

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

Bank of England Veterans v Brentham Veterans.

Team:-

Tony Georgiou

John Rogers

Paul James

Mike Miley

Alan Hedley

Jon Rhodes

Tom Rice

Eamonn Malone

Nigel Green

Mick Duffy

Colin Matthews

Subs:-

Neil Graveney

Dave Sellers

Unused sub – Dave Grose.

On a glorious tropical Summer's day where the temperature must have been touching 100 degrees Fahrenheit, Brentham Veterans entered the Bank of

England Changing rooms which had taken the weather in to account as the air conditioning was on full blast – it was fu\*in freezing. There was plenty of room in the changing rooms, and Brentham veterans all got changed and took to the main pitch ready for a 10:30am kick off. 10:30am came and went, so did 10:45am. It was nearer 11am when the Bank took to the pitch, together with a lame referee – thankfully it wasn't that big fat cheating ba\*tard who had been the bane of Brentham Veterans over the years. Brentham were being cheered on by their biggest away following of the season with John Rogers' son James, Mick O'Brien, Marky Mark and Dave Grose ready to cheer the Blues on. The Big Tosser won the toss and changed the sides around so that Brentham were defending the Main building end of the pitch.

Bank of England kicked off and they looked confident on the ball as they took the game to Brentham, who's defence was in confident move following their clean sheet the previous week. Mike Miley, aka Frank Gallagher was especially pleased to have his first clean sheet of the year! With Brentham without a recognised goalkeeper this week, Tony Georgiou volunteered to go in goal, for the first half anyway, and he looked confident as he collected crosses and feeble attempts on goal within the first 15 minutes. Although Brentham were beginning to see more of the football, they weren't really creating clear cut chances or troubling the Bank custodian. Mike Miley, and Paul James were dominant at the back for Brentham, and John Rogers was providing Jon Rhodes with plenty of the ball. Unfortunately, after 20 minutes, Jon Rhodes pulled up with a hamstringing problem as he was about to outrun the Bank left back again. Dave Sellers was introduced, and it wasn't long before Brentham were making a tactical switch with Alan Hedley taking over in goal from TG. Alan was in dominant form as he was taking control of his box and claiming any through ball from the bank midfield who had a player that was even smaller than Colin Matthews who was giving Tom Rice and Eamonn Malone a run for their money.

On 30 minutes, Eamonn Malone, who had now moved out to the right hand side of midfield, received a ball from Tom Rice on the right hand side of the Bank penalty area, Eamonn fired in a low hard cross which Nigel Green turned in at the far post from 6 inches with the Bank players claiming for offside, however, one of their defenders and the goalkeeper was on the line. 0-1 and a

deserved lead for the visitors. The Bank tried to force their way back in the game and John Rogers made a crunching tackle in midfield to thwart a Bank attack as they looked for a quick equaliser. The large pitch was playing well as both sides played attractive football before the referee brought the half to an end with Brentham having kept a clean sheet for 140 consecutive minutes.

Half time:- Bank of England Veterans 0-1 Brentham Veterans.

Brentham kicked off the second half with Neil Graveney taking over the fittest man at Brentham role, as well as the right back role as he was introduced for the second half. Brentham were now playing attractive football and in one flowing move beginning with Neil Graveney at right back, the ball was played from one side of the pitch to the other with at least seven Brentham players touching the ball before Tom Rice was presented with a shooting opportunity which he fired well wide of the Bank's left hand post, a brilliant flowing move which deserved a better finish. Nigel Green and John Rogers were hugging the touch lines and provided a threat as they found the midfield runs of Dave Sellers and Tom Rice. Sellers fired over from the edge of the Bank box following another fine Brentham move, as Brentham tried to find the second goal which would dampen the spirit of the Bank of England who looked dangerous on the break.

On 70 minutes, Brentham pushed forward again, however Duffy lost possession on the edge of the Bank penalty area. From the resulting break by the bank, the ball found its way to the Bank right winger who tried a cross cum shot from 30 yards out which somehow trickled inside Alan's near post as he was flat footed, expecting a cross to the far post. 1-1, and the visitors had scored an equaliser against the run of play. Brentham tried to regain the lead and almost immediately Eamonn Malone fired in a cross to Tom Rice who attempted a diving header from 8 yards out, however, the ball hit his shoulder and went narrowly wide of the Bank post. Tom was again involved a few minutes later when he was well placed 12 yards out in front of the Bank goal, but he fired well wide, once again letting the Bank off the hook.

With both teams wanting to win, there was a short period of 5 minutes where tempers were frayed, kicking off when Mike Miley won an excellent 50-50 challenge in the middle of the park which the Bank midfielder took exception

to and retaliated with a kick to Mike. Mike took exception and smacked the Bank midfielder with his handbag, and the Bank guy wiped his lipstick off and threatened Mike with his purse. Other Bank players got involved, and so did Eamonn Malone who got into verbals with the Bank centre half who spat his dummy out in Eamonn's direction. 'Normal' service resumed after 5 minutes of petulance from both sides as they both calmed down enough to concentrate on the game.

On 82 minutes, The Bank worked the ball out to the right winger who crossed perfectly to the penalty spot and the Bank forward headed convincingly past Alan and just inside his near post to give the Bank an undeserved lead which was confirmed as the Bank Centre half said "we have got an undeserved lead".

Brentham immediately brought back on Colin Matthews and played three up front with just three at the back, and they immediately forced a couple of corners. On 86 minutes, one of Brentham's corners was cleared, only as far as Mike Miley who played the ball back into the Bank penalty area, with the ball falling to Eamonn Malone on the edge of the six yard box. With the Bank claiming for offside, Eamonn calmly placed the ball under the Bank keeper and into the far corner of the net to bring the scores level again. 2-2.

Brentham again forced several corners in the dying embers of the game, but they just couldn't force the winning goal that their play had deserved. The lame referee brought the game to an end on a thoroughly entertaining game for the fans, but Brentham could and perhaps should have won on the day, however, they remain unbeaten in 2011 as they enter February.

An excellent performance from Frank Gallagher, and fine performances from John Rogers who was impressing his son, Tom Rice, and Tony G. The Guinness wore off Eamonn at just the right time for him to force the equaliser.

Just for the record, there is a thief amongst the Brentham Veterans, and all fingers point to the inhabitant of the Chatsworth Estate.

Thank you to everyone who took part.

Full Time: Bank of England Veterans 2-2 Brentham Veterans.

(Green 1, Malone 1,)

Next game away to Meadhurst Veterans. Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2011.