

H&W Welders U20 3-2 Ballyclare Comrades U20

Saturday 14th January 2017 – NIFL Development League North

H&W Welders U20 have proved to be Ballyclare Comrades Reserves' bogey team this season, when they completed a Championship Development League North double at the weekend.

In thirteen previous outings Kingsley Burrows' young guns had chalked up twelve wins, with the only blemish being against the Welders away back in October. On that occasion the city side ran out 3-1 winners at Dixon Park, and on Saturday they just shaded a five-goal thriller 3-2 on their own patch at Blanchflower Stadium in east Belfast.

After a sluggish start the Reserves opened the scoring through Reece Gilmour, who controlled the ball and blasted it past the keeper, but they were unable to impose themselves on a keen tackling home side.

Almost on the stroke of half time parity was restored, when Ross McKnight had to retrieve the ball from the net following a goalmouth scramble, and the hosts carried the momentum in to the second session, with the lead changing hands on the hour. Ten minutes later Kyle McCauley made it 2-2 from close range, and from this point the Wee Reds were on top. During the final quarter Welders were on the defensive, but five minutes from time they broke up-field to grab the winner.

Defenders Graham Irvine and Scott Gault were candidates for the Man of the Match accolade.

Despite the defeat Comrades remain in pole position in the table, but manager Burrows was unimpressed by the below par performance.

"We didn't play our usual passing game, and didn't deserve to get anything from it," he stated. "When we equalised with twenty minutes remaining I felt that we looked the more likely to win, but Welders hit us with a late sucker punch to end our winning run," he added.

The Reserves were scheduled to play Dervock this weekend in the fifth round of the County Antrim Junior Shield, but this one has been postponed, so their next match will be on 28th.

Comrades Reserves: McKnight; A McCauley, K McCauley, Irvine, Gault (C); Haggan, Clarke, McIlwaine, Robinson; Gilmour, Fenton. Subs\; Lilburn, Nesbitt, Chalmers, McAbney.