

Third team are toast of Berkeley Fields

FOOTBALL: North Greenford United Social – the club's third team – became the pride of Berkeley Fields by winning the West London club's only piece of silverware this season, writes Patrick Hillier.

Simon Whall's goal six minutes from the interval was enough to beat Stedfast United FC 1-0 in the Middlesex Junior Cup Final at Short Lane – the home of Ashford Town.

The Junior Cup has a long and distinguished history, introduced way back in the 1891/92 season, when Millwall Athletic Reserves were the inaugural winners.

Over the years the cup has proved to be an extremely popular and tough competition to win and there have been many famous names from Middlesex football on the impressive list of winners.

On Wednesday evening, in front of a large and vocal crowd, North Greenford thoroughly deserved their narrow victory, despite surviving a number of scares early on in the game from Stedfast's dangerous front line.

When Stedfast's prolific goal scorer Matthew Woods saw his shot cannon back off a post into the arms of United keeper Jason Lamming with the game 15 minutes old, the club's large contingent of fans sensed it was going to be United's night.



From that point on, Greenford began to play a higher line, moving the ball around quickly and working the flanks well, particularly out on the right where man-of-the-match Wall caused the Stedfast defence all kinds of problems.

Whall's winner came when he found himself unmarked to the right of the Stedfast area and drove the ball home.

The strike was aided by a deflection, but no-one in the North Greenford camp cared as, even at this point in the match, victory became a definite and realistic prospect.

In the second half, United put in a dominant performance in which they restricted their opponents to a few half-chances.

On the hour they should have gone two up, when the ball, played in from the left, was parried out by Stedfast keeper Justin Skinner and driven home by Scott Whall.

Assistant referee Matthew Young put up his flag for offside against Whall and referee Peter Jago disallowed the goal.

In the end, it didn't matter, and it was a great moment for all at the club when manager Dave Duffy invited vice-chairman Brian Varley – unable to play in the game as the result of a recent illness – to receive the cup on the team's behalf.