

Purewal fires West through to quarter-final of FA Vase

BY HARRY CROWE

Reporter

FA VASE

Hebburn Town.....0
West Auckland Town....2

WEST produced a superb defensive display to overcome fellow Northern League side Hebburn Town and set up a home tie against Chertsey Town in the last eight of the FA Vase.

Gary Forrest's side got off to the perfect start inside 18 minutes when Adam Burnicle's teasing cross was inadvertently diverted in by Jack Donaghy as the windy conditions restricted chances in the first half.

After the restart, West doubled their lead on 52 minutes after a stunning 40-yard run from Amar Purewal who slotted the ball beyond Andrew Jennison.

Having rescheduled the contest from the previous weekend due to the wintry weather, Forrest made just the one change from the narrow defeat to Newton Aycliffe a fortnight ago, with Jamie Cobain making way for Burnicle as West lined up in a 4-3-3 formation.

In front of record-breaking crowd of more than 1,300,



WINNER: West Auckland striker Amar Purewal slides the ball past Hebburn keeper Andrew Jennison to secure his side's place in the last eight of the FA Vase

Pic: Andy Mitchell

Scott Oliver's Hebburn side started brightly and created the first chance inside nine minutes as Andrew Stephenson found some space on the edge of the area but his right-footed shot expertly pushed away by Bland to keep the score on level terms in the early exchanges.

West began to gain momentum and took the lead in bizarre fashion as a clever

one-two in midfield between Alex Francis and David Dowson resulted in the latter stretching the Hornet's defence.

Dowson picked out Burnicle, whose low cross was mistakenly sliced in off the left-foot of Donaghy leaving Jennison rooted to the spot.

With the wind becoming increasingly more challenging, chances were limited and

West had to wait until the 29th minute before creating another decent opportunity. Lewis Dodds' interception on the half-way line found its way to the feet of Dowson who then guided it towards Purewal only for his curling effort to drift wide of the target.

Seven minutes after the restart, West inflicted more misery on Hebburn in ex-

traordinary circumstances as Purewal collected the ball near the centre circle and went on a remarkable run, darting into the area before calmly placing the ball into the bottom corner to spark scenes of jubilation in the visitors' technical area.

As the clock started to run down, Hebburn frantically threw more men forward in search of getting back into the tie but two saves from Bland to deny Graeme Armstrong and substitute Jack Robson looked to be decisive with only a quarter of an hour remaining.

Heading into the final few minutes, Oliver's side were awarded a free-kick. Michael Richardson stepped up and to his disbelief his shot was kept out by Bland.

West were due back in cup action on Tuesday at home to Division Two side Tow Law in the League Cup quarter-final encounter (7.30pm).

West Auckland: Bland, Hegarty, Price, Colquhoun, Hunter, Portas, Francis, Dodds (c), Dowson, Purewal, Burnicle.

Subs: Morris, Cobain, Connor, Heaney, Coulson.
Referee: Sam Mulhall.
Attendance: 1,310.

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Dale duo tackle Muddy Boots 10k

ATHLETICS

AFTER the rough weather for the last few days, it was a relief to gather at the start of the Muddy Boots 10k in a gentle breeze and sunshine.

The race takes place in Ripon, in aid of St Wilfred's Primary School, and is a mix of Tarmac and muddy trails with a few hills thrown in for good measure.

It was, as usual, very well attended and all runners received a woolly hat at the finish. Teesdale AC runners attending were Barbara Crawley and Judith Rodwell, pictured above.

Times were unavailable as The Mercury went to press.

Alan Bray

COCKFIELD AND DISTRICT DARTS AND DOMINOES

Darts

Dun Cow Inn 1-1-0, The Sportsman 5-0-1; Blacksmith's Arms 5-1-0, Etherley CC 1-0-1; Cockfield WMC 2-0-0. Rav Horse Woodhouse 4-