

Match Report

UniBond Cheshire Senior Cup Final

Tuesday 1st April 2008 Kick off 7:45pm.

Played @ Witton Albion. Wincham Park Stadium.

ALTRINCHAM 3 v NANTWICH TOWN 3 AET

Chris Senior.34.

Pavol Suhaj. 71. 87. 93.

Ryan Shotton.90.107

ALTRINCHAM: 1 Stuart COBURN, 15 Chris LANE, 5 Darren TINSON (capt), 10 Greg YOUNG, 16 Ryan SHOTTON, 19 Chris SENIOR, 23 Ryan TOULSON, 7 Robbie LAWTON, 11 Warren PEYTON, 9 Colin LITTLE, 12 Joe O'NEILL.
Substitutes: 2. Steve ASPINALL, 3. Gary SCOTT, 6. Jake SEDGEMORE, 8. Val OWEN, 18. Pat MCFADDEN.

NANTWICH TOWN: 1 Lee JONES, 2 Paul DONNELLY, 3 Gyorgy KISS, 4 Richard SMITH, 5 Paul TAYLOR, 6 Phil PARKINSON, 7 Ashley CARTER, 8 Glyn BLACKHURST, 9 Andy KINSEY, 10 Adam BEASLEY, 11 Danny GRIGGS.
Substitutes: 12. Pavel SUHAJ, 14 Ryan DICKER, 15 Nick LINFORD, 16 Nathan SOUTHERN, 17 Mark FITTON.

Nantwich won 5 – 3 on penalties

In front of huge support, Nantwich Town proved worthy winners over Blue Square Premier club Altrincham, to win one of the most entertaining and dramatic Cheshire Senior Cup Final's held for years.

Despite a well worn and heavily sanded pitch, 'The Dabbers' were able to play their brand of football, enabling them to more than match their senior rivals.

However, despite honours being even during the first half hour it was relegation haunted Altrincham who took the lead in the 34th minute through Chris Senior. In the build up to the opening goal, Altrincham built an attack along the 'Dabbers' right and from an angled ball played in from the edge of the box, Senior found just enough space to squeeze the ball between the near post and our 'keeper Lee Jones.

Danny Griggs and Ashley Carter produced a series of promising runs along opposing flanks following some tough midfield battles but, 'Ash' in particular was then having to battle against on loan Stoke City defender Ryan Shotton whose well timed interventions all too often halted the progress of our flying winger. Meanwhile, up front, Andy Kinsey and Adam Beasley were battling hard against 'Robins' central defenders Darren Tinson and Chris Lane, albeit without prising an opening, and it was the Blue Square Premier club who left for the dressing room at the half way mark holding their single goal advantage.

On resumption, the 'Dabbers' were forced on the defensive for a short period, but soon recovered to take the game to Altrincham. A 'Griggsey' snap shot from outside the box forced 'Robins' goal keeper Stuart Coburn down on his line before making the save – followed by 'Ash' Carter who was unlucky not to reach a long throw-in from Glyn Blackhurst before Coburn managed to gain enough space to smother the ball at the foot of his left hand post,

followed shortly afterwards by 'Blacky', whose powerful drive from outside the box took a deflection for a corner during a period when the 'Dabbers' were threatening. Meanwhile, hard working 'Beaso' made way for Pavol Suhaj as the 'Dabbers' sought extra height across the middle and up front and within seconds of coming on 'Pav' got in with an angled shot that fizzed narrowly past the 'Robins' left hand post. Five minutes after coming on as a substitute, 'Pav' raised a tremendous cheer from 'Dabbers' fans when he struck the equalizer before going on to complete a hat-trick with goal's in the 87th and 3rd minute of extra time. But the 'Dabbers', with victory within their grasp, shot themselves in the foot after some poor defending on the right hand edge of our box that allowed the lurking Ryan Shotton to steal in and fire past 'Jonah' to send the match into extra-time.

Altrincham were on the defensive right from the beginning of extra –time and within three minutes of the restart, 'Pav' embarrassed the Altrincham defence when, despite the close attention of a couple of defenders, he managed to twist and turn with his back to goal before firing past Coburn from an angle into the bottom right hand corner of the net to put us ahead once again. Nick Linford replaced Phil Parkinson on 108 minutes. Despite strenuous efforts by the 'Robins', we deservedly held the advantage going into the second period of extra-time before 'Pav' collapsed clutching a groin with an expression that indicated considerable pain. Despite a brave effort to stay on the pitch, the pain proved too great a burden and he was assisted from the pitch before Nathan Southern replaced him. Then, more drama as Altrincham equalized for a second time after Ryan Shotton took advantage of a loose ball on the right hand side of our defence from a cross that was delivered from wide on the opposite flank. Five minutes from the end of extra –time Altrincham striker Colin Little threatened with a close range effort before 'Jonah' bravely blocked the effort at the foot of his right hand post. However, despite further efforts from both sides, the match ended all square before lining up for the penalty decider.

For the 'Dabbers', Andy Kinsey, Ashley Carter, Richard Smith, Nick Linford and Danny Griggs, all were successful with their clinically struck penalties whilst Lee Jones was declared a hero after saving the first Altrincham penalty. However, despite Altrincham scoring from the spot with three further penalties, Nantwich had kept their nerve and deservedly won the Cheshire Senior Cup for the third time in their history.

Steve Davis initially expressed disbelief at the result but then said:- “ Fascinating match. Having been so close in normal time and then throwing it away, left me gutted. But, you only had to witness the body language of our players to see they weren't going to give up without a fight. In fairness, despite the different levels, there was nothing between the sides except that Altrincham were difficult to break down, particularly in the centre of defence but on the other hand, I thought we played the better football and went on to deservedly win the final. However, that is the first piece of silverware we have brought to the Weaver Stadium since it opened and I'm very proud to have been a part of the achievement”.