

WBHC Mens Match Reports 2004/05 Season

League Champions ! Stroud 0 – 2 Wootton Bassett

(5 March 2005)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI clinched the North-East East District 2 league title with an impressive 2-0 win over second-placed Stroud on Saturday.

Bassett had topped the table from the first game of the season, losing only once. Prior to this weekends game Stroud had matched this record, lying in second place on goal difference only. So the scene was set for a grandstand finish, winner takes all, especially as Bassetts only defeat had been at the hands of Stroud back in November.

In a tight start to the game, both sides had early chances. Bassett used their superior pace in attack to pressurise the Stroud defence into conceding a succession of short corners. The home side counter-attacked and forced several good saves from Lee Baldry.

Then, mid-way through the half Bassett varied a short corner routine, with Martin Bray switching Dale Titcombes push-in left to Mark Tolley for him to side-step the oncoming defender and drag the ball into the back of the net for Bassetts first of the game. The game now opened up and Grant Kirkup took full advantage with several strong runs into the heart of the home sides defence, forcing the Stroud keeper to make a number of important saves to keep his side in the game. It remained 1-0 at the break.

Early in the second half, a further short corner by Bassett saw the ball again switched wide to the left of the D for Tolley to cross into the danger area and Martyn Chivers to force the ball home for Bassetts second goal. At this point a hale storm interrupted the proceedings and, as the pitch disappeared from view, threatened the abandonment of the game. Thankfully, after 15 minutes play was able to resume and Bassett began to relax in the knowledge that Stroud now had to score three times to overcome the visitors league goal advantage.

Bassetts game became more expansive and they demonstrated their superior passing play, with Ian White coming close on several occasions to increasing his tally of 25 league goals this season. However the score remained 2-0 and in the end it was a convincing and well-deserved victory for Wootton Bassett.

After the game, a jubilant Lee Baldry congratulated his players and acknowledged the contributions of all the squad members during the course of the season. 'Success is even sweeter', he said 'if you remember that Bassett have narrowly missed out on promotion by one point in each of the last two seasons.'

Man of the match: Grant Kirkup. **Goal scorers:** M.Tolley, M.Chivers.

W.Bassett 1st XI: Baldry (Capt), Pearce, D.Gardner, Martin, Vines, Sharp, Skivington, Titcombe, Tolley, Kirkup, Chivers, Edgar, White, Bray, S.Gardner.

Final push from Bassett: Wootton Bassett 3 – 2 Mendip

(26 Feb 2005)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI maintained their first place in North-East East District 2 league with a win over fourth-placed Mendip at Lime Kiln on Saturday.

The game sparked into life straight from the whistle with both sides pressing forward for an early goal. Gradually Bassett gained the ascendancy and after 15 minutes a good interchange between Grant Kirkup and Dale Titcombe down the right, produced a telling cross for Alistair Sammon to prod in at the far post for Bassetts first goal.

The lead was short-lived, with Mendip equalising from a short corner. The pressure was now on for Bassett, as a win was essential to maintain top spot in the league. This was relieved slightly when, following the breakdown of another attack by the visitors, a swift linking counter-attack involving Skivington and Titcombe found Kirkup whose pinpoint cross was met by Martyn Chivers to sweep the ball home for Bassetts second. The home side had to repel one further attack before half time, when a Mendip short corner was well saved off the line by Jerry Martin with goalkeeper Lee Baldry beaten. 2-1 to Bassett at the break.

The second half was all Wootton Bassett. Steve Gardner fired the ball into the net from a short corner but it was adjudged too high and despite numerous short corners, the home side were unable to convert. Mid-way through the half Mark Tolleys thrusting run finally penetrated the solid Mendip defence, he slipped the ball to Martin Bray whose shot was saved by the goalkeeper only for it to rebound back to him. His second goal-bound attempt was stopped illegally on the line by a defender for a penalty flick. Mark Tolley stepped up and coolly converted the flick to the goalies right for Bassett's third goal.

