



Ballyclare Comrades 2-2 Warrenpoint Town

Saturday 28th January 2017 – NIFL Championship

Match and Ball Sponsor: Spares Direct

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

1. Paddy Flood
2. Curtis Woods
5. Jason Johnston
23. Dean Youle
3. Adam Gray
4. Samuel McIlveen 🟢🔴 (63')
8. JB Dobbin
7. Gary Brown 🟡 (79')
10. Corey McMullan
11. Thomas Robinson 🟡🔴 (30') 🟢🔴 (47')
9. Chris Trussell 🟡🔴 (17') 🟢🔴 (48')

Substitutes:

12. Michael O'Hanlon 🟢🔴 (47')
14. Denver Taggart
15. Kevin Lynch 🟢🔴 (48')
16. Adam McCart 🟢🔴 (63')
17. Owen Thompson

Warrenpoint Town: Parr, McVeigh, McGuigan, McMenamain, Donnelly, Murray, Lynch, Dane, Bagnall, Moan, Reilly. Subs: King, Dempster, McKenna, Maguire, Croskery.

Comrades had to settle for a point in an entertaining top of the table clash against Warrenpoint Town, despite racing into a two-goal lead in the first half hour.

Manager Stephen Hughes started with the side which had done so well to turn the game around in the second half the previous Saturday against Lurgan Celtic. This meant Samuel McIlveen coming back into the starting line-up.

The game started with action at both ends. Inside the opening minute, Comrades had a decent effort, when Chris Trussell shot from the edge of the box, the ball flying narrowly wide of the target.

At the other end Warrenpoint threatened in the 5th minute, when a swift break saw the ball played to McMenamain in a good position inside the box. However, Paddy Flood was quickly off his line to produce an excellent block.

The Comrades 'keeper had to be at his best again, two minutes later, when Murray got in behind the defence, but saw his effort from 9 yards thwarted by a fine save.

The all-action start continued with a chance for Comrades in the 12th minute. Adam Gray got forward from his left-back position and surged into the box, before shooting just wide of the far post from 8 yards.

It was the home side who drew first blood on 17 minutes. Chris Trussell got on the end of a good ball played into the box by Curtis Woods and shook off a defender, before finishing confidently from 7 yards.

Comrades had their tails up. In the 26th minute they came close to adding to their lead, when Thomas Robinson cut into the box from the left and fired in a shot from 9 yards, which was blocked by 'keeper Parr, who then did well to turn the ball past the post, after Chris Trussell nodded the rebound back towards goal.

On the half hour mark Comrades put themselves in a prime position with a second goal. A super move ended with Thomas Robinson making space for a shot from 8 yards, which flew into the net, giving the 'keeper no chance.

The two-goal lead didn't last too long for the home side, as Warrenpoint grabbed a goal back within two minutes. A sweeping move ended with Murray producing a fine finish from 10 yards from a testing angle.

The visitors then had the better of the remainder of the half. On 40 minutes McMenemy made space for a shot from 9 yards, which was kept out by another great save from Flood. Then, on 42 minutes, Reilly had a chance from the corner of the 6-yard box, but his effort was deflected just over the bar.

The second half started with Comrades having to replace their two goal scorers inside the first three minutes through injury. This unsurprisingly threw them off their stride and the visitors had the best of much of the rest of the game.

Comrades were stretched on several occasions in the opening phase of the half, but their defence held firm. That was until the 59th minute, when a through ball saw Paddy Flood rushing from his goal, to try to get to the ball first. He did so, but was unable to hold onto the ball and McGuigan latched onto it before squaring to McMenemy, who had the easy task of slotting into the empty net.

Warrenpoint continued to look the more threatening side as the half progressed and Comrades struggled to create much at the other end. In the 83rd minute, the visitors came close to taking the lead, when Murray's shot from the right side of the box was deflected onto the bar.

Comrades' best spell of the second half came late on and it was then that they had a great chance to take all three points. In the 88th minute, Michael O'Hanlon did very well to cut in from the right and he then got on the end of one-two with Kevin Lynch, which put him in a great position 6 yards from goal, but his resulting effort was well saved by Parr.

Although Comrades may be disappointed at losing a two-goal lead, they can reflect that the point gained now puts them seven points ahead of third placed Institute and at least prevented Warrenpoint increasing their six-point lead at the top.