

MATCH REPORT

League Game

12th January 2023

Caterham Pumas 1 – 5 Coulsdon Athletic FC

A bit delayed but Sunday saw the return to league games, our first since before Christmas, which was one to forget, so maybe the break will have done us some good. We hit back with a win last week in the Cup - so the first challenge now is we need back to back wins after our up 'n' down patch.

We were away to Caterham Pumas. A side that don't be appearing to excel in the division right now, but we know to ignore league position and just play our game.

After setting the team up slightly differently last week, with a change to 4-3-3 and our skipper in the heart of defence, we thought we'd stick with that but also bring our free roaming creative player Thomps from the wing to the centre. That would leave us with central cover when the shackles come off and he goes on his travels.

The aspects we asked for attention to this week was a strong start, keeping the ball on the deck, and being more clinical.

And so the match kicked off.

We didn't start too badly, a little bit sloppy with possession but we were starting quite well.

We lost the ball in midfield and Caterham attacked down our right hand side. Their winger hit a cross in and Li threw himself at the ball, almost cutting it out.

But he made some contact. That contact sent the ball spinning and looping high into our box - and over the keeper into the net. 1-0 Caterham in the most unfortunate of ways. No criticism of Liam or the lads there. Just bad luck.

We had to be on it though, there was no way we could allow them a two goal cushion.

We got back into a rhythm very quickly.

The midfield of Raff, Thomps and Nath was working well and providing a good service to the wingers. A good piece of interchange left Raff with the ball about 25 yards out, as he dodged one tackle, he was then crudely cut down. Free kick to Coulsdon.

Nath stepped up and hit a wicked dipping shot to the keepers right, and although he got down for the save, good save at that, he could only parry the ball. There was Thomps. Waiting like the predator he is. Ball clipped over the prostrate and helpless keeper, and bosh, 1-1! We deserved that.

A good build up from the back from Haz to Johnny, slipped wide to Li, and a first time ball through to Nath ended with us getting a throw in near the corner flag on our left.

MATCH REPORT

Johnny came up from the back and launched a powerful throw, coming down just before the keeper - Josh rose the highest and got a flick on to the back post.... Where Nath had timed a lovely run to tuck the ball in to give the Black & Blue the lead. 2-1!! Get in.

Although Caterham were quick on the counter they weren't hurting us too much. Remember playing football as a kid against a brick wall? Yeah that was our back line right now of Charly, Haz, Johnny, and Li were dealing very efficiently of any threat posed by the oppo.

We continued to attack.

The ball was worked from defence from to Char, into Raff and Ry was then fed the ball to his plates. Exactly where we want it to be. Ry seemed to glide over the sodden pitch rather than on it. He danced down the white line and at one point the Lino was a bit close to the pitch and was running front of Duggs, he got out the way just before it became a problem and Duggs carried on his run, and with the perfect ball into Josh's feet, Josh skipped past the keeper and slammed the ball into an empty net. 3-1 Coulsdon. Noice!!

Daylight. Great.

Our nomadic and creative central midfielder, Thomps, then played one of the best passes you'll ever see on a pitch. We will be talking about this later in the year as Pass of the Season. Dropping and picking the ball up in the right back position, he looked up and saw the run from our left winger George, and with a direct diagonal pass over the head of the Caterham players, George ran onto it, controlled it, and then stuck a lovely little lob into the corner of the onion bag. There is no way that can be called Boring Route One with such a purposeful pass are such a such a deft touch to control the ball, this was our Beautiful Sport for all to see. 4-1 Coulsdon, and the managerial decision to push our full back Georgie into a higher position, was paying off.

The half came to an end, but yep, now the lads were on a roll.

The half time team talk centred on the fact that we had done half a job so far. The fact that we couldn't get carried away and we needed three points and not to concede in the game again. Being ultra critical, our passing had to improve.

The second half was very positive.

There were many more attacks from the Coulsdon lads, it was very good, but we weren't adding to the Goals For column. However at 4-1 we could afford to make some changes and save some legs, and take less risks for injuries.

After introducing all 5 subs we settled quickly, with Galls and Billy doing particularly well.

In fact it was that duo that created the next attack on goal. After an attack down our left resulted in a corner, Galls stepped up and hit the perfect corner into the box. Far enough away from the keeper, and close enough to be a threat. With the ball directed into this area, it was met strongly by the Alice band of the one and only Billy. Just like the footballing legend, Billy the Fish, he rose and nuted the ball with power and bulleted the header straight into the old sac d'oignon - as the say in the Dordogne. 5-1. Bootiful.

We had carved out quite a few chances, but in all we were deserving of the margin of victory.

MATCH REPORT

We had also rested players second half, as well given the subs today some much needed minutes.

With a couple of results going our way, we sneaked into second in the table, two points behind top - with a game in hand.

Back to back wins for the first time since well before Christmas, and we needed to maintain this. Let's have it Coulsdon, we fighting for this title.

Final Score: Caterham Pumas 1 CAFC 5

Goals: Thomps/Nath/George/Josh/Billy

Assists: Nath/Josh/Thomps/Duggs/Galls

MOTM: Thomps



FOOTBALL CLUB