

UniBond League Premier Division – Sunday 20th September

NANTWICH TOWN 6 DURHAM CITY 1

Rhead 40, 75, 90 Ayer 1

Carter 44

Lennon 65,84

The Dabbers racked up their biggest home win since New Year's Day 2008 with a comfortable victory against a youthful Durham side. Burly marksman Matt Rhead plundered a hat-trick as Nantwich recovered from the shock of conceding on 35 seconds to condemn the Citizens to their ninth straight league defeat.

With their sponsors having withdrawn their support at the start of the season, the UniBond Premier newcomers fielded a team of youngsters who took the lead when Rufus Ayer caught Nantwich keeper Lee Jones off guard with a surprise 35 yard lob in the first minute.

Nantwich were further ruffled when debutant Charlie Reeves had to be replaced by Dave Whittaker on the quarter hour after a clash of heads left the former Kidsgrove centre half with a nasty cut on his head. With Michael Lennon and Ashley Carter both spurning a couple of chances, it looked like that the men in green could be in for a rough afternoon. The jitters, though, were settled five minutes before the break when Rhead lobbed stand-in keeper Max Stoker to put Nantwich on level terms. Stoker, who normally plays at centre-half, denied Rhead a second with an outstretched leg but Carter put the hosts ahead just before half-time.

The second half proved to be one-way traffic but Stoker again performed heroics to push Rhead's header onto the underside of the bar before gathering the rebound. He was beaten again, however, just after the hour mark when substitute Glyn Blackhurst set up Michael Lennon to sidefoot home. Stoker palmed out a blistering drive from Dave MacPherson before Rhead made it 4-1 when he firmly headed home Carter's cross from the right. Ten minutes later it was 5-1. Rhead nodded the ball into the path of Carter and when his powerful shot could only be parried, Lennon was on hand to snatch his second.

Blackhurst headed just over and Lennon hit the upright before Rhead grabbed his hat-trick on 90 minutes, climbing to head home Jake Sedgemore's corner from the right. To their credit, Durham's youngsters kept going to the end and their determination was nearly rewarded in stoppage time when Jones had to fend away a long range thunderbolt from substitute Paul Taylor.

Nantwich: Jones, Reeves, Tickle, Sutton, Tinson, Sedgemore, Ashley Carter, MacPherson, Rhead, Lennon, Gibson. Subs: Shaw, Blackhurst (for Gibson, h-t), Whittaker (for Reeves, 15), Mahmoud (for MacPherson, 79), Chapman.

Attendance: 395