

## **Rose and Crown 1 – 0 Rothwell FC**

Rothwell travelled to Barnsley with what seemed like a near full strength team, and hoping for a good result on the back of 6 straight wins. Liam Kelly missed out again with the mumps and Dopey missing for the rest of the season with knee ligament trouble. Number one fan Paul Frost was in attendance with his replica Rothwell shirt and rattle!

Things never start well for Rothwell and this week it was the team bus that wouldn't start. AA quick response arrived and we were soon on our way. Rothwell arrived particularly early and started with a good warm up. Richards came back into the team in midfield and Tallant replacing the injured Matthew John Lloyd. There was a welcome return for Tom Dufton, the veteran getting a place back on the bench.

The game started and Rothwell made a slow start this week. Rose put good pressure on Rothwell without creating any real opportunities. Langstaff looked his weight at left wing back and the team struggled to adapt to the pitch. The main attacking threat came from Arkle who could have had a hat trick in the opening half hour, blazing over on each occasion when well positioned. Rothwell started to get a grip on the game eventually and started to create openings. Young Joe Bullock had borrowed some boots this week, cork studded, definitely not star studded. Bullock missed 2 great chances but you got the impression more would fall his way. Tom Greaves made another good start at the back but younger Dufton Jack was having problems keeping his Octopus arms down and giving numerous free kicks away. The crowd were chanting "You're just a human Mr Tickle"!

Rothwell managed to sustain some pressure on the crown defence which looked ragged to say the least. Young Bullock probably missed some more chances before the half was out. Old Wooden Legs was keeping things tight at the back and McCarthy had little to do again. Robinson was showing willing in midfield and Thackeray was superb. Half Time whistle blew and Rothwell, although not performing well, probably would have liked to have been in front. The half time message was keep going and it should come. Pitts had the cliché book out again!

The second half started and Rothwell took the ascendancy. Several chances slipped by, sometimes the final ball or pass too heavy and running away from the Rothwell attack. It is likely again that Young Bullock missed more chances, definitely at least one open goal. Disaster struck after around 60 minutes on the clock when Mr Tickle got over friendly with the Rose number 10 in the box. The referee had no choice but to award the penalty. However, as some heads dropped, McCarthy had his eyes on at least one shot at the end of season presentation do when he produced a superb save and the ball was eventually cleared by Mr Tickle himself. Game back on!

Rothwell made some changes to personnel to try and pep up the attack. Graham was brought on to replace Greaves in defence and manager Pitts decided to go for the pace of veteran Tom Dufton over the creativity of Richards. However, somewhat out of the blue Rose scored. The Rose defender took a dead ball and somehow this bypassed the midfield and Old Pinocchio at the back got his legs stuck in the mud again and the striker outpaced Dufton to round McCarthy to slot home. Shellshock!!

From then on it was pretty much one way with possession. Rothwell kept plugging away but that little bit of class seemed to be lacking this week. The chances were there but they couldn't be taken. Arkle missed once again when well positioned. The crowd were screaming to put Thackeray up front for the last 10 but this fell on deaf ears. The final whistle blew and Rothwell were left dejected after an unexpected defeat. Pitts's men were showing good form in the last few weeks but its back to the drawing board now for Pitts and Portrey.

Big game next week against Hall Green in the Cup. This will be a test to see how far Rothwell have come on. All hands to the deck this week and alcohol ban on Friday night!

**Scorers** – N/A

**MOM** – Robinson

**Donkey of the Week** – Mr Tickles

**Football Card Winner** – N/A