Bassett continued to press for a fourth, but conceded a soft goal before the final whistle. The home sides midfield was caught out of position and a break by four Mendip forwards drew the Bassett defence across to the left and were unable to stop the final pass for an easy conversion by an unmarked forward into the open goal. Overall, the win was more comfortable for Wootton Bassett than the scoreline suggests. Next week is the last league game of the season. - A midday fixture at Stroud. It is nicely set up for a grandstand finish, with the winner becoming League champions.

Man of the match: Grant Kirkup. **Goal scorers:** A.Sammon, M.Chivers, M.Tolley (pen).

W.Bassett 1st XI: Baldry, D.Gardner, Martin, Edgar, Vines, Kelly, Sharp, Titcombe, Tolley (Capt), Skivington, Kirkup, Chivers, Bray, S.Gardner, A.Sammon, S.Whittingham.

White Chalks Up Six: Bath Buccs. E 3 - 11 Wootton Bassett

(19 Feb 2005)

Wootton Bassett 1st XI completely dominated this game against a young Bath Buccs. side holding their own in mid table. With three points in the bag Wootton maintained their lead at the top of North-East East District 2 albeit by a now improved goal difference over Stroud A.

Straight from the first whistle Wootton showed their superior speed and stick skills, with their early pressure resulting in the opening goal for, on form Ian White with a crisp strike low into the corner past the Bath keeper after only 5 minutes. While the Bath team were still trying to reorganise, the second goal came a couple of minutes later with Bassett interchanging passes inside the Bath 25. A powerful hit in from Grant Kirkup was majestically flicked in on the reverse by winger Martyn Chivers.

Bassetts third, came on ten minutes with the midfield and striking quartet knocking the ball around as if it were a training exercise, culminating in White slotting the ball home from close range. Five minutes later White completed his hat trick. After several close range efforts were thwarted by the home defence, the ball came to White who's first strike was saved by Baths young keeper only for it to fall back to White, who coolly slipped the ball past the advancing keeper.

Sustained Bassett pressure sent Bath into disarray, and after a sloppy pass by the home midfielder Dale Titcombe intercepted the ball and sent a pin point pass to Robin Lovegrove, who received the ball on the run just inside his own half. With ball in close control he sliced through the home side and drove into the D, rounding the last defender he calmly slipped the ball right of the keeper, retrieved his own pass and smashed it into the empty net for his first of the game.

As the game moved on towards half time Bassetts efforts on goal were stifled by the home defence. Numerous short corners came to nothing but Bassett were finally rewarded with a goal not quite off the training ground. The ball was pushed in by Titcombe but went under Mark Tolley's stick and was picked up by Kirkup who slipped it wide with too much pace, pushing Tolley very wide but having managed to keep the ball in play and under control he smashed the ball back across goal for Lovegrove to poke the ball in.

The half time team talk was more of the same please and, straight from the off, Bassett put the home side on the back foot and sweetly stole the ball from the home sides midfield. White then drove into the D, his crisp strike was again well saved by the home keeper, but the ball popped out of his pads and dropped just in front of the goal line. Lovegrove was the quickest to react as he slid in to jab the ball home for his hat trick. After a short respite the home side gained a bit of forward momentum but this was snubbed out in emphatic style with two White goals in as many minutes. They came via the same route, two well worked short corners with White smashing the ball in from the top of the D on both occasions. This took Whites personal tally to five equalling the number he scored in the corresponding home fixture earlier in the season. White then went one better with his sixth, giving him 25 so far this campaign and Bassetts tenth of the game, the first double figures score in the clubs history.

The celebrations were short lived however as Bassett got complacent and sloppy and allowed Bath to push forward and within 5 minutes they had clawed back two goals from short corners conceded from mis-timed tackles in the D. Next came another moment for the history books, as Alistair Sammon became Bassetts youngest ever scorer at the tender age of thirteen as he notched up his first league goal and Bassetts eleventh.

With the seconds ticking away in the game, Bassetts defence again went to sleep as they allowed the home side to drive from midfield to the top of the D. Backing off further the home striker was able to get a shot off which past the Bassett keeper into the back of the goal.

