



Knockbreda 0-5 Ballyclare Comrades

Saturday 20th August 2016 – NIFL Championship

Ballyclare Comrades team (4-2-3-1)

1. Paddy Flood
2. Curtis Woods
6. Stuart McCullough
5. Michael McQuitty
3. Dean Youle
8. JB Dobbin
4. Corey McMullan (50')
7. Gary Brown (21') (65')
10. Michael O'Hanlon
11. Thomas Robinson (44') (77') (82')
9. Chris Trussell (16') (78')

Substitutes:

12. Adam Irwin (65')
14. Chris Getty
15. Bobbie Crowe
16. Denver Taggart (78')
17. Mark Shannon (82')

Knockbreda: McKay, King, Cockcroft, Ferguson, Wray, Cooling, Wilson, McNeill, Beggs, Hanna, McMaster. Subs: Crawford, Johnston, Hughes, Lynch, McBride.

Comrades produced a scintillating display to gain a comprehensive win at Knockbreda and continue their very positive start to the season.

The only change to the starting line-up for this game, saw new signing Thomas Robinson, who has been so influential as a substitute the previous Saturday, make his first start, with Adam Irwin the unlucky player to drop to the bench.

The game had a lively start. In the 2nd minute a quick break ended with Chris Trussell firing in a shot from 8 yards, which forced a save from 'keeper McKay.

On 8 minutes at the other end Cockcroft was unlucky to see his free-kick effort from just outside the right corner of the box come back off the bar. The ball was cleared and another lightning break up-field from the visitors ended with Chris Trussell cutting in from the left into the box and trying to hit the ball inside the far post from 10 yards, but McKay was again equal to the task, producing a good save.

The first goal of the game came in the 16th minute. The influential Michael O'Hanlon did very well, running down the left, getting to the by-line inside the box and pulling the ball back for Chris Trussell. This time there was nothing the 'keeper could do as the Comrades striker blasted the ball into the roof of the net from 8 yards out.

Five minutes later the buoyant visitors were two up. Thomas Robinson got on the end of a ball over the Knockbreda defence and got to the by-line, before chipping the ball across the box to find Gary Brown, who resulting header was beautifully placed wide of the 'keeper and inside the far post from 6 yards.

Things were to get even better for the men in red a minute before half time. With the home defence stretched, Michael O'Hanlon found Thomas Robinson and he ghosted away from a defender before striking a sizzling low shot wide of the despairing dive of the 'keeper from 14 yards.

Comrades' travelling support were delighted by their team's first half performance and they were to have more to cheer about in the second half. Five minutes in the lead was increased further, when Corey McMullan hit a fiercely struck volley from the edge of the box, which the 'keeper failed to hold, the ball dropping behind him and into the net.

Unsurprisingly some of the intensity now went out of the game, with Comrades having a large lead and the players being drenched by torrential showers. The home side has a fair share of attacking possession for period around the middle of the half, but Comrades' defence held firm.

The visitors were however not finished going forward and in the 77th minute they grabbed their fifth goal. Substitute Adam Irwin's fine cross-field ball picked out the run of Thomas Robinson, who advanced into the box, held off the challenges of two defenders and finished from 7 yards, to cap an excellent personal display.

Late in the game there were a couple of opportunities for a sixth. On 87 minutes, two of the substitutes, Mark Shannon and Adam Irwin linked up down the left and Irwin made room for a shot from 12 yards, which forced a save from McKay. Then, in the 90th minute Irwin was again denied by the 'keeper, this time a free-kick into the box broke to him, but his first time shot from a central position 8 yards out was saved.