

# Villages

The Herald 1st May, 1998

## Meon bring home silver after 40 years

League crown set to follow Div2 title glory and six-a-side triumph

IN one of the wettest spring seasons on record East Meon have ended a 40-year trophy drought and brought home the silver at last.

Village football is as much about socialising as scoring, but it's good to win a title or two and East Meon looks set to do the latter in the 48-team Meon Valley League.

In fact it could be three titles, as the club won the Meon Valley League six-a-side tournament on Sunday.

The first silverware came home on Easter Sunday thanks to the amazing Chris Heighes - who had scored a staggering 57 goals this season up to the end of last week - the East Meon team beating Burrigde 4-0 to collect the Nicholson Cup for winning the Meon Valley League Division 2 title.

Heighes scored two goals in that cup final which left the club needing a win and a draw from their last four games to be league champions.

### East Meon

And before last week was out a Heighes hat-trick for a 3-1 victory over Fareham Sacred Heart Reserves made the prospect even brighter.

For with three games to go closest challengers Fareham Sacred Hearts and Crowsnest both need the maximum nine points to draw level - but to pass East Meon they would need about 50 goals too, to better the villagers' goal difference of 134-34.

In the Nicholson Cup clash at Fareham, the conditions were perfect, although the game started slowly with most of the pressure coming from Burrigde.

But East Meon broke the deadlock, the first goal coming from James Broom, who converted a Russell Matthews corner with a powerful header.

This opened the floodgate for East Meon to play their

familiar free-flowing football and it wasn't long before they got on the scoresheet again.

With plenty of goalmouth action it was Heighes who latched on to a half-chance and volleyed the ball past the oncoming keeper.

Meon's third came with seconds remaining in the first half, with yet another pinpoint corner from Matthews met by the towering Liam Bray with great effect.

In the second half it wasn't long before they scored their fourth, and again it was Heighes who met a superb 30-yard cross from Man of the Match Jeff Wheeler and wrapped the game up for the visitors.

After the cup final Meon manager Mark Whiteley said: "This was a hard-fought match and I'm proud of every one of the lads.

"It has taken 40 years to bring silverware back to the village, and now we are in a superb position to do the league and cup double."



Champions - the East Meon team. Back row (from left): Paul Hiscock (secretary), Liam Bray, Graham Hughes, Steve Bond, James Broom, Reg Norris, Daniel Hill, Daniel Ball, Robert Ezzard, top scorer Chris Heighes and manager Mark Whiteley. Front Row: Nat Titheridge, Russell Matthews, Jeff Wheeler, team mascot Craig Radcliffe, captain Phil Appleton, Grant Blofield and Nick Tubb.