



**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2009**  
**FA CUP 1<sup>st</sup> ROUND**  
**Gillingham 3-0 Southend United**

**Blues XI: Steve Mildenhall, Simon Francis, Anthony Grant, Adam Barrett, Johnny Herd, Franck Moussa, Jean-Francois Christophe, Stuart O'Keefe, Francis Laurent, James Walker and Dougie Freedman.**

**Journey: 8 out of 10.**

Great journey there and back, the only traffic trouble we faced was getting out of Southend!

**Stadium: 6 out of 10.**

A decent ground would have been better if the away fans end was covered, as we could not get any atmosphere going.

**Food Quality/Service: 4 out of 10.**

Decent service however that was the worst burger I have ever tasted!

**Programme: 5 out of 10.**

For three pounds this was a really poor standard programme.

**Performance: 6 out of 10.**

We played good football in stages, however, our bit-part squad was taken apart when off the ball.

**Southend United's hopes of a cup run ended at the KRBS Priestfield Stadium on Saturday afternoon. The Kent side got revenge for last weeks league defeat against the Shrimpers in comprehensive fashion and put their name in the draw for Round Two.**

Before the game it was announced that Ron Martin had paid the £2.1m due to HM Revenue and Customs, which meant any threat of administration, was cleared, sadly, that was to be the only good news on this crisp November afternoon as a makeshift Southend United side got dumped out of the FA Cup.

To be fair Southend did start off the game well and had chances with Christophe and Francis but neither of their efforts tested Simon Royce. The Shrimpers has a glorious chance to go in front but a good save and a bad miss rescued the home side. James Walker showed good skill to get ball two defenders but his close range shot was deflected over Royce but the keeper clawed it off the line and into the path of Freedman, but his header went over the bar.

The hosts had a perfect chance to take the lead when they were awarded a very soft penalty after Francis has tripped Man Utd loanee Febian Brandy. Keeper Steve Mildenhall then pushed the penalty away with a fine one handed save from Simeon Jackson's spot kick.

It did not take Gillingham much longer to finally get the ball in the net. In the 25<sup>th</sup> minute Curtis Weston and Brandy exchanged neat passes on the edge of the box and it was Weston who got the opportunity on goal when he lifted it over Mildenhall and into the corner.

Just 3 minutes later and the Gills were at it again. Brandy, who was causing the back four troubles every time he got the ball, doubled the hosts' lead when he hit a low shot under Steve Mildenhall.

Damian Scannell came on for the Shrimpers and he looked lively down the wing but Southend could not really get a clear shot on goal. The game did get put beyond doubt in the 62<sup>nd</sup> minute when ex-Shrimper Mark Bentley rose highest at the far post to loop a header over Mildenhall and it went in off the post.

With 15 minutes to go Southend could have made it interesting however they were left scratching their heads as one of the most experienced strikers in the Football League shot wide with the goal gaping. Royce was caught off his line, after coming for a cross, Laurent teed up Walker who's shot was deflected into the path of Freedman, 4 yards out, and he put it well wide of the goal.

Simon Royce was shortly called into action again, this time he palmed away a strong header by Christophe and this proved it was not Southend United's day.