Waltham Abbey Res** v Wadham Lodge (EOL Sen Div. 2); **Roydon Spartans** v Bengo Trinity Res (Hertford & District League Div. 2); **Oracle Components** v Broxbourne Badgers Res (Hertford & District League Div. 1) and **North Weald** v Alemite Athletic (Bishops Stortford, Stansted & District League Prem Division).

Match 1 - 11am: Essex Olympian League Senior Division 2; **Waltham Abbey Res (2)** 3 v 3 (1) Wadham Lodge; Admission and Programme: None.

Champions Wadham Lodge scored after just 23 seconds in this game that took place at the Ryman League club's Capershotts ground. The game was an entertaining first fixture of the day with Waltham Abbey equalising from the the penalty spot and then taking a half time lead when Wadham failed to clear following a corner.

The Abbey extended their lead in the second to 3-1 but when Wadham reduced the deficit to one goal late in the game I sensed that an equaliser was on the cards. Not to be proved wrong the visitors duly obliged in the last minute of stoppage time and as both teams took a point apiece. The bar opened at half time to allow the 20 plus spectators the chance of a half time cuppa. From here it was a pleasant but busy drive through Epping Forest and onto Harlow for the afternoon fixtures.

Match 2 - 1.30pm: Hertford and District League Division 2; **Roydon Spartans (1)** 5 v 1 (0) Bengo Trinity Reserves (played at the Harlow Link centre - main pitch); Admission and Programme: None.

I'm not too sure if this venue in Parsloe Road is the regular home for Roydon Spartans as I thought they played in Roydon, at the Recreation Ground in Occupation Lane. Anyway, today they had use of the main pitch at the Harlow Link prior to Harlow Links FC Premier division home game with Hertford County. The game in the first half spluttered along, with the teams being separated by a single Roydon goal at the break. This was despite Bengo having the better chances during the half.

In the second the home side ran riot with four goals and this could have easily been doubled this with several other chances going inches wide of the goal. Bengo did manage a consolation but looked a tired side at the end.

Match 3 - 3.25pm: Hertford and District League Division 1; **Oracle Components (1)** 3 v 1 (1) Broxbourne Badgers Reserves (played at the Harlow Link centre - pitch across the road); Admission and Programme: None.

My third and final game of the day was a choice between watching Harlow Link F.C. take on Hertford County or Oracle Components play Broxbourne Badgers Reserves. I chose the latter as they were going to play "off centre" at the pitch

across the road from the main complex. This was probably the most even match of the day with Oracles' pace up front being manacled by the Badgers experienced looking back line, well for most of the game anyway! After taking an early the home side found it difficult to break through and then found themselves pegged back by a simply constructed goal just before the break. In the second period the game became a very even affair with both sides having chances to break the deadlock. It was Oracle that finally took the lead despite more than hint of offside to it and sealed the game late in the half. The win meant that Oracle finished a creditable third place in the League and had also seen them winning the Division One Cup on penalties at The County Ground Letchworth in April. A season to build on for the 2011-2012 campaign.

Match 4 - 1.00pm: Bishops Stortford, Stansted & District League Prem Division; **North Weald** (0) 3 v 2 (1) Alemite Athletic (the Premier Division title decider played at the Fairways Sports Club - next to Harlow Link, separate facilities, (pitches separated by wire fence and gate); Admission and Programme: None; Attendance: 100 PLUS!!

Now for the bonus game. When I arrived at the Harlow Link, I noticed a game on at the venue next to the Link had attracted a considerable number of spectators. The venue, so I found out, was the Fairways Sports Club separate from the Harlow Link and home to Alemite Athletic and a couple of youth sides in the area. The complex consists of a brick-built building with a bar and dressing rooms. Three well-kept pitches and a floodlit area made up the playing surfaces that were separated from the Link pitches by wire fencing and a gate. This game proved to be the most competitive of the day with the Bishops Stortford, Stansted & District League Premier Division title up for grabs. Leaders North Weald needed only a draw against Alemite Athletic. The teams were spurred on by a very vocal crowd that numbered more than my attendances for the three games on the day put together! It was a punishing game with no quarter given in the majority of the tackles. Alemite took a half time lead but leaders North Weald equalised early in the second with a drilled free kick front the edge of the box. The League leaders then took the lead with a header from a corner. Alemite continued to attack as they had to win and levelled midway through the half. The game then built to crescendo with Alemite forcing an excellent save from the North Weald keeper. With everybody for Alemite pushing up searching for a winner to take the title it was North Weald that broke away and scored a third with only a couple of minutes left on the clock. Not bad for a game I never expected to see that day.

A good Cup final day Treble completed with more than a passing interest in the final game (saw all the goals in that one as well!).

07/20