

BASE WON



By Adam Daniels at Barnes Velodrome

Base One FC were crowned Jumpers For Goalposts champions last night as they beat bitter rivals Sport Billy 8-2 in a fiercely contested match at the Barnes Velodrome.

Base One sat just one point ahead of Sport Billy and needed to avoid defeat if they were to lift the trophy for the third time in their club's history.

The league leaders looked lively within the opening minutes, not allowing Sports Billy any time or space on the ball to play their trademark attacking football.

But just five minutes into proceedings, Adams' troublesome ankle again gave way and he was stretchered off, much to the dismay of the 30,000 travelling fans and Fabio Capello watching in the stands.

Forced to play without their talisman, Base One looked for a cool head to calm the nerves. That cool head came from Rob Woods who linked up magnificently with Pearson to fire Base One into a 1-0 lead with just six minutes on the clock.

Lovell, who had replaced the injured Adams, had taken no time to settle into the game, dazzling the Sport Billy defenders with his silky skills and footwork and forcing their goalkeeper into some fine saves.

It wasn't long, however, until Base One further exerted their authority and goals from Zamorski and another from Rob Woods send them into a 3-0 lead.

Zamorski was playing like a man possessed, perhaps with a point to prove following newspaper allegations accusing him of being no more than the team pin-up. His second goal after 20 minutes silenced both his critics and the Sport Billy support.

At the other end, Base One's goalkeeper Fitzpatrick was in usual scintillating form, pulling off numerous saves to thwart the Sport Billy strikers and keep Base One



Sargent watches on as Lovell dazzles

firmly in control.

The Sport Billy players were noticeably rattled, having not experienced defeat all season, and resorted to dubious calls for penalties in a vain hope to leverage themselves back into the match. The referee only waved away their protests, only adding to the hostility both on and off the pitch.

Fitzpatrick was eventually beaten, but it took a special strike to beat him. But where many teams of less grit would have wilted under the pressure, Base One stood firm and grew as the game went on. Player/manager Sargent from the sidelines and it soon became obvious that Sport Billy would be unable to match either their application or skill.

The Woods brothers, who have been compared to Manchester United's once influential Neville brothers, rose to the occasion to prove that it's not just in looks that comparisons to the Nevilles can be drawn. The pair combined to score a goal each at the halfway point to give Base One a 6-1 lead.

In his pre-match programme, Sargent maintained that he would only play if absolutely necessary, but with Base One legs tiring and the capacity crowd demanding to see him play, he took to the field to rapturous applause shortly after the half-hour mark.

Sport Billy scored again to make it 6-2, but Base One looked the more deadly in front of goal. Sport Billy had little means of stopping their fast-paced counter-attacking style that made them so irresistible throughout the season. Sport Billy's body language suggested they had already conceded this game – and the league title.

Pearson, wearing his trademark non-uniform awful shorts and luminous girl's wristbands, was playing like he had all season – a rock at the heart of the Base One defence and a powerhouse in front of goal. With 10 minutes left, he gathered the ball on the left wing and rifled the ball past the hapless Sport Billy keeper to give Base One a 7-2 lead.

Shortly before the final whistle, Zamorski sealed his hattrick and the put the icing on the cake, slotting the ball into the bottom right-hand corner to make the final score 8-2.

Speaking after the game, Sargent said: "This past seasons has been like a fairytale.

"I was given a sorry state of a team with no investment for new players so I had to work with what I had.

"I'm proud that I've turned a bunch of losers and no hopers into a team that can go out and beat anyone.

"I'm off to IKEA now with the missus."