

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2011.

Brentham Veterans v Acton Saints Veterans.

Team:-

Adrian Lovett

John Rogers

Paul James

Mark Langley-Sowter

Dave Grose

Nigel Green

Tom Rice

Neil Graveney

Tony Georgiou

Mick Duffy

Jon Rhodes

Subs:-

Colin Matthews

Alan Hedley

Alex

On a grey February morning, Brentham Veterans were playing their first home game in a month and entertaining Acton Saints, who judging from the fixture earlier in the season, 'Saints' was not exactly a true description of the way they played football. There was some concern that the game may be called off as the Brentham 1<sup>st</sup> team's game the day previous had fallen foul of a waterlogged pitch, but after Dave Grose and John Capps had inspected the pitch, the go-ahead was given. As expected, Vinnie had rolled up with Acton Saints, together with half of the old Hanwell Strollers team, but it was good to meet up with brothers Martin and Olly who have threatened to join the Brentham \Veterans on their end of season tour to Kerry – Oh no!

The Big Tossler won the toss and Brentham began the first half defending the bowling green end of the pitch. Acton kicked off and began confidently by passing the ball well with Brentham unable to get a foot hold in the game. Acton were having the majority of the possession, but weren't threatening as Jamesey and Marky Mark marshalled the defence well. On 15 minutes, Brentham scored against the run of play when fine work by Tony Georgiou down the left wing of Brentham saw him deliver a cross to the far post where Duffy headed the ball back across goal to find Tom Rice who had made a fine run from midfield. The Rice Unit bundled the ball over the Acton line to continue his fine goal scoring form, and to give Brentham the lead.

Acton continued to play attractive football, and Adrian had to be alert as he rushed out to an Acton forward's feet to clear the danger and thwart another Acton attack. Acton were not to be denied, and on 20 minutes, they were level when they scored a goal not dissimilar to the Brentham goal when a cross to the far post was headed back by Martin for an Acton forward to side foot past Adrian, giving him no chance. The Acton No10 was 'putting it about' and midway through the first half his challenge on Paul James resulted in Jamesey having to leave the field with bruised, if not fractured ribs. Alan Hedley fitted in to an unaccustomed central defensive role alongside Marky Mark. On 33 minutes, Brentham re-took the lead when Tony Georgiou played a fine ball into the feet of Duffy in the Acton penalty area. Duffy turned his defender and was thwarted by the Acton keeper, but as the ball broke loose, Duffy managed to toe poke the ball sideways to Jon Rhodes on the 6 yard line for a simple finish to put Brentham ahead. 2-1.

Brentham were now in control, and Jon Rhodes broke free before firing wide of the Acton goal, but that was not the best chance Brentham had to extend their lead. On the stroke of half time, Tom Rice played the ball to Duffy half way inside the Acton half. Duffy skipped past the last defender, then waltzed past the keeper, and with the goal gaping, his legs gave way and he fired over when it looked easier to score. A bad miss from the out of sorts striker. As soon as Acton took the goal kick, John Capps blew for half time with Brentham holding a slender lead.

Half time: Brentham Veterans 2-1 Acton Saints Veterans.

Brentham began the second half sluggishly and almost gifted Acton a second goal when Dave Grose gave the ball away outside the Brentham penalty area. An Acton player crossed and the replacement centre Forward for Acton headed against Adrian's post before the ball was cleared by the Brentham defence. Brentham had been lucky, and so had Dave Grose who was having an excellent game up until that point. Brentham had not learned their lesson and were guilty of giving the ball away too easily and were made to pay on the hour mark when Acton equalised following another bout of sustained pressure. Brentham now knew they were in a fight to maintain their unbeaten start to 2011. Midway through the half, Alex was introduced to the action to make his first appearance for Brentham Veterans as Brentham looked to take the lead for the third time in the game. On 70 minutes, Brentham were awarded a free kick on the touch line about 15 yards outside the Acton penalty area. Colin Matthews flighted in a wonderful ball which eluded everyone before nestling in the bottom corner of the Acton net. Duffy tried to convince everyone he had glanced in the ball, but the cheating ba\*tard couldn't even buy a goal as he offered Colin some cash and the opportunity to sleep with Lucy so that the Big Tosser could finally get on the scoresheet, but Colin was having none of it. 3-2.

On 70 minutes, John Rogers made a shocking tackle on John Capps which flattened the official. John Rogers assault was surprising as John Capps was having quite a good game and there was no need for Mr Rogers to take umbridge with the man in a yellow Brentham top (which he had to wear as Acton were in black). For some reason John Capps mentioned his arse was hurting, but nobody had noticed Mr Rogers assaulting Mr Capps from behind, and up the bum. The Acton players took great delight in the farce, but

fortunately Mr Capps was able to continue following treatment. Surprisingly John Rogers escaped a red Card.

Brentham weren't firing on all cylinders on the day, and they continued to give the ball away cheaply, and as Acton pushed forward, they were creating chances, and Adrian again had to rush out a couple of times to thwart danger, but on 78 minutes Acton once again drew level when their big centre forward finished from inside the Brentham box. Brentham had now relinquished the lead three times and were looking destined to not hold on to a lead on the day.

Brentham continued to push forward and won several corners, and from one, Colin Matthews took the worst corner in Brentham history as he almost hit the bowling green huts from the corner flag, but he wasn't going to win the c\*nt of the day award, the best was yet to come. On 85 minutes, Duffy latched on to a loose ball outside the Acton penalty area, and once again he skipped past the last defender before being brought down by the Acton goalkeeper. A stone wall penalty. Duffy picked himself up and took the penalty which was fired down the middle, however, the lazy ba\*tard of an Acton keeper stayed still and kicked the ball out to deny the Big TOSSER from winning the game for Brentham. To rub salt into the strikers wounds, Acton broke and their Centre forward powered past Alan Hedley before smashing the ball past Adrian, giving him no chance. It was now 3-4 to Acton, and they saw out the remaining minutes to record a victory over Brentham for the first time in many seasons.

Not the best performance from Brentham on the day, who gave the ball away far too often, but the responsibility for the defeat rests at the Captain's feet who couldn't hit a barn door with a banjo at the moment – Wan\*er.

As the Brentham players trudged off the pitch and made their way into the showers to wash the mud off their aching bodies, Colin 'Hypocrite' Matthews was spotted washing his football boots in the sowers. Absolutely irresponsible behaviour, and the bill for the clogged up drains for the last 30 years will be sent to Mr Matthews in due course.

Full Time: Brentham Veterans 3-4 Acton Saints Veterans.

(Rice 1, Rhodes 1, Matthews 1,)

Next game, away to Sheen Old G's – Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2011.