

FA Cup 1st Qualifying Round - Saturday 10th September 2005

Halesowen Town 5 South Normanton Athletic 3

Howard Forinton notched a hat-trick in seven minutes during the first-half but Halesowen were given a huge fright in progressing to the next round after squandering a three-goal lead to Northern Counties East Division 1 outfit, South Normanton Athletic.

Halesowen piled on the early pressure with Alex Cowley shooting across goal in the 3rd minute after goalkeeper Steve Boot failed to clear a corner. After winning a series of corners, Dave Haywood then played an incisive 13th minute pass to Nathan Lamey, but his shot squirted wide and on 17 minutes Cowley struck the side-netting as a gulf in class started to look apparent.

FORINTON inevitably opened the scoring in the 19th minute by touching the ball into the roof of the net from close range to record his first goal in Halesowen colours after Steve Pope was given a free header from a corner.

Two minutes later Simon Forsdick made a great run down the left wing and set up **FORINTON** to increase the lead by striking the top corner of the net from the edge of the area.

FORINTON completed his hat-trick with a simple tap-in after 26 minutes when Boot could only parry a shot from Nick Smith into his path.

Pope and Lamey then wasted two free-kicks by blasting high and wide and in the 43rd minute Forsdick ballooned another good chance over the bar.

With the floodgates looking ready to open, not even the most pessimistic Yeltz fan believed Halesowen could then throw away their comfortable three goal lead to a side languishing

bottom of a league three rungs lower in the football pyramid.

However, the Shiners were given a lifeline seconds before the interval when Nathan Robinson exposed Halesowen's weakness down the left wing and crossed for hard-working Anthony **BEDWARD** to convert an open goal from close range in their first real chance of the afternoon.

Halesowen were given a further warning at the start of the second half when Nicki Preston made an important clearance and in the 59th minute the home defence was almost caught out when a long free-kick from John Peel was flicked over goalkeeper Dean Coleman by Carl Lewis but the ball fell just wide.

The plucky visitors scored a second goal after 61 minutes when Lewis swung in a free-kick and captain **PEEL** buried a free header beyond Coleman amidst more woeful defending.

Unbelievably, heartened South Normanton equalised in the 66th minute when Nick **THORPE** latched onto another long ball and held off two defenders before beating Coleman with an excellent finish from 12 yards to the delight of the travelling contingent.

Halesowen redeemed themselves and reduced the tension with two further goals in the final minutes. **LAMEY** regained the lead with a low strike from 20 yards after Forinton laid the ball off in the 70th minute.

Man-of-the-match **FORINTON** then planted home a 77th minute header from Haywood's deep cross to record his 4th goal of the game.

Halesowen Town: Coleman; Cooper, Haywood, Preston, Pope, Farmer (Pierpoint 90), Cowley (Johnson 85), Lamey, Forinton, N. Smith, Forsdick (Strachan 89). Unused Subs: Baker, Amos.

South Normanton Athletic: Boot; M. Smith (Cox 84), Jago, Peel, Atkinson, Walker, Robinson,

Martt, Thorpe, Bedward (Augustus 55), Lewis. Unused Subs: Warden, Morrell, Roome.

Referee: D. Handley (Wigan)

Attendance: 279

Booked: Cox (90)

Sponsors' Man of the Match: Howard Forinton