

Beacon Hill Rovers First Team Report 2009-10

The 2009-10 season for Beacon Hill's First Team was a roller-coaster with some near highs and some incredible lows. The lowest point without question was the career threatening broken leg suffered by Anthony Canty on 6th March. Such a moment puts into perspective all other events during the season. How inspiring it was, therefore, to see him join in the pre-match warm-up for our last couple of fixtures. That March fixture also saw our best chance of silverware fade away when denied a second goal with the ball clearly over the line. Sometimes justice is hard and Silver End came back to equalise then beat us in extra time.

The previous fixture had seen us fall at the Quarter-Final stage of the Essex County Cup; only the second time Beacon Hill had made such progress in the competition. What is impressive about this team however, is how they face down adversity. Due to the excellent cup runs and inclement weather the First Team did not play a League game from the first week in November to the middle of March and after falling out of the cups the team put together an unbeaten run in the League to lift us up the table. The backlog in fixtures caught up with us at the end of the season: at one time playing 5 matches in 11 days, by the end we were running on empty. Those players who stepped up from the Reserves and Thirds all did their bit with Tom Stimson deservedly winning the Club's Young Player of the Year Award. The First Team Awards saw Jon Yabsley collect the Sportman's Trophy for his consistent season whilst the Players' Player votes were tight with Bomber Tracey, Ant Cunnigham and Adam Sansom all running the winner close before an excellent last couple of months saw Dave Heward collect the Award, a deserving reward after coming back from last season's serious knee injury.

Individual highlights from the season include a great team performance under the lights at Braintree Town, the successive wins over Harold Wood in Cup then League and dumping our old nemesis Southminster out of the County Cup 5-1; I really enjoyed that one. What our Cup exploits have shown this season is that we can mix it with the best, indeed we often play our best football against higher ranked teams. What we lacked was consistency over the whole season. On occasions individuals found it hard to produce their best form and we found it tough to cover for absences from injuries, suspensions and other commitments. The challenge next season is clearly to add to the undoubted strengths this squad already possesses. I'll certainly be working hard to achieve that aim. Pre-season will be about working out as a team how we can best use the skills we possess.

Top of that list of positives is the team's never say die attitude. Three examples would include: we got turned over at Byfleet in October, some home truths were shared and we didn't lose again until March including beating Byfleet in the Strachan Cup. Second would be our injury hit 10-man victory over UCC. Finally this team just never knows when it is beaten. Time and again they stick to the plan, keep playing and get their rewards at the end....and what a way to finish the season....2-1 down at Harold Wood with one minute to go at the end of injury time in the last match of the season, only to equalise, win the ball back and score again to win 3-2. Now that is a high to finish the season with! Roll on next season!

Merf Roberts
First Team Manager