Overall this was a diamond performance from the Bassett squad as they push towards the title decider with Stroud A on the 5th March.

Man of the Match: Ian White **Goal scorers:** I.White (6), R.Lovegrove (3), M.Chivers, A.Sammon

W.Bassett 1st XI: Baldry (Capt.), Pearce, Martin, Vines, Edgar, Tolley, Titcombe, Kirkup, Chivers, Lovegrove, White, Sammon, Skivington, Whittingham.

Bassett resume winning ways: Wootton Bassett 5 - 2 Marlborough

(12 Feb 2005)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI eventually dominated the game against Marlborough and managed to come away with all three points. They have now maintained their lead at the top of North-East East District 2 league only by goal difference over Stroud.

In a well mannered game, Marlborough struck first catching Bassett cold. Marlborough drove forward after a mistake by Martin which gave Marlborough a free hit just outside of the D. This was struck in and in a scramble with the keeper ex-Bassett player Wayne Cranstone flicked the ball into the back of the net.

The game then turned as Bassett upped the tempo. Ian White tackled one of their defenders and took the ball into the D and stuck a fierce shot that was saved by the keeper, but suffered an injury in the process. After lengthy treatment to the keeper, Bassett clawed a goal back thanks to White with his powerful strike into the corner.

Bassett kept the pressure on and another save from their keeper was adjudged to be illegal and a penalty stroke was awarded to Bassett. Dale Titcombe stepped up and calmly put the ball down to the keepers left.

Still Bassett kept coming, the passes were going from left to right and they were dominating the midfield, but Marlboroughs defence was not going to be broken easily. An interchange between Steve Gardner and Robin Lovegrove eventually passed to White who struck another shot only for a defenders foot to prevent a goal. Another penalty flick was awarded to Bassett, Titcombe stepped up but the keeper guessed correctly and saved it.

Bassett did not let this miss put them off and soon afterwards Titcombe put a lovely weighted ball through for Gardner to run onto. He went round the keeper and passed back to Lovegrove for him to put in the net for Bassett's 3rd goal. The Marlborough keeper was now in too much pain to continue and had to be replaced.

Marlborough conceded a short corner and the push was stopped by Tolley and struck by Lovegrove who couldnt keep the shot down and the goal was disallowed. Bassett kept the pressure on but failed to convert 3 or 4 more short corners.

Marlborough, to their credit came back and had a good shot on goal which was smothered by Baldry but he then lost sight of the

ball and the resulting shot was adjudged to be illegally cleared off the line. The umpire had no choice but to award a Penalty Flick to Marlborough, which they converted. 3-2 to Bassett at half time.

In the second half Bassett tried to keep the same tempo and movement. They were awarded a short corner which was taken by Titcombe, stopped by Tolley and struck into the bottom left hand corner by White. A few minutes later the same routine worked again, with White producing Bassetts fifth goal.

At the final whistle, the score was 5-2 to Bassett which keeps them top of the league, still by goal difference.

Man of the match: Neil Sharp. **Goal scorers:** White (3), Lovegrove, Titcombe

W.Bassett 1st XI: Baldry, Pearce, Martin, D.Gardner, Sharp, P.Sammon, Vines, Edgar, Titcombe, Tolley(Capt), A.Sammon, Lovegrove, White, S.Gardner,

Bassett drop valuable points in race for promotion: Yate B 1 – 1 Wootton Bassett (5 Feb 2005)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI dominated this game against Yate but only managed to come away with one point, maintaining their lead at the top of North-East East District 2 league only by goal difference over Stroud.

In a rain-soaked game, Bassett exerted early pressure on the home side and saw shots from Bray and Chivers go narrowly wide. Then, completely against the run of play, a speculative shot from Yate hit the post and bounced off the unfortunate Lee Baldry and back into the goal for Yate to take the lead mid way through the first half.

An uneven pitch made it difficult to string good passes together and Bassett had to rely on set pieces to try to penetrate a packed Yate defence. However, the home side defended well and held on to their lead by half time.

