The TOUCHLINE WITH DUGOUT NEWS

MATCH REPORT
Saturday, 24 October 2026

Isthmian League South East Division

Broadbridge Heath	2 | 2	Herne Bay
Samuel Hard Jack Church		Ade Azeez Josh Ajaji

Air Engineering Stadium Saturday, 24 October 2026

BEARS STAND FIRM TO CLAIM HARD-EARNED POINT AGAINST BAYS

Broadbridge Heath weathered the storm in more ways than one as they held on with ten men to earn a hard-fought 2–2 draw against Herne Bay at the Air Engineering Stadium.



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Twice ahead through Samuel Hard and Jack Church, the Bears were twice pegged back before Ben Holden's dismissal left them facing a stern test. Herne Bay pressed for a winner, but the hosts stood firm to secure a valuable point.

Earlier in the day, there had been doubts whether the game would go ahead at all. Strong winds and heavy rain forced an 11am pitch inspection, with the eventual green light sparing the travelling Bays a rearranged Tuesday-night journey to Sussex.

Herne Bay arrived eighth in the Pitching In Isthmian League South East Division, three points ahead of their 11th-placed hosts. With little separating the sides in the table, this promised to be a closely contested afternoon.

It was the Bears who struck first. Bays goalkeeper Tom Wray could only parry the initial effort, and Hard reacted to the loose ball, finishing past him to give the home side an early lead.

As the first half wore on, the conditions worsened. Wind swept across the ground and the rain intensified, adding to the challenge for both teams. Late tackles brought an edge to proceedings, while several decisions from referee Simon Faires prompted protests.

Herne Bay drew level through Ade Azeez, who had recently joined on a 28-day loan from

Welling United. Their advantage lasted barely five minutes, however, as Church restored Broadbridge Heath's lead to send the Bears into the interval 2–1 ahead.

The visitors emerged for the second half with renewed purpose. With the wind continuing to buffet the stadium, Josh Ajaji produced some sharp footwork and supplied the finish to bring the Bays level once more.

The afternoon then became more difficult for Broadbridge Heath when Holden received a second yellow card. The decision was disputed, but the consequence was clear: the Bears would have to see out the contest a man short.

Herne Bay pushed to make their numerical advantage count. Antonio Morgan came agonisingly close, his effort appearing destined for the bottom-left corner before striking the post.

Yet Broadbridge Heath carried a threat of their own. Zachary Jeanes broke through on goal and drove an effort across Wray, forcing the goalkeeper into a strong save to deny the Bears a potential winner.

That chance underlined how finely balanced the contest remained, even as the visitors applied pressure. Herne Bay kept searching for a way through, but the Bears held their ground to ensure the afternoon ended with honours even.

For Broadbridge Heath, there was plenty of encouragement in the resilience they showed. Having twice surrendered the lead and then lost a player, they refused to let a difficult afternoon slip away entirely.

The Bears return to league action on Tuesday against Ashford United, with kick-off at 7.45 pm. Herne Bay, meanwhile, host Sittingbourne.

The TOUCHLINE

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