

Young Guns Overtake two goal deficit to move top of the table

Goals from striker Joe Flint and right back Jordan Jones were enough to earn Mark Hemingway's youth team a point this afternoon, as they held Chasetown to a 2-2 draw at the Kirkington Road ground in Rainworth, a result which puts Stags top of the Football Conference Youth Alliance North division.

Plying their first game at their new home, the Stags got off to a poor start, failing to keep the ball and getting out muscled at every turn, Mansfield were fortunate not to be behind after four minutes after midfielder Nuha Jabbi had been caught in possession. Chasetown were strong in the challenge on Jabbi and sprayed the ball to the left hand side, a drilled cross into the middle wasn't dealt with allowing the visitors to get a shot away, fortunately for Hemingway's side the final shot was scuffed wide of the target from close range.

Mansfield then applied pressure on 11 minutes with two consecutive corners, however failure to challenge for the second, a right footed out swinger from Liam Marsden, saw the visitors break and ultimately grab the opener. The back tracking Matt Jones was outpaced down the right hand side by the Chasetown forward who, as Ryan Hopkins came to narrow the angle, curled a shot beautifully into the net.

The visitors then doubled their lead nine minutes later as the Stags again gave away possession in midfield. A neat clip to the left hand side saw the visiting wide man control well and drill beyond Hopkins for his second of the afternoon.

Mansfield were lacklustre and easily frustrated as the first period went on, often getting penned in their own half, however on 28 minutes a unified push forward nearly saw Jack Hawkins reduce the deficit. A stray back pass from Chasetown was poorly cleared by the on rushing Scholars keeper, the ball fell to Hawkins' feet however the diminutive midfielder failed to get his long range effort under the cross bar with the keeper lost at sea.

Two minutes later Hawkins was involved again as he linked up with Kurtis Turner to send Jordan Villums down the left channel. The creative front man cut past his marker but saw his drilled effort easily collected by the keeper.

Defender Billy Simpson then went off with a dead leg with ten minutes to go before the break, replacement Jason Gregory slotting into defence well and gradually stopping the number of visiting attacks.

With a minute to go before the break the Stags finally caught Chasetown napping as a delightful lofted ball from midfield saw striker Joe Flint free. After clipping the ball off the covering defenders head, Flint drilled low into the bottom corner to send the Stags into the break only a goal behind.

After the break Mansfield stepped up in their efforts to pull the game level and on 66 minutes were agonisingly close to a leveller. After a foul on Villums on the left hand side,

Liam Marsden delivered a testing free kick from deep which Matt Jones clipped back into the middle, Flint was first to the ball but failed to beat the keeper who clung onto the hit mans forceful header.

Two minutes later Stags Captain Turner thundered a header over the bar after Matt Jones delivered a fine free kick from the right touch line following a feisty challenge on Flint.

The Stags continued to battle and were finally rewarded on 75 minutes following a strong midfield move. Jack Hawkins created in the hole clipping over the top for Flint, the hit man held up well before squaring for the onrushing Jordan Jones who slammed into the top corner at the first time of asking to level the game in front of the on looking Paul Cox, Richard Cooper and Adam Murray.

With three minutes remaining Mansfield won a corner after a barrage of attacking play; however they again gave away possession cheaply and allowed the visitors to counter. Jordan Jones did just enough to track the advancing Chasetown runner before Ryan Hopkins clung onto the resulting shot.

There was late drama in the second of three additional minutes. Mansfield allowed the visitors far too much space on the edge of the box to get a shot away, Ryan Hopkins producing a strong low save to the goal bound effort. However the Stags gloves man could only parry into the path of a Chasetown man who hit the post before bundling into the empty net from close range, only to see the flag raised for offside.

Mansfield mustered one last attack with Substitute Remi Davies holding up play well, however he young Scholars, who would have been disappointed to throw away a two goal lead, clung on until the full time whistle, the match ending in a 2-2 draw and in danger of players from both sides losing their tempers after what was a spirited yet feisty second half.

Hemingray's Stags are next in action on Monday when they travel to Guiseley, 2pm kick off.

Stags: Ryan Hopkins, Jordan Jones, Ben Birch, Billy Simpson (Jason Gregory 35), Liam Marsden, Jack Hawkins, Kurtis Turner (C), Nuha Jabbi, Matty Jones, Joe Flint (Remi Davies 80), Jordan Villums

Subs Not Used: Ross Lamb, Tom Clarke, Dean Robinson, Kieron Coupe

POS	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	Mansfield Town	2	1	1	0	4	2	2	4
2	Gateshead	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
3	FC Halifax Town	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
4	Ilkeston	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
5	Guiseley	3	0	3	0	6	6	0	3
6	Boston United	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
7	MMU	2	0	1	1	2	3	-1	1
8	Birmingham City	2	0	1	1	2	4	-2	1

9	Chasetown	2	0	1	1	2	4	-2	1
10	Stalybridge Celtic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Harrogate Town	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0