

FA VASE

Second Round

Match Report

Date: Saturday 18 th November.2006. Attendance 333.
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Teams: NANTWICH TOWN 3 v SHILDON 4 (After extra time)
Bott 5. Kinsey 90. Pen 96. Emson 73.82. Shoulder 91. Moore 106.

NANTWICH TOWN: Rob Hackney. Murray McCulloch. Paul Taylor. Richard Smith. Mark Fitton. Adam Beasley. Phil Parkinson © Georky Kiss. Andy Bott. Mathew Platt. Michailis Chailis. Substitutes: Matt Blake. James Marrow. Paul Donnelly. Andy Kinsey. Danny Reade (sub g/k).

Nantwich made one change to the line up that lost to FC United last weekend with Matthew Platt partnering Andy Bott in attack at the expense of Matt Blake who was part of the five man subs bench. Prior to the start the holders were presented with a miniature FA Vase by the chairman of the Vase committee, Mr Mervyn Leggett. On show earlier in the afternoon was a 'Sporting Champions of the Year' plaque, presented to Nantwich Town at the Grosvenor Hotel in Chester last Thursday evening, an event sponsored by Scottish Power/Trinity Mirror Cheshire, the award presented in recognition of the club's FA Vase achievement last season.

Ahead of the pre match warm-up head coach Steve Davis presented his players with an in depth assessment of their Northern League visitors after witnessing them in action on Wednesday as they succumbed to their third successive defeat, and having conceded seven goals for a single reply. From the whistle Nantwich attacked down the visitors right through Kiss, bringing Platt into contention deep square of the area, who then followed with a looping centre that drew 'keeper Spence but, the ball fell narrowly wide of the far post. Platt was again prominent a few moments later when the striker took a free kick just inside the Shildon half that dropped amongst a clutch of players before Spence dived on top of the loose ball right on his line. **The early pressure gave way to the first goal for the Vase holders when, following a 5th minute right sided corner kick taken by Platt, the ball arched over the defence to find the unmarked Bott, the 12 goal striker catching the ball with his right knee before knocking it into the far corner of the net.** Despite the setback Shildon regrouped and launched a wave of attacks that pulled the home defence out of position for a time. Nantwich central defender Mark Fitton saved his side's blushes when he hacked the ball off the goal line after Emson had delivered a dangerous ball from square on the left during one of those attacks. Meanwhile, on the opposite side of the pitch, Chailis was receiving some rough treatment from Shildon right back Jury who eventually received a booking for his over exuberance. By the quarter hour Nantwich had sustained a barrage of attacks from midfield, and in one such move McCulloch hacked the ball off the line after Ord sent in a dangerous looking cross, whilst moments later, Paul Taylor came off second best in a tackle that forced him out of the tie leaving Kiss to move from midfield to the left back position, whilst Paul Donnelly came

from the bench into midfield. On 27 minutes Shildon captain Moore was unlucky on the turn with a short range volley that was interrupted by Kiss followed by Emson who flashed an angled shot across the face of goal. As the game approached the half hour Nantwich looked a somewhat disjointed outfit, often finding themselves stretched by a not particularly good, but, physically strong and hard working side. Just past the half hour mark Shildon winger Niven sent in an acute angled ball from the left that dropped neatly into the arms of Hackney whilst the same player, after switching flanks, turned Kiss, before shooting from close range, forcing Hackney to produce a diving save at the foot of his right hand post. Meantime, Nantwich were struggling to put any type of effective move together, largely due to some inept passing in midfield. Having lost the ball in midfield in the 39th minute, Nantwich allowed Emson to head over from a right sided cross, whilst a minute later, Smith put in a well timed tackle on the edge of the box to deny Emson's progress followed seconds later by Moore, who delivered an overhead kick from a similar position that fell just wide of the right hand post. Nantwich captain Phil Parkinson was shown a yellow card a minute later for a late challenge on Howarth whilst the same player took a 44th minute free kick that went straight into the arms of Rob Hackney. From a corner, late in the first period, the ball fell to Hutton on the right who was denied by the home 'keeper, however, the danger was not averted as Emson hit back with with a couple of close range shots that Fitton, and then McCulloch, did well to defend. The opening half proved tough for the Vase holders, and without change, the slender lead looked likely never to be enough.

Half time: NANTWICH TOWN 1 v Shildon 0

Within a minute of the restart Shildon came close to leveling after Niven found Emson in space on the left but, the timely intervention of McCulloch forced the visiting striker to hit the side netting from close range. During a further Shildon attack, Kiss elected to head the ball out at the expense of a corner, whilst in a rare move by the home side shortly afterwards, Platt delivered a strike from the edge of the area that went straight into the arms of Spence. Nantwich, then followed with a left sided corner but, the flag kick from Beasley was cleared upfield, and from right to left, the ball eventually reaching Emson who continued with a run that was eventually halted by the excellent timing of central defender Smith. A 57th minute free kick to Nantwich after Howarth had fouled Chailis, was effectively dealt with by Shildon but, Nantwich on the whole, were looking far away from the side that had so magnificently won the trophy at St Andrews back in May. Just past the hour, Smith was again called upon to intervene when he headed the ball out for a Shildon corner that was effectively dealt with by Donnelly before attempting to move the ball out via the midfield, and a rare incursion into Shildon territory. Steve Davis rang a change in the 66th minute when Platt made way for Blake and almost immediately Nantwich won a right sided corner after Bott had challenged a defender. From the right sided flag kick the ball reached Smith who had come up to assist the situation but, despite the ball falling to Smith, his clipped effort over the visitors defence fell into unmarked space, eventually to be hooked up field by left back Jury. Shildon midfielder Hutton proved to be a danger as the game wore on and he twice threatened around the 68th minute when first he was denied a close range shot by Fitton, whilst moments later, he shot wide from a similar range. In the 70th minute Nantwich built an attack that saw Chailis fire into the arms of Spence but, within a minute, Shildon had turned defence into attack, leaving Hutton to head wide from a corner. **Then, in the 73rd minute, the**

