

## **English Fire Service V RAF [Football Section]**

On Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February the English Fire Service played the RAF at RAF Uxbridge in this annual fixture. London's Wayne Brown, the assistant England Manager, was in charge for the day, as Steve Haw was unable to attend. Wayne had problems with players dropping out at the last minute and had to bring in a couple of extra London players.

The game started in difficult blustery conditions. England started badly and in the 5<sup>th</sup> minute the RAF's left midfielder put in a lovely cross which was headed in at the far post 1-0 to the RAF. A minute later, it was 2-0 to the RAF with a near identical goal, a lovely left sided cross headed in at the back post. Minutes later the fire service had their first chance, good interplay between England's midfield put Michael Deane in, a good strike brought out a fine save from the keeper.

On 15 minutes, the England striker got through one on one with the keeper, again the keeper pulled off a great save. After a sustained spell of pressure by England, the RAF broke again down the left, another good cross fell to the striker whose shot was saved well by Paul Horridge but the ball bounced back to the RAF player who volleyed into the roof of the net, 3-0 RAF. Eventually, on 35 minutes, England got on the score sheet, good pressure resulted in the ball rebounding off the bar and the England captain Andy Bourne was there to smash the ball into the net 3-1. Minutes later a lovely back heel from Thompson put Michael Deane through but his shot hit the side netting and just before half time Paul Scott hit a lovely low curling shot which was well saved by the RAF keeper.

The second half started the same as the first, badly for England. Practically straight from the kick off the RAF forward hit a weak shot into the corner of the net 4-1. On 55 minutes Tom Cowans put Paul Scott through; he went around the keeper beautifully but screwed his shot into the side netting. England ended a poor performance by defending very badly in the last 5 minutes allowing the RAF 2 more very soft goals, ending in a 6-1 thrashing, however, had England taken any of their numerous chances it could have been a completely different story. England's next game is against the Welsh Fire Service on 1<sup>st</sup> April in Wales, here's hoping for a much better result.

Eugene Flynn [ London Secretary]