



Saturday 26th September 2009
Southend United 0-1 Oldham Athletic

Starting XI: **Steve Mildenhall, Osei Sankofa, Simon Francis, Adam Barrett, George Friend, Franck Moussa, Jean-Francois Christophe, Alan McCormack, Anthony Grant, Lee Barnard and Roy O'Donovan.**

Southend United slumped to their first league defeat at Roots Hall to a very average Oldham Athletic side. Pawel Abott's 76th minute penalty gave the Latics all three points.

The Shrimpers gave new boys Roy O'Donovan and George Friend their home debuts and Osei Sankofa came in for the injured Jean-Yves M'Voto to fill in the back four.

Right from the first whistle the game did not look like it would be a fantastic match and both teams were giving the ball away. It was the visitors who had the first real effort on goal. Pawel Abott caught Mildenhall off guard from 30 yards after Barrett's poor pass but Mildy did get enough to tip his attempted lob over the bar. Before that, Parker had the ball in the net but his effort was ruled out for off-side, a let off for the Blues.

Shortly after, Southend new boy O'Donovan collected a pass from winger Franck Moussa, but had his shot saved by former Luton goalkeeper Dean Brill. The Shrimpers went close again when Simon Francis' 25 yard free kick curled narrowly wide of the left goalpost.

It was the Blues who then had a goal disallowed. Another superb cross from Francis was whipped into the Oldham box, goalkeeper Brill was routed to his line and left-back George Friend was on hand to tap home from close range, but the referee blew his whistle after an alleged pull on a Latics defender.

The second half was hard going as both teams failed to muster up a real attempt on goal early on. Lee Barnard had a half chance after the ball fell to him in the box, he turned and fired a shot which went past the angle of the bar and post.

Oldham then had a few chances on goal, Leeds loanee Alan Sheehan had a long range shot just drift over the bar and then Simon Francis sliced over as he tried to block Parker's cross cum shot.

Lee Sawyer and Francis Laurent entered the field of play as Blues looked to take the lead but it was Oldham who scored the first goal. Keigan Parker raced onto a through ball and attacked full-back Friend and the Athletic forward looked like he was running the ball out of play so George Friend came across to let the ball run out for a goal kick, and legs tangled and the linesmen waved his flag so the referee pointed to the spot.

Former Huddersfield and Darlington striker Pawel Abott stepped up and smashed a penalty past Mildenhall to give the away side the lead, which if I am being honest, neither side deserved.

As the final whistle grew closer, Southend had a chance to clinch a point, when Scottish striker Dougie Freedman played a wonderful through ball for Francis Laurent who couldn't repeat his magic from last week as his shot flew over the bar.