commencement of a disastrous path for Nantwich after Shildon leveled the score. It began with Hackney losing possession, almost on the edge of the area. Emson, the scorer, initially stumbled after winning the loose ball but, regained composure before proceeding toward an undefended goal and, despite Smith tracking back, the striker steadied to fire the ball home from 12 yards. Nantwich heads bowed, and almost from the restart, with the home defence in somewhat of a tangle, Emson was allowed an unchallenged 15 yard strike that fortunately was off target. With ideas of how to combat the rampant Shildon at a premium Nantwich effected a change when Chailis was replaced by Andy Kinsey. The change was like a breath of fresh air as the 15 goal striker, making his first appearance, after several week's out with an ankle injury, recharged the ailing 'Dabbers'. His introduction sparked a much needed Nantwich revival that resulted in the visitors going on to the back foot. A series of free kick's pulled the visitors defense all over the place but, the final ball was still absent from the home side. Two corners in a minute for Nantwich ended with the second one volleyed over the bar by Donnelly and it was now the visitors back in attack with Emson yet again the main threat when his 81st minute header was taken by Hackney at the foot of his right hand post. **However, the lively No.9 showed determination enough not to be outdone. From the goal kick, Shildon hit back from midfield, pressing Nantwich deep on their right, where Blake was to lose out in a defensive tackle allowing Emson to volley home from 16 yards eight minutes from normal time.** However, the drama didn't conclude there. **Stung by that relapse, Nantwich went straight into attack from the restart and penned Shildon back for a period, eventually winning a free kick just outside the area, right on the stroke of full time. With the ball in place, super sub Andy Kinsey elected to take the dead ball kick, from which he produced an unstoppable shot that flew through the wall and into the back of the net to the disbelief of Shildon.** With the tie now in added time, Shildon striker Ord shot over from close range following a scramble in the area but, that proved to be the final effort as referee Mr Tevindar brought proceedings to a halt before introducing extra time.

During the short break, Shildon, who had arrived with only four substitutes, and no physio, replaced Ord with substitute striker Kevin Shoulder, who was to have an immediate impact on the game. **A minute into the first period of extra time Nantwich lost the ball, deep on their right hand side, allowing Shildon midfielder Newall to deliver a cross to the edge of the box from which Shoulder volleyed a fierce drive past the diving Hackney into the back of the net to set up a grandstand finish.** The next piece of drama came some five minutes later. **With a body language that had rage written all over it, Kinsey set off on a run that saw him brush aside three challenges before passing to Bott who was then hauled down in the box at the expense of a penalty. Up stepped super sub Kinsey, who made no mistake from the penalty spot, to once again bring the scores level.** Blake then followed by carving out an opportunity for Bott but, his close range header fell wide of the target. **Then, a minute into the second period of extra time, disaster struck the Vase holders. Nantwich central defender Mark Fitton was judged to have fouled out on the left and from the resultant free kick Howarth delivered the ball crossfield to meet the head of Moore who rose high enough to head over Hackney into the roof of the net from 10 yards.** In the dying moments Georky Kiss drove a left foot shot wide of the right hand post whilst at the other end Fitton denied shoulder after Jury had played him in with a ball down the centre and

then, right at the death, Nantwich won 4 successive corners that produced shots from McCulloch and Parkinson, unfortunately dealt with quite effectively by a very average but, nevertheless very hungry opposition.

A bitterly disappointed Nantwich Head Coach Steve Davis reflected: “ Heartache doesn’t come much harder than this, and I cannot accept such a woefully inadequate performance by the players. The shape, concentration, passing, and effort, was all so out of proportion, that it allowed a very average side to put us to the sword on a day when so much pride was at stake. Having prepared them ahead of the tie with information gathered from my watching Shildon in midweek, nothing appears to have registered with the majority of them. There were strong exchanges of views afterwards but, unless they wake up to the fact that unless attitudes and performances change, then results similar to that will appear again, only this time in the league now that we are out of all cup competitions.”

Nantwich continue their league promotion campaign on Tuesday evening when opposition promotion contenders Maine Road are the visitors to Jackson Avenue. The match is the last home game in the league until Tuesday 12th December when Newcastle Town are the visitors. Meanwhile, winger Danny Griggs underwent a double hernia operation last Friday, and provided his rehabilitation progresses well, he could possibly make a return to the squad for the Newcastle game.