After the break, Bassett resumed where they had left off and, despite numerous shots on goal by Ian White and Martin Bray, failed to convert a succession of short corners. Eventually a cross from Matt Edgar reached Martyn Chivers who forced the ball home for Bassetts equaliser 10 minutes into the half.

Rupert Pearce, Dave Gardner and Neil Sharp provided a solid back line for Bassett, stifling Yates attacking play and allowing Bassetts midfield to continue to press for the winner. However, despite more close shaves, the Yate goal could not be breached and the home side hung on to the draw at full time.

Man of the match: Neil Sharp. **Goal scorer:** M.Chivers

W.Bassett 1st XI: Baldry, Pearce, D.Gardner, Vines, Edgar, Sharp, Titcombe, Tolley(Capt), Kirkup, Chivers, Bray, White, Whittingham, A.Sammon

Chivers late goal seals victory for the leaders: Wootton Bassett 3 – 1 Bath Buccs F (22 Jan 2005)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI came away with a deserved victory against wily opposition to maintain their grip on top spot in North-East East District 2 league.

The veterans from Bath Buccs used all their experience to frustrate Bassetts early attacks, slowing the pace of the game to suit their passing style. They put this experience to good effect when, after 15 minutes, the visitors out- manoeuvred Bassetts defence forcing them to concede a penalty flick that was converted past goalkeeper Lee Baldry high to his left to give Bath an early lead.

Bassett gradually began to get the better of the mid-field exchanges and 10 minutes later Mark Tolley dribbled through powerfully, passed the ball to Steve Gardner who made a diagonal run towards the goal line and his pull back was met by Pete Sammon to force the ball home from close range to level the scores. Bassett made several wrong-footing breaks exploiting the speed of their younger forward line, but these were well defended by Bath and the score remained 1-1 at half time.

Bassett pressed hard in the second half, with captain Dale Titcombe marshalling the midfield and making good use of the flanks. Increasingly Bath were forced to defend in numbers. After 10 minutes a short corner taken by Tolley was stopped by Titcombe and well struck by Ian White only for the ball to hit the post. Mark Tolley was first to the rebound and he fired in from five yards for Bassett to take the lead for the first time.

The home side now took control of the game and should have moved further ahead but for some good interceptions and strong tackling by a well drilled Bath unit. The visitors also remained a danger on the break, however, and Lee Baldry needed to be at his best to save low down from a rare Bath attack. Then, with two minutes to go continued pressure from Bassett saw the Bath defence floundering for the first time and the resultant short corner by Den Kelly was switched right to Gardner who crossed for Martyn Chivers to convert for 3-1 at the final whistle.

Man of the match: Dale Titcombe. **Goal scorers:** P.Sammon, M.Tolley, M.Chivers

W.Bassett 1st XI: Baldry, Pearce, Martin, Edgar, Kelly, Sharp, Titcombe (Capt), Tolley, Skivington, Kirkup, Chivers, Bray, White, S.Gardner, A.Sammon, P.Sammon

Bray proves handful for local rivals: Chippenham B 1 – 8 Wootton Bassett (15 Jan 2005)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI demonstrated why they are top of the league inflicting a heavy defeat on local rivals Chippenham in North-East East District 2.

After a break of six weeks since their last league fixture, Bassett started cautiously and their early attacking moves were thwarted by the Chippenham keeper as he smothered several promising runs into the D. However, they soon found the net following a quickly taken free hit to White who slipped the ball for Martin Bray to score a stunning opener with a powerful flick past the goalkeeper into the top corner of the net.

Further goals followed at regular intervals, the first resulting from a Chippenham 16 yard hit out that was blocked by Mark Tolley who powered into the D, side-stepped the approaching goalkeeper and sweetly stroked the ball into the back of the net. The next came from a short corner, stopped by Bray, switched left to Alistair Sammon who crossed for Martyn Chivers to reverse flick high into the net from 5 yards.

