

St Albans City boss Allinson 'gutted' by last-gasp defeat at leaders Maidstone United

Football

LEE POWER

lee.power@archant.co.uk

St Albans City boss Ian Allinson admitted he was 'gutted' for his players after their late 3-2 defeat at National League South leaders Maidstone United on Saturday.

Saints hit back from going two goals down inside seven minutes to level at the Gallagher Stadium thanks to a Shaun Jeffers brace.

But they were left empty-handed and contemplating a fifth successive defeat after Johl Powell struck in the sixth minute of injury time to claim all three points for Stones.

"I'm obviously very, very disappointed and gutted for the players," Allinson told the club website.

"Everyone's heads on the floor. It's taken a mammoth effort over the past six weeks, with Saturday-Tuesday, Saturday-Tuesday and we've gone toe-to-toe with a full-time team that is top of the league and lost out in the 97th minute to a goal I feel we could stop.

"We haven't defended well enough and it's such a shame because we've had a crazy first five minutes, we speak at length about some of the things we do in those five minutes and I use the word naivety in the changing rooms. Maybe we're just too young."

Less than two minutes had been played when Sam Corne took advantage of a poor clearance to open the scoring and it was 2-0 on seven minutes as Jerome Binnon-Williams fired home a low free-kick.

But Jeffers hit back on 26 minutes, after a mix-up in the home defence, and headed home his 25th goal of the season to square matters early in the second half.

It looked like City would claim an excellent point, until Christie Patisson cut the ball back for Powell to squeeze a shot past



Shaun Jeffers scored both goals for St Albans City against leaders Maidstone United
Picture: GAVIN ELLIS/TGS PHOTO

Michael Johnson for a last-gasp winner.

And Allinson added: "I felt we didn't manage the game early on and didn't manage it late on. But inbetween that spell, I thought we were outstanding, got back in the game and could have gone on and won it if we'd kept the ball a bit better.

"I'm immensely proud of what the players have done and immensely proud of the crowd we've had today, we still had some numbers, but just really disappointed, personally for the club and players because they've gone toe-to-toe and just fell short a little bit at the end."

Saints now face a break from league action – although they host Dagenham & Redbridge in a Game for Ukraine fundraiser friendly on

Saturday – before a trip to Hungerford Town on April 9.

And Allinson praised his players for their endeavours during a difficult run, adding: "We've lost six and drawn one of the last seven. Have we been totally outplayed, outfought, outbattled? No, we haven't.

"I just think in that period some of the mistakes we didn't make at the beginning of the season, we've now gone and made them.

"I said it eight, nine weeks ago. No-one is ever going to be allowed to criticise this team for lack of effort, because their effort is outstanding.

"The commitment to training, the commitment to work-rate, we just might not be quite good enough in terms of both boxes and I think it has told again."

sport

Swimming

The St Albans District Secondary Schools swimming team roared back into action with a resounding victory at the Herts Schools' Inter-District Championships.

After a year gap, the St Albans District boys and girls produced a dominant display to win all six category trophies for junior years seven and eight, intermediate years nine and 10 and senior years 11 to 13.

They won over half the races, broke four records and medalled in 42 events to claim a fifth successive meeting victory.

Thomas Jobson (Marlborough Science Academy) and Ellie Holliss (St Albans Girls School)

Business & Enterprise College) captained the team, which also broke the senior girls freestyle record.

The senior boys medley and freestyle relay records were broken by Jobson, Arvin Rodriguez, James Atwell, Alexander Kalverboer, Nathaniel Mapley and Daniel Holliss.

And the senior girls medley team record went to Ellie Holliss, Caitlin Hartley, Hannah Brooke, Oksana Wojcik-Jardzioch and Elizabeth Standen.

Team manager Andrew Ellis put the performance down to depth across all events and the dedication of the swimmers.

Basketball



St Albans Wolves Under-14 girls celebrate their title win

Picture: ST ALBANS WOLVES BASKETBALL

St Albans Wolves U14 girls recorded two big wins to clinch the National Basketball League East Division title.

First Cambridge Cats were beaten 84-32 on the road before the championship was clinched with a 77-49 home victory against Brentwood Fire.

Emerson Westerby's side will now be at home in the play-off first round and if they are successful they will also play at Oaklands in the last eight.

The Final Four takes place at the National Basketball Performance Centre in May.

Darcy McRae had another big game at Cambridge, finishing with 30 points with Maliya

Lawal adding 25 and Darcey Judge and Paris Mitchell-Tyson collecting 10 each.

The game against Brentwood was a revenge mission for the young Wolves as one of their two league losses had come against the Fire.

But there was never going to be a repeat as Westerby's side led from tip-to-buzzer.

A 17-10 first period lead grew to 36-20 going into the locker room at half-time. Wolves then edged further ahead with a 17-15 third quarter before they wrapped up the title with a 24-14 final period.

Mitchell-Tyson led the way with 17 points despite getting in early foul trouble.

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