



Saturday 3rd October 2009
Stockport County 0-2 Southend United

Blues XI: **Steve Mildenhall, Simon Francis, Adam Barrett, Osei Sankofa, George Friend, Franck Moussa, Anthony Grant, Alan McCormack, Francis Laurent, Lee Barnard and Dougie Freedman.**

Journey: 4 out of 10.

A coach failure on the way, but luckily arrived minutes before kick off. However we made superb time getting home from the match.

Stadium: 4 out of 10.

A very old league ground with an open terrace for away supporters. Luckily it didn't rain!

Food Quality/Service:

N/A

Programme: 7 out of 10.

Interesting articles to read, I think the programme was a lot better than Brentford's on Tuesday night.

Performance: 8 out of 10.

A very professional away performance with the help of an on form Frenchman and the nous of Dougie Freedman guided the Blues pick up the win.

Southend United bounced back from two torrid performances with a professional display against Stockport County at Edgeley Park. A brace from striker Lee Barnard along with a sensational display from Francis Laurent guided Blues up into the top half of Coca-Cola League One.

After a rough journey on the way due to a technical fault with the coach, I along with the blue Shrimpers Trust coach, arrived literally 2 minutes from kick off. We all rushed to take to our seats on the uncovered stand behind the far goal in blustery conditions.

Blues had the first chance, donning their yellow strip, when the clever Dougie Freedman ran at the County defence before playing a ball out to Lee Barnard who cut inside and forced a save from Fon Williams, however Franck Moussa could not divert the rebound pass the Welsh stopper.

Simon Francis who scored a free kick in mid-week was at it again. This time his free kick, on the edge of the box, smashed against the left hand post, but he did ever so well to get the ball up and over the wall.

That was the last real main threat on goal from the Blues but there was one constant threat from the Shrimpers in the shape of Francis Laurent, who was running at players for fun and winning free kicks in dangerous positions.

After the break the home side had their first real chance on goal and it came from Bignall. The striker unleashed a powerful 15-yard effort but the Blues custodian Mildenhall was on hand to block the shot.

Then in the 57th minute Southend United had a great chance to take the lead. Lee Barnard was through on goal but was held back by former Newcastle defender Paul Huntington. The referee did not give it but the linesman on the far side flagged for the penalty and up-stepped Barney to place the ball into the far corner of the goal. People say things even themselves out throughout the season and just like Oldham got the penalty last week from the lino, we got ours this week. The defender also received his marching orders.

Minutes later Southend should have doubled the lead when George Friend latched onto the unplayable Laurent's cut back, but his shot cannoned off the post and Barnard's had his shot saved by Fon Williams.

In injury time Barnard scored his second of the game after County had a penalty appeal turned down. He took control of the ball under the eye of a hesitant Stockport defence, his first shot smashed off the cross bar but he then raced clear to tap home into an empty net.

This sent the few hundred that travelled up to Lancashire home with a smile on their faces.