Bassetts fourth goal was also from a short corner, with Ian Whites original shot blocked and Bray forcing home his second goal from the resulting scramble. Then, with half time approaching, it was White himself, running onto a free hit from the left touchline who hit the back of the net with a well taken shot from 10 yards, to make it 5-0 at the interval.

The second half was a more even contest following a half time substitution by the home side, who twice shot narrowly wide following short corners. The near-capacity crowd (4 home and 3 away supporters) were beginning to wonder if the excesses of the festive season had taken their toll on the visitors, but these near-misses seemed to galvanize them into action. Twenty minutes into the half, Grant Kirkup took a free hit from the centre circle to Chivers, who drew the keeper and slipped the ball for Bray to flick in from an acute angle.

Then, from the restart Ian White tackled the Chippenham receiver, made a diagonal run with the ball towards the goal line and pulled the ball back across goal for Bray to drill it home. As Bassett continued to press forward, their defence was left exposed to a Chippenham counter-attack and slack marking allowed the home side a consolation goal for 7-1.

But Bassetts goal advantage was quickly restored when Chivers picked up the ball near the half way line, passed it to Steve Gardner on the edge of the D, who slid it on to meet Chivers overlapping run and first time cross, leaving that man again - Martin Bray - a mere tap in for his fifth goal of the game.

At the final whistle, Bray was first to acknowledge the teamwork that had allowed Bassett to run out 8-1 winners and the selflessness of his fellow strikers that had allowed him to move to top the clubs table of goal scorers this season.

Man of the match: Martin Bray. **Goal scorers:** M.Bray (5), M.Tolley, M.Chivers, I.White
W.Bassett 1st XI: Best, Pearce, Martin, Vines, Sharp, Tolley (Capt), Kirkup, Chivers, Bray, White, S.Gardner, Moore, A.Sammon

Mallet nailed by Bassett: Wootton Bassett 6 – 2 Shepton Mallet B (4 December 2004)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI maintained their top position in NEE District 2 league with a 6-2 win over Shepton Mallet at Lime Kiln on Saturday.

Bassett made an early break through with a well taken goal from Ian White after 5 minutes, before the visitors responded with two goals in quick succession from short corners to lead mid way through the first half.

The home side then pushed forward strongly with a decisive move down the right and a sweet combination of passes along the forward line for Martin Bray to level the scores. Continued pressure resulted in a further breakthrough when a through ball from Grant Kirkup was touched on by Gardner for Dale Titcombe to score at the far post, giving Bassett a 3-2 lead at half time.

The second half saw Wootton Bassett take total control of the game with a second goal from White from a short corner and another from Bray with a well steered shot from Titcombes cross into the D. Then, with five minutes to go, Neil Saunders slotted a neat pass through to Steve Gardner to flick past the Shepton keeper to make it six of the best for Bassett.

Joint man of the match: Matt Edgar and Steve Gardner. **Goal scorers:** I.White (2), M.Bray (2), D.Titcombe, S.Gardner.
W.Bassett team: Baldry (Capt), Pearce, D.Gardner, Saunders, Vines, Edgar, Skivington, P.Sammon, Titcombe, Kelly, Kirkup, Chivers, S.Gardner, Bray, White, A.Sammon.

Unbeaten run ended by last minute goal: Wootton Bassett 2 - 3 Stroud (27 November 2004)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI suffered their first defeat of the season against Stroud in this top of the table clash at Lime Kiln.

Bassett found themselves two goals down within 20 minutes after they failed to contain Strouds attacking start to the game. Eventually they found their form and took control of the remainder of the first half with some decisive and skillful passing into the heart of the Stroud defence. A powerful run down the right by Grant Kirkup was rewarded with a long corner. This was quickly taken and crossed into the D for Steve Gardner to force in Bassetts first goal from five yards. 2-1 at half time.

