

Ballyclare Comrades U20 2-4 Cliftonville Olympic (after extra-time)

Saturday 13th May 2017 – George Wilson Cup (Final)

Report courtesy of the Newtownabbey Times

After being pipped at the post for the Championship Development League North title, and reaching the quarter-final of the prestigious County Antrim Junior Shield against adult opponents, Kingsley Burrows' young guns embarked on the end of season George Wilson Cup being played on a knockout basis.

Most Premiership and Championship clubs entered their Under 20 teams, and the Wee Reds dispatched Premiership sides Ballymena United III and Crusaders Reserves en route to the final, where they were beaten by Cliftonville Olympic – another Premiership outfit.

There was plenty of drama in the final on Saturday afternoon at Seaview, where the lead changed hands twice, before ending 2-2 at the end of normal time, only for the north Belfast side to score two more unanswered goals in extra time, and collect the trophy on a 4-2 scoreline.

Tully nosed the city side ahead on the half hour, but this was cancelled out when full back Scott Gault overlapped down the left, and linked with Michael Haskins before firing in to the net off the bar.

Comrades turned round one up after Scott Cummings put Haskins through to score with a shot that hit the bar and post. Defenders contended that the ball had not crossed the line, but the linesman's flag stayed down.

Seven minutes in to the second session Olympic regained the lead through Whiteway, and thereafter generally had the upper-hand. In extra time class and fitness began to tell, with Cliftonville adding two more to secure the trophy.

Commenting manager Burrows said, "In a hectic two weeks we saw off three sides above us in the rankings, while Cliftonville disposed of lower rated teams and this took its toll. After an hour we were running on an almost empty tank, and Cliftonville were deserved winners, but overall we had a brilliant season," he added.

Comrades U20: McKnight; K McCauley, McCart, Ervine (Chalmers 85), Gault (C); Clarke, Haggan; K Robinson (A McCauley 98), Haskins, Gilmour (Fenton 55); Cummings. Subs not used: McCabrey, Lilburn