The TOUCHLINE WITH DUGOUT NEWS

MATCH REPORT

Wednesday, 30 September 2026

Sussex Senior Cup

Haywards Heath Town	2 | 0	Brighton & Hove Albion Under-21s

Jack Barnes
Lukas Franzen-Jones

HSEnergy Group Stadium Wednesday, 30 September 2026 Attendance 1,267

HEATH SINK ALBION YOUNGSTERS IN FRONT OF RECORD CROWD

A record crowd of 1,267 watched Haywards Heath Town book their place in the next round of the Sussex Transport Senior Cup with a deserved victory over Brighton & Hove Albion Under-21s.



Brandon Wright

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Second-half goals from Jack Barnes and Lukas Franzen-Jones settled an entertaining tie at the HSEnergy Group Stadium, giving the Blues another memorable night as they continued their impressive form.

Heath came into the game flying high in the SCFL, and there was plenty of anticipation around the ground as they prepared to test themselves against Albion's youngsters.

The hosts made a positive start, moving the ball confidently and pressing Brighton in the opening stages. Town looked comfortable in possession, with both sides working hard to prevent the other from finding a way through.

Brighton forward Valentine Joseph had an early opportunity, holding off his marker to get a shot away, but dragged his effort wide of the post.

At the other end, Barnes tested Ferdinand with a header towards the back post. The goalkeeper, son of Rio Ferdinand, rose well to claim the ball and keep the scores level.

Kofi Shaw also tried his luck for the visitors, sending a half-volley wide as Albion looked to make their mark on the contest.

There was little to separate the teams throughout the first half. Heath played some good football, but neither side could produce the

breakthrough, leaving the tie balanced at the interval.

With the score goalless, the second half offered everything to play for, and it was Town who returned with the greater impact.

Barnes smashed the ball into the net to put Heath ahead, sparking celebrations around the ground and getting the Shed End rocking.

It was just the start the hosts wanted after the break, but Brighton responded by pressing for an equaliser.

Heath's goalkeeper produced a fine save to preserve the advantage, while the defence stood firm as the visitors searched for a route back into the game.

Town's work without the ball was every bit as important as their attacking play. They defended well and gave themselves the platform to push towards a place in the next round.

The decisive moment came from a free-kick in a promising position. Franzen-Jones stepped up and delivered a superb strike into the top corner, doubling Heath's lead in spectacular fashion.

It was a goal worthy of the occasion, putting the Blues firmly in control and giving the home crowd another moment to savour.

Heath saw the tie through to complete a well-earned 2-0 win, with two second-half finishes and a clean sheet rounding off a special evening.

For the record crowd, there was plenty to enjoy: confident football, determined defending and a cup victory to celebrate.

Town now await news of their next opponents, with the next round announcement provisionally expected on Saturday, 10 October.

Attention returns to league football this Saturday, when Heath host Midhurst & Eastbourne at the HSEnergy Group Stadium. Kick-off is at 3pm as the Blues look to build on their cup success.

The TOUCHLINE

DUGOUT NEWS

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