The home side came out strongly in the second half, pressing forward for an equaliser. This left them vulnerable to counter-attacking breaks from Stroud but, despite a number of scares in defence, Bassett forced a succession of short corners. Bassett varied their short corner routines in an attempt to penetrate the defence and the Stroud goalkeeper made several fine saves to keep them out until, with five minutes to go Dale Titcombe pushed out to Martin Bray to stop on the edge of the D for Ian White to strike

the backboard. Bassett were level at 2-2.

Both sides would probably have settled for a draw as full time approached, until a momentary lapse at the back for Bassett allowed Stroud to slide the ball past goalkeeper Lee Baldry, to snatch a last minute winner for the away side. The result brought Bassetts unbeaten run to an end, but they continue to top NEE District 2 League on goal difference from Stroud.

Man of the match: Ian White.

W.Bassett team: Baldry (Capt), Pearce, Martin, Edgar, Skivington, Tolley, Titcombe, Kirkup, Chivers, Whittingham, S.Gardner, Bray, White, A.Sammon.

Bassett top table: Mendip 0 – 2 Wootton Bassett

(20 November 2004)

In a closely fought game at Midsomer Norton, Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI continued their unbeaten run to take three precious points from third placed Mendip, increasing their lead at the top of NEE District 2 League.

In cold wet conditions, Mendip defended solidly in the first half and, despite continued pressure, Bassett were unable to break through. Two shots from Mark Tolley narrowly missed and Ian White went close only for the Mendip keeper to make several important saves to keep the score 0-0 at half time.

With both teams determined to get a result, the second half was more open and either side could have opened the scoring, before Mark Skivington made a decisive pass directly into the D for Martin Bray, with his back to goal, to flick it over the keeper for Bassett's opening goal. This only spurred Mendip into more determined attacks and their sustained pressure led to a succession of short corners. However, two excellent snap saves low down to his right by Lee Baldry and a well-marshalled defence by Pearce and Martin kept Mendip at bay.

As the game progressed with the score still 1-0, both sides started to tire and spaces began to open up in midfield. With 8 minutes left, Mendip forced another short corner which was well blocked by Paul Vines to Martyn Chivers, who swiftly moved the ball down the wing to Bray just inside the Mendip half. With the opposition defence out of position, Bray quickly passed the ball to White who drew the keeper and slipped the ball for Bray to run onto and pass the ball into an open goal. With the pressure off, Bassett now started to pass the ball with ease to win the match 2-0 at the final whistle.

The game also saw good senior team debuts on the wing from Colts players Tom Wiltshire and Jack Showering. Saturdays result means that Wootton Bassett lead the table with 19 points and 35 goals from seven games. Next week they play second in the table Stroud in a six-pointer at Lime Kiln (push back 1pm). Spectators welcome.

Joint man of the match: Martin Bray and Mark Tolley

W.Bassett team: Baldry (Capt), Pearce, Martin, Vines, Skivington, Tolley, Kirkup, Chivers, S.Gardner, Bray, White, Wiltshire, Showering.

Bassett White-hot ! Wootton Bassett 7 – 1 Bath Buccs E

(13 November 2004)

Ian White launched a personal blitz on the Bath Buccs E defence as Wootton Bassett retained their lead at the top of Gerrard League North-East East Division Two with a 7-1 success. White blasted five goals to leave the visitors reeling, Martin Bray also getting on the scoresheet twice.

Bassett began the game positively with quick passing moves and a good off the ball running, but despite dominating much of the first half, it was goalless at half time and the home side looked destined for their second draw in as many weeks.

The story in the second half was entirely different, with Martin Bray hitting the target after a well worked move within minutes of the restart to open the scoring. Ian White then doubled the lead before Bray scrambled the ball into the net for his second to make it three. Bassett made good use of rolling substitutions to keep the team fresh and the attacking style of play combined with Ian Whites lethal finishing meant that the home side scored a further three goals - all courtesy of White. Bath then grabbed a consolation strike with a swift attacking move, only for Ian White to reply immediately with his fifth goal of the game.

Saturdays goal haul means that Wootton Bassett lead the table with 16 points and 33 goals from only six games. Next week they travel to Mendip, who currently lie third in the league.

W.Bassett team: Baldry (Capt), Saunders, P.Sammon, Skivington, Edgar, Moore, Tolley, Titcombe, Sharp, Kirkup, Kelly, Chivers, S.Gardner, Bray, White, A.Sammon

Local rivals in epic battle: Marlborough B 3 – 3 Wootton Bassett

(6 November 2004)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI, dropped their first points of the season in an epic struggle against a determined Marlborough side on Saturday.

Marlborough got off to a strong start and scored an early goal to put Bassett under pressure. With Bassett looking out of sorts and unable to manufacture good scoring opportunities, Marlborough took full advantage. This was exacerbated by injuries to two of Bassetts defenders and Marlborough forced in a further goal before half time with the away team back line in disarray.

Bassett took advantage of the opportunity to reorganise at half time and, despite a further setback going 3-0 down soon after the break following a sharp Marlborough move, came back strongly into the game. The slow pitch helped Marlborough survive a succession of short corners, but eventually Bassett were rewarded with a deserved first goal from Martin Bray. After the frustrations of the first half, the away teams confidence was now re-ignited and the remainder of the match was all about Wootton Bassett.

Marlborough repelled wave after wave of Bassett attacks before Martyn Chivers deft reverse flick at the far post converted a Titcombe cross to make it 3-2. With 5 minutes remaining Bassett had a goal disallowed and as the clock ticked away were beginning to believe that it was not to be, when Ian White forged into the D and hit a crisp shot from an acute angle into the back of the Marlborough net to level the scores. From the restart Bassett were even more determined, peppering the Marlborough goal and, with the last hit of the game they almost snatched a dramatic winner when a sensational reverse flick from Bray hit the post to leave the match drawn at the final whistle.

W.Bassett team: Baldry (Capt), Martin, Pearce, D.Gardner, Vines, Moore, Edgar, Tolley, Titcombe, Whittingham, Chivers, Kirkup, Bray, White, S.Gardner. A.Sammon

Bassett stay top: Wootton Bassett 8 – 0 Yate B

(30 October 2004)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI, determined to break their run of third place finishes in successive seasons in NEE District 2 league, blitzed Yate B 8-0 at Lime Kiln on Saturday to reinforce their push for promotion. They are now four points clear at the top of the table, with a perfect 12 points from 4 games.

Yate, in third place at the beginning of the day, were well organised and resisted sustained early pressure from Bassett before patient buildup saw Martin Bray slip the ball to Ian White for a crisp shot past the keeper for Bassett's first goal after 15 minutes. This was followed two minutes later by Steve Gardner who swept in a wrong footing cross at the far post. Bassett moved further ahead with a fantastic drag flick by Mark Tolley from a short corner to lead 3-0 at half time.

After the break, Yate were forced onto the defensive for long periods with only occasional forays into the Bassett half. It was one of these rare attacks that led to the fourth goal when Bassett swiftly turned defence into attack, clearing the ball out of their D to Dale Titcombe, who passed to Ian White to run towards goal and cross to Martin Bray who deftly slotted it past the unfortunate Yate keeper. With the game sewn up, the home side continued to press, with Grant Kirkup (twice) and Martyn Chivers scoring, before Steve Gardner picked up his second of the game to round off an impressive 8-0 victory for Wootton Bassett.

Man of the match: Grant Kirkup for his piercing runs, high work-rate and two well taken goals.

W.Bassett 1st XI: Baldry (Capt), Martin, Pearce, D.Gardner, Vines, Skivington, P.Sammon, Edgar, Tolley, Titcombe, Lovegrove, Chivers, Kirkup, Bray, White, S.Gardner.

Bassett's winning run continues: Bath Buccs F 1 – 3 Wootton Bassett

(16 October 2004)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI continued their perfect start to the season with 9 points from 3 games in Gerard NEE Division 2, with a 3 - 1 win over Bath Buccs F at Bath University on Saturday.

In a one-sided first half, Bassett got off to a good start with the Bath keeper pulling off some amazing saves, before Ian White scored the first goal with a shot from a short corner. His second goal was a candidate for goal of the season - a full blooded strike from the edge of the D that hit the roof of the Bath net. This was followed 10 minutes later by Martyn Chivers with his first goal of the season, for Bassett to lead 3 - 0 at half time.

The second half was an altogether different affair. Bassett continued to attack but Bath progressively got back into the game, eventually producing a goal from a short corner. Continued pressure from Bath eventually forced the Bassett defence to concede a penalty flick, which was well saved by Baldry, and a number of shots that required the keeper to make sharp saves that kept the scoreline to 3 - 1 in favour of Bassett at the final whistle.

Man of the match: Lee Baldry for some crucial saves in the second half.

W.Bassett 1st XI: Baldry (Capt), Martin, Pearce, Vines, Kelly, Edgar, Tolley, Titcombe, Chivers, Kirkup, Moore, Bray, White, S.Gardner, P.Sammon.

Bassett continue perfect record: Wootton Bassett 4 - 0 Chippenham B

(9 October 2004)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI continued their impressive start to the season with a 4-0 thumping of local rivals Chippenham.

An early goal from striker Martin Bray put the home side ahead and the away side on the back foot, Chippenham's defensive formation allowing Bassett to keep the pressure on for most of the first half. Despite this, the score at the break was only 1-0 thanks to an outstanding display of shot stopping from the Chippenham keeper. Bassett employed the same rolling substitution tactic that proved so successful the previous week and, in the second half, it paid off. The home side dominated the play with quick and accurate passing and a solid defence meant that goalie Eric Best saw the ball only once.

Two goals from Ian White and another from Bray meant that the score at full time was 4-0, but it would have been higher but for the prowess of the away goalkeeper.

Man of the match: Martin Bray for two well taken goals and excellent control of the front line.
W.Bassett 1st XI: Best, Martin, D.Gardner, Vines, Edgar, Tolley (Capt), Titcombe, Chivers, Kirkup, Bray, White, S.Gardner, Skivington, P. Sammon, A. Sammon

Wootton Bassett off to Flying Start: Shepton Mallett 0 – 8 Wootton Bassett (2 October 2004)

Wootton Bassett Mens 1st XI got off to flying start with an 8-0 victory over Shepton Mallett in their first league game of the season in Gerrard League NEE Div 2. Pre-season friendlies against sides from higher leagues paid dividends, with the team pressing forward strongly from the first whistle and combining well to provide a hat trick for Dale Titcombe within the first 10 minutes of the game.

Bassett made good use of rolling substitutions to both the forward line and midfield to keep the pressure on the opposing team and, with a solid back four of Martin, Pearce, D.Gardner and Vines, goalkeeper Baldry had little to trouble him. By half-time Bassett had slotted in further goals from Bray and White and another brilliant individual strike from Titcombe to lead 6-0.

Tolley and Titcombe continued to marshal the midfield for Bassett in the second half but, with the game already lost, Shepton Mallett changed their line up in an attempt to stem the tide of goals. This defensive formation limited Bassett to just two further strikes from Bray and S.Gardner despite continuing pressure from the away team.

Man of the match: Dale Titcombe for control in midfield and four goals.
W.Bassett 1st XI: Baldry (C), Martin, Pearce, D.Gardner, Vines, Edgar, Tolley, Titcombe, Chivers, Kirkup, Bray, White, S.Gardner.

WBHC Mens Match Reports 2003/04 Season

Bassett just miss out on promotion in last game of 2003/4 Season:

Marlborough B 2 - 3 Wootton Bassett (20 March 2004)

In a closely fought last game of the season at Marlborough, Wootton Bassett moved into an early lead with goals from Ian White and Steve Gardner, only to be pegged back by the home side early in the second half. Then, in a final effort to secure the last league promotion place, Ian White scored his second goal of the game for Bassett to emerge 3-2 winners.

Unfortunately other results meant that Bassett eventually finished third for the second year in succession, missing out on promotion by just 2 points from the Gerrard League North East District 2 to teams from Devizes and West Wilts.
