

BEDWELL RANGERS 0-15 ROYSTON TOWN EAGLES

IT'S the time of the year when the end of the cricket season overlaps with the start of the football campaign.

And it was in that spirit, on a beautiful sunny afternoon, that the Eagles began their 2016/17 with a thumping win.

The opposition will get much harder, but you couldn't have asked for much more from the team in terms of attitude, style and...goals.

Star of the show and man of the match, on his debut, was Luca Winterton.

Despite not starting the match, he bagged six, four of them in a second half in which Royston were rampant.

While the Bedwell goalkeeper and some less-than-perfect finishing actually kept the score down, Winterton was ruthless in front of goal as well as setting up at least one other.

But it was an excellent all-round display, with other debutants slotting in well and old hands in new positions quickly shaking off any rustiness from the school holidays.

Eagles were on top from the start but it took 10 minutes or so for Sean Blois to open the scoring with a fine low shot from just outside the box.

But from then on, it was pretty much relentless.

Jack Piggott, whose pace and trickery Bedwell simply couldn't cope with, unselfishly teed up Kian Harness for the first of his five goals and then scored himself in between two from Winterton.

With the score 5-0 at half-time it was just a question of how many more Eagles could score. Plenty, as it turned out.

There were two more from Winterton, then one from Anthony Georgiou, followed by the welcome sight of Sam Fage confirming his return from injury with a goal (although his control and spectacular left-foot effort from outside the box later in the game was in its own way even more impressive).

Then it became the Harness show. Eagles' top scorer of 2015/16 was excellent, and not just with the business of putting the ball in the net.

The way he kept chasing down every ball, hassling defenders, and going for the jugular without ever showboating, summed up the team's performance.

Harness brought up double figures and, after another from Winterton, saw a free kick find its way into the net by the scenic route and then completed a brilliant move.

A Harness header from a corner and one more Winterton effort rounded things off.

Fellow debutant Jacob McCormack showed his ability going forward as well as in ensuring the clean sheet was preserved, which might seem of minor importance but also demonstrated the kind of commitment and concentration the team will require all season.

There are tougher challenges to come. But as a welcome back to football, it could hardly have gone any better.

TEAM: Jacob McGlynn, Will Hamblin, Cameron King, Jacob Schroeder, George Palmer, Anthony Georgiou, Kyle Smith, Sean Blois, Logan Downie, Jack Piggott, Kian Harness, Sam Fage, Jacob McCormack, Owen Maslen, Luca Winterton.

ends