



For the home side, Blackhurst went close with an 8 yard glancing header from a Shotton cross from the right before Dittmer gathered on his line whilst at the other end, there was an almighty scramble in the 6 yard box from which Nantwich were lucky to escape from conceding further. On the half hour, Jones made a telling save when he held a close range effort from Law at the foot of his right hand post before the game switched ends to where Shotton was again a threat with an angled strike from deep that unfortunately missed the target. However, Shotton made no mistake in the 43<sup>rd</sup> minute. Good work in midfield by Parkinson allowed Shotton to drift in from the left hand edge of the box before providing a fine finish with a powerful low shot to give Dittmer no chance as the ball flashed into the bottom far corner of the net.

But on the stroke of half time, Nantwich were dealt a blow when they lost O'Loughlin to a left leg injury – Richard Smith, for the second game in succession, taking the place of an injured player.

### **Half time: NANTWICH TOWN 2 v PRESCOT CABLES 1**

After the break former QPR striker Karl Connolly delivered a tasty looking ball from just outside the box for Prescott winger Williams but a poor finish from the No.11 let Nantwich off the hook – at the other end, Gibson fired over from a left sided position whilst after winning the ball from the resultant goal kick Gibson then went close with a fierce 12 yard drive following a corner that Lennon had won from an initial strike that had glanced off a defender. However, Gibson made no mistake in the 53<sup>rd</sup> minute with a well taken goal from just inside the box. In the build up, a 3 man move from midfield was flicked on to Lennon with his first time reaction producing a scramble in the 6 yard box – the ball then falling to Shotton who followed in with a shot that also took a deflection – but only as far as Gibson who gave Dittmer no chance with a determined finish to restore the two goal margin.

As the game moved toward the hour mark Tickle produced an important goal line block after Williams had struck from close range before Nantwich then raided the Prescott half with an excellent 5 man move that culminated in Heler forcing Dittmer into making a desperate save at the foot of his left hand post with a strike from 12 yards. Meanwhile, Dittmer was in action again when he brilliantly tipped over the bar – this time from Blackhurst after Heler initially cut the ball back from the line before clipping the ball toward the well placed 'Dabbers' No.8. On 65 minutes Prescott introduced maximum substitutions in an effort to claw back the deficit but it was that man Shotton who threatened yet again – this time in the 72<sup>nd</sup> minute when he forced Dittmer to turn away the young striker's effort from inside the area, albeit at the expense of a throw-in. Nantwich introduced Griggs and Beasley late in the game – meanwhile, from a loose ball, Gibson took another pot shot at the target but which fell wide – Beasley got on the end of a clearance to flash a shot across the 6 yard box before Shotton was then a whisker away from completing a hat trick after Griggs initially floated the ball in from the left but when Dittmer elected to come off his line it was enough to force the young 'Dabbers' striker to clip his shot narrowly over the bar.

But, to Prescott's credit, they never gave up, and right on the stroke of normal time Connolly's replacement in attack McEwan let fly from distance with the straightest of shots that fizzed past Jones into the right hand corner of the net to set up a nervous finish for the home side. The visitors continued to pile in and Nantwich were grateful to Tinson for clearing from under the bar whilst in almost the last touch of the second period, Griggs went close with an angled strike that fell inches wide of the left hand post.

Nantwich head coach Steve Davis, whilst happy to secure the points was far from satisfied and said:- “ We made hard work of it, and were some distance from the excellent performance we produced against Worksop on Saturday. Passes went astray – defensively we looked vulnerable at times and were too flat when in good positions to take advantage of Prescott. We've been here before – we take an early lead then sit back as though we can stroll through the game. By Saturday, against Kendal, I can only hope we are switched on again”.

**Man of the match: Liam Shotton.**