**Ilfracombe Town V Stoke Gabriel**

**Fisher nets on return from four month suspension.**

After a long summer Stoke, who now play at step six, started their pre season with a long mid-week journey up to North Devon to play Western League hosts Ilfracombe Town.

With the game starting as an even affair is was Ilfracombe who had the closest chance early on when Stuart Cameron struck the upright after the visiting back line failed to clear the original ball into the box. The visitors battled on and after a few shots from distance didn't really trouble the hosts keeper.

Stoke were forced into an early sub when Steve Bowker was taken off injured being replaced by a young Neil Last, who scored the goal that won Stoke the league, giving Stoke a more attacking formation. It was the hosts though who took the lead when with the last kick of the half Stan Paxton tapped home a free kick at the far post.

With the sun setting behind the hill it suddenly got dark and cold as Ilfracombe doubled their lead as Stan Paxton claimed his second after converting past a bit of poor defending.

Ilfracombe almost rounded off the game just after as Kayne Dryden beat Stoke keeper Dom Aplin only to see his shot rebound off the post.

Stoke managed to reduce the deficit just after when sub Neil Last hit a thirty yard drive into the bottom corner and then the visitors found themselves level when ten minutes later Gary Fisher, returning from a four month suspension, lobbed the home keeper from the edge of the box.

The teams were level for just over a minute as Danny Jenkins beat the offside trap to lob Aplin scoring the last goal of the evening.

A great game of football played in the sun of North Devon as Stoke narrowly face defeat to Western League opposition.

Ilfracombe Town: Jamie Mathews, Lewis Ovey, Steven Reed, ?????, Kayne Dryden, Gary Skinner, Stuart Cameron, Ed Yo, Stan Paxton, Jason Jones, Ed Jenkins, Danny Jenkins, , , ,

Stoke Gabriel: Dom Aplin, Kris Davis, Dean Stevens, Ryan O'Callaghan, Mark Ashworth, Ben Brown, Steven Bowker, Si Laughton, Gary Fisher, Robbie Bowker, Sam Dicken, Rick Lee, Neil Last, ,