

## **DARTFORD 0 CONCORD RANGERS 0**

Dartford notched up a third consecutive draw against a stubborn Concord Rangers side to preserve their unbeaten run at Bericote Powerhouse Princes Park in front of 877 supporters on a freezing cold Tuesday night.

In all honesty, proceedings on the pitch did little to offer the fans any heat, with excitement lacking in the first forty-five, as the visitors made their time-wasting intentions clear from the start in an attempt to disrupt the Dart's fluidity.

Having witnessed such tactics across the ninety minutes, that shouldn't detract from the fact that Steve King's side created the first meaningful opportunity as early as the sixth minute from a rather unlikely source. The move came on the right-flank when Jordan Wynter neatly controlled the ball with his chest. The defender then got the better of Beach Boy, Joe Payne, before cutting inside and pulling the trigger with a swift left foot to force goalkeeper Myles Roberts into making the save.

As both sides struggled to maintain possession, a majority of the play was bounced around the middle of the park. However, there were glimpses of creativity in occurrence, but neither team were able to grab the bull by the horns. Jake Robinson tried his best with what appeared to be a lost-cause long-ball yet, somehow still managed an excellent half-volley which failed to test Roberts (15).

Eleven minutes later saw Ade Azeez use a mixture of skill and strength to lose his man, before sending a teasing ball across the box, which Jack Jebb just couldn't reach. Connor Essam roamed forward from time to time and almost set-up Ade Azeez in the 43rd minute with a delightful chip. Unfortunately, his teammate's header was saved by Roberts as well.

As for the visitors, they came close themselves when Lamar Reynolds forced Dan Wilks into a save in the 24th minute, before Lewis Simper's free-kick whistled past Wilks' upright three minutes later.

There was a little more urgency from both sides during the opening exchanges of the second-half, and Dan Wilks was the first goalkeeper called into action when Rangers managed to register a shot on target following a corner (48). Yet, barely two minutes later saw pandemonium at the other end when Jack Jebb's cross wreaked havoc, forcing a goal-line clearance by the Beach Boys.

As we reached the 53rd minute, an Ade Azeez counter-attack was stopped in its tracks abruptly when Tosan Popo floored the Dartford number 14! Referee Mr Isaac Searle, who'd had a reasonably quiet game up until this point, subsequently booked the Concord defender. Then, on the hour, that statistic was even after Ronnie Vint saw yellow for a late challenge.

In-between the disciplinary action, Dan Wilks was called into action to remain alert and save a goal-bound effort in the 59th minute to keep the teams deadlocked at 0-0. Three minutes later saw manager Steve King make a change, as he introduced Calvin Kalala for George Porter (62). This would then be followed by Danny Leonard coming on for Kai Woollard-Innocent (75) and Luke Allen replacing D'Sean Theobalds (81).

The Darts finished the stronger, but were unable to open the scoring after Kalala (84), Allen (86 and 88) both failed to find the target with decent efforts. The game was then summed up deep into stoppage time when Jake Robinson, fresh from a brace at the weekend, saw his strike smash back off of the Rangers crossbar.

The result sees Dartford remain in a competitive fifth place in the National League South table, as well as stretching their unbeaten run at Bericote Powerhouse Princes Park to an impressive ten league games.

## **TEAMS**

**DARTFORD:** Dan Wilks, Jordan Wynter, Kai Woollard-Innocent, Ronnie Vint, Connor Essam, Tom Bonner ©, Jack Jebb, D'Sean Theobalds, Jake Robinson, George Porter, Ade Azeez.

**SUBSTITUTES:** Luke Allen, Tyrique Hyde, Calvin Kalala, Danny Leonard, Kieran Murtagh.

**CONCORD RANGERS:** Myles Roberts, Tosan Popo, Joe Payne, Ryan Blackman, James Blanchfield, Temi Babalula, Danny Green ©, Mamadou Jobe, Lamar Reynolds, Jayden Randell, Lewis Simper.

**SUBSTITUTES:** Jake Peck, Richard Afrane Kesey, Ben Allen, Ben Search, Sam Carter.

**By Chris Palmer**