

FA County Youth Cup – 1st Round

Gloucestershire FA 4 Berks & Bucks FA 8 (AET)

Scorers:

Berks & Bucks FA: Liam MacDevitt (Wokingham & Emmbrook FC) 4 (1 pen.), Sanchez Cammock (JMA Reading) 2, Khalid Senussi (Wokingham & Emmbrook FC), Steve Brzezicki (Flackwell Heath FC)

Gloucestershire FA: Charles Buse (Forest Green Rovers FC) 3, Ben Simmonds (Gloucester City FC)

Report:

A remarkable game at Oaklands Park, Almondsbury, Bristol saw a repeat of last year's 1st Round tie as these two teams were drawn to face each other once again. No one who witnessed that 6-4 win for the Berks & Bucks FA would have dared to think that amount of goals was again possible, but lightning can strike twice it seems!

As early as the second minute, Liam MacDevitt showed he had pace to burn, racing clear of the home defence and in on goal. There seemed a hint of a shirt tug, combined with a pitch that was soft underneath but dry on top, and MacDevitt was unable to give the visitors an early lead.

Gloucestershire were out for revenge, having lost three times last season in various competitions against Berks & Bucks. It soon became clear that this was a day when defences would be under pressure.

Berks & Bucks went ahead on 7 minutes. A free-kick was awarded 25 metres from goal and Sanchez Cammock's excellent strike brought out a fine save from Jake Underwood in the home goal, diving to tip the shot around the post. From the resulting corner, whipped in from the left, the ball evaded a mass of jumping bodies, finding Cammock unmarked at the far post and he was alert enough to steer the ball home off his chest from close to the goal line. 0-1

The lead was doubled on 28 minutes. This time MacDevitt was set free down the right and, once more, his pace took him clear of the defender. Cutting into the box, the striker looked up to see his strike-partner arriving. The pass was good and Cammock turned the ball past the stranded Underwood. There was perhaps a hint of fortune in the finish as the ball seemed to take a double hit of Cammock's boot before finding the net. 0-2

At this stage Berks & Bucks seemed comfortable and further chances were created and squandered, which could have ended the game as a contest.

Gloucestershire showed terrific heart and reduced the arrears on 35 minutes with a goal that had the visiting management anguished at the defending. A right-wing corner was whipped in towards the near post at waist height. The defender near the post decided to leave it on his keeper's call rather than clearing the danger. Simmonds saw his split-second chance, putting a toe on the ball to steer it past the stranded Jamal Richmond in goal. 1-2

The score line stayed the same to the half-time whistle, but there was a sense of disappointment among the visitors that they were not further in front.

At the break Joe Blount replaced Ollie Hayward in midfield. Hayward had been struggling with a groin strain towards half-time. Blount was given no time to settle into his new surroundings, however, as Gloucestershire, fired up from their team talk, attacked with intent.

Berks & Bucks looked as if they were still in the dressing room and it was no surprise when Buse equalised for Gloucestershire on 64 minutes. 2-2

This time it was the visitors' turn to show their mettle and on 70 minutes they regained the lead. A free-kick was awarded centrally, 25 metres from goal. One or two players took a look at the opportunity, but it was

Khalid Senussi who took responsibility for the kick. The strike was crisp and low, eluding the defensive wall and Underwood's despairing attempts to keep it from hitting the back of the net. 2-3

On 75 minutes it seemed the tie was finally over. Counter-attacking at pace, it was MacDevitt bursting clear down the right, driving on towards the byline. Berks & Bucks had men advantage catching up with play and MacDevitt's pass found Steve Brzezicki, arriving at pace to sweep the ball first time high into the net. 2-4

Jack Westbrook replaced Senussi as Berks & Bucks sought to shut up shop. Gloucestershire had other ideas and responded with two goals in two minutes on 82 and 83 minutes. The first arrived courtesy of a right-wing corner that was headed clear to the far side of the penalty area. The defence were slow to close down the second phase ball and Buse fired through a mass of bodies to find the bottom corner of the net. 3-4

Straight from the restart Gloucestershire poured forward again and this time the ball ran loose inside the six-yard box. Defenders and keeper frantically tried to clear the danger, but it was that man Buse again, on hand to poke it home to complete his hat-trick for the home side. 4-4

No further goals and so the game moved into extra-time.

Westbrook tested the keeper with a snap effort from range in the opening minute, but Underwood had shown himself well capable to deal with those.

Ollie Hogg, fresh from the U16 County team, replaced Chris Stapleton and was immediately involved in the action. Ten minutes of the first half of extra time had elapsed when a fine passage of neat passing play took the ball out to Hogg on the left. Aware of his options he found the perfect pass to MacDevitt, arriving with a well-timed run into the box. The control and finish was perfect. 4-5

On the stroke of half time MacDevitt again went through the defence like a knife through butter. Taking the ball around the keeper a goal looked certain when he was pushed to the ground from behind. Penalty!

MacDevitt brushed himself down and gave Underwood no chance with the spot-kick. 4-6

Gloucestershire now had a mountain to climb and had to commit more bodies forward. This left them vulnerable to the counter-attack. First MacDevitt was through one on one with Underwood, but the keeper stayed big to block with his body. Then Cammock worked an opening inside the box, twisting and turning to shoot narrowly wide.

On 113 minutes the seventh goal arrived and it was a product of route one football. A clearance long downfield was neatly headed on by Cammock and MacDevitt ran clear of the defence to slide the ball past Underwood for his own hat-trick. 4-7

There was still time for another goal and it was that man MacDevitt again who provided it. A right-wing corner was not cleared with the ball bouncing around the six-yard box. MacDevitt, back to goal and by now brimming with joy and confidence, attempted a cheeky overhead kick. The contact was not perfect, but it was enough to loop the ball over Underwood and into the net. 4-8

A fantastic afternoon's entertainment ended with Gloucestershire kindly presenting the match ball to MacDevitt.

The squad will now travel to Uxbridge on Sat. 12 November to face Middlesex FA, who beat Dorset 3-1 in their own 1st Round tie.

Berks & Bucks squad: Jamal Richmond (Slough Town), Jack Seaton (Aylesbury), George Stirland (Thatcham Town), Alex Collard (Aylesbury) (Capt.), Matt Higham (Bracknell Town), Ollie Hayward (Buckingham Athletic) (Sub. 46 Joe Blount (Slough Town)), Khalid Senussi (Wokingham & Emmbrook) (Sub. 74 Jack Westbrook (Aylesbury)), Steve Brzezicki (Flackwell Heath), Sanchez Cammock (JMA Reading), Liam MacDevitt (Wokingham & Emmbrook), Chris Stapleton (Aylesbury) (Sub. 91 Ollie Hogg (Aylesbury)). Unused sub. Josh Corcoran (Aylesbury)