



## Limavady United 3-5 Ballyclare Comrades

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2017 – Bluefin Sport Championship

### Ballyclare Comrades team

1. Paddy Flood
6. Michael McQuitty 🚩 (74')
14. Adam McCart 🚩 (64')
23. Dean Youle
17. Thomas Robinson 🚩 (74')
4. Samuel McIlveen
22. Gary Brown 🚩 (68')
8. JB Dobbin 🟡 (31')
11. Adam Gray 🚩 (24') 🚩 (62')
18. Jason Johnston 🚩 (51')
24. Stewart Nixon 🚩 (48')

### Substitutes:

2. Curtis Woods 🟢 (74')
16. Matty Parker 🟢 (68')
5. Chris Rodgers 🟢 (74')
7. Jack Chalmers
20. Zach Barr

**Limavady United:** Wells, Devlin, Crown, Watt, L Harkin, Gill, Law, King, Owens, Hume, Bradley . Subs: Carlin, McCloskey, C Harkin, McClelland, Logue.

Comrades made the most of playing in the only game in the Championship to survive the wintery weather, to extend their lead at the top of the table in an action-packed game at the Limavady Showgrounds.

Manager Clifford Adams stuck with the team which had beaten the same opponents the previous Saturday, with the only change coming on the subs bench, where U20 centre-back Jack Chalmers replaced the departing Michael O'Hanlon.

Comrades started strongly and pushed the hosts back for the first few minutes, However, they were caught out by a sucker punch in the 4<sup>th</sup> minute. Confusion at the back allowed Bradley to get free on the left side of the box. Paddy Flood managed to get a hand to his low ball across, but he could not hold onto it and Hume was left with a simple task to slot the ball into the empty net from 6 yards out.

Four minutes later the visitors came close