



Ballyclare Comrades 0-3 PSNI

Saturday 25th February 2017 – NIFL Championship

Match sponsors: Jackie Murdock and Kelso Ritchie

Ball sponsor: Daniel's at Tweedies

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

1. Paddy Flood
2. Curtis Woods
5. Jason Johnston
23. Dean Youle
3. Adam Gray  (29')
4. Samuel McIlveen
8. JB Dobbin
7. Michael O'Hanlon  (32')
10. Gary Brown
11. Thomas Robinson  (56')
9. Chris Trussell

Substitutes:

12. Corey McMullan  (56')
14. Kevin Lynch  (32')
15. Denver Taggart
16. Owen Thompson
17. Johnny McClurg

PSNI: Williamson, McCullagh, McCrory, McDermott, A Wright, Berry, Anderson, Roohi, Adamczyk, McDowell, McWilliams. Subs: J Wright, Courtney, Moody, Riddle, Kirk.

Comrades' very poor February continued with a disappointing home defeat to PSNI, a result which brings their opponent right into the play-off hunt.

Manager Stephen Hughes made a couple of changes to the side which lost at leaders Warrenpoint in the previous game. Samuel McIlveen and Gary Brown came into the starting line-up, with Adam McCart dropping out with an injury and Corey McMullan taking a place on the bench.

The home side started well enough and probably should have been ahead in the 4th minute. Michael O'Hanlon did well on the right and played the ball low into the box, where Chris Trussell met it with an effort from 7 yards, which he swept just wide of the post.

Three minutes later a surging run down the left from Adam Gray ended with him getting the ball to Thomas Robinson in the crowded box, but he saw his effort from 8 yards deflect off a defender and wide.

Despite being very much on top in the early minutes, Comrades soon found themselves a goal down. In the 9th minute, a corner was conceded and from this the ball was played into the near post, where McCullagh was able to glance a header in from 5 yards.

A minute later, Comrades had a good chance to get quickly back on level terms, when Thomas Robinson pulled the ball back from the by-line in the box to find Gary Brown in a central position 7 yards from goal. However, he was unable to get a good strike on the ball and Williamson made a comfortable save.

Comrades' vulnerability from set-pieces was their downfall again on 15 minutes, when they conceded the second goal. A free-kick was played into the box and not dealt with, allowing the ball to break to Adam Wright, who then made no mistake with an effort from 8 yards.

The home side reacted and came close in the 21st minute, when Gary Brown went on a run across the edge of the box, before hitting a fine effort, which forced a fingertip save from Williamson. Then, from the resulting corner, Dean Youle saw his header from 10 yards cleared off the line by a defender.

However the vulnerability at the back was still apparent, when in the 27th minute an incisive move down the right by PSNI ended with McWilliams striking the near post with a well-struck shot from 13 yards.

The rest of the first half was frustrating for the home side, as PSNI began to look comfortable with their lead. Only a Samuel McIlveen shot from 16 yards, which went low just past the post in the 41st minute, threatened to reduce the deficit before the break.

Comrades did most of the pressing in the second half, but there wasn't much real threat on the PSNI goal, until the 56th minute, when Kevin Lynch curled an effort just wide of the far post from 16 yards out on the right side of the box.

A minute later and yet another goal from a set-piece more or less sealed the points for the visitors. This time a free-kick was played into the box from deep and Adamczyk got his head to the ball to power a fine effort in from 10 yards.

The home side didn't throw the towel in, and had a few chances to at least reduce the deficit.

In the 73rd minute a corner was met by a header into the ground from Curtis Woods 6 yards from goal, but the ball flew off the turf and over the bar.

On 78 minutes a free-kick, played low into the box was met by Kevin Lynch, who struck out a boot to send an effort flashing just over from 14 yards.

Then, a minute later, Chris Trussell found himself with a good chance 9 yards from goal, but his effort was too close to the 'keeper.

It was not to be for Comrades, who are suffering a spell where goals have dried up and opponents are finding it far too easy to score at the other end.