

## Match Report

UniBond League First Division South

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March.2008.

Gresley Rovers 0 v NANTWICH TOWN 3  
Andy Kinsey.39.  
Nick Farquharson.53.  
Ashley Carter.87.

Gresley Rovers: David Clarke. Tom Groves. Tony Hemmings. Miles Chamberlain. Dan Douglas. Carl Slater ©. Shaun Ridgway. Jamie Hood. Paul Edwards (Marshall 61). David Blenkinsop. Chris Sleith (Hollis 63). Substitutes: Martin Rowntree. Stefan Marshall. Jermaine Hollis.

NANTWICH TOWN: Craig Ellison. Nick Linford. Gyorgy Kiss. Richard Smith. Ryan Dicker. Adam Beasley. Ashley Carter. Glyn Blackhurst (Prince 90), Andy Kinsey ©. Nick Farquharson (Mahmood 89). Danny Griggs. Substitutes: Omar Mahmood. Nathan Southern. Liam Prince.

Referee:Mr Nigel Murphy.

Attendance.251

Nantwich were without 6 regular first team players for the visit to Gresley. Three were serving suspensions, two were injured whilst hours before kick off Paul Taylor declared himself unavailable, his wife having gone into labour with their first child. In their absence Steve Davis recalled Nick Linford from his loan spell at Newcastle Town whilst three 16 year olds were added to the bench.

'The Dabbers' attacked early – Danny Griggs testing Clarke in the 3<sup>rd</sup> minute with an effort from just outside the box. Kiss, Griggs and Farquharson combined in the 6<sup>th</sup> minute to force a corner and from the clearance Farquharson and Kinsey put in close range strikes that cannoned off defenders before the under pressure home defence secured breathing space via a goal kick.

Leading up to the quarter hour 'The Dabbers' had been relentless in attack and a Danny Griggs free kick found the well placed Kinsey who then reacted by bringing in Blackhurst 8 yards out. Unfortunately,

the Nantwich midfielder's glancing header went straight into the arms of the waiting Clarke.

But, the early signs were good for the unfamiliar looking 'Dabbers' 3 – 5 -2 formation. Meanwhile, in Gresley's first attack of note, leading scorer Blenkinsopp played in fellow striker Edwards with a tasty looking ball – the finish though was far from appetizing – it finished well wide of the target!

On 18 minutes, Kiss and Griggs combined to allow the long serving Nantwich winger to put in a shot from an angle that drifted wide of goal - Kinsey followed shortly afterwards with a strike that forced Clarke back on his line before securing the ball, whilst at the other end, Edwards struck a dipping shot that was held by Ellison.

On 20 minutes, the lively Griggs tested Clarke with a shot from just outside the box before Carter struck from deep at the near post but, Clarke was again on hand to save. Lifted by the voices of over 100 traveling supporters Nantwich continued to press for a goal but were continually thwarted by Clarke and his defence, marshaled at left back by veteran Tony Hemmings. A 5 man Nantwich move started by Kinsey ended when Carter struck a blistering volley from deep that hit the side netting. Gresley were reduced to mere spectators as the match passed the half hour mark and the 3 man midfield of Blackhurst, Beasley and Linford supported out on the flanks by Griggs and Carter, was too much for the home side to manage.

Six minutes before the break Nantwich took a well deserved lead through Andy Kinsey. With play deep over on the Gresley left the home defence were pulled out of position before Kinsey nipped in on the edge of the 6 yard box and, despite slipping in the process, managed to put in a fierce shot from a semi prostrate position that flew across the static Clarke into the far bottom corner of the net. In the remaining minutes, Carter tested Clarke from deep on the right before the overworked Gresley custodian got down to make the save at the foot of a post – Kinsey turned right back Groves before laying into the path of Griggs who responded from outside the box with a looping shot that drifted over the bar. In a rare, but late in the half Gresley move, the home side contrived to eventually secure a corner. From the flag kick over on the Nantwich right, the ball arched over a ruck of players to find the unmarked Blenkinsopp at the far post who proceeded to disappoint with a volley that fell wide.

Gresley came out for the second half with all guns blazing – but were soon on the back foot as Nantwich surged again. ‘The Dabbers’ deservedly increased their lead in the 53<sup>rd</sup> minute. A long throw from inside his own half by Blackhurst found Griggs close to the touch line. After skipping past Gresley right back Groves the winger brought into play the overlapping Farquharson who stood his ground, first against his marker and then Clarke who, despite spreading himself 12 yards out, failed to prevent the on loan Crewe striker picking his spot and firing into the bottom right hand corner of the net for the 5<sup>th</sup> goal of his loan spell.

But, despite trailing to a couple of well worked goals, Gresley continued to battle, albeit in vain. Nantwich kept their pedal pinned to the floor and rarely gave Gresley even sight of goal and, on the occasion they did force a break into the visitors box, their efforts were dealt with effectively by the commanding Smith, Dicker and Kiss. Meanwhile, ‘The Dabbers’ continued to press for a further goal and were rewarded three minutes from time by Ashley Carter. In the build up, Nantwich won a free kick just outside the area. Andy Kinsey stepped up to take the dead ball kick, producing a fierce strike that beat the wall before rebounding off Clarke at the right hand post into the path of the inrushing Carter who smashed the ball into the roof of the net from 3 yards out. A minute from time Mahmood replaced Farquharson whilst right on the stroke of normal time. Liam Prince came on for Blackhurst.

Ahead of Tuesday’s visit from runaway leaders Retford United Nantwich are back to 5<sup>th</sup> , a position they must maintain if they to are to secure a promotion play off position at seasons end.

Head coach Steve Davis, wearing a broad smile quoted; “Fantastic team performance. The game was a six pointer and having to come here without six first team players, was a worrying prospect. But, I needn’t have worried. Despite playing an unfamiliar 3-5-2 system, every player did his job, and did it well. Gresley accepted their defeat with grace and their manager was honest enough to say “you footballed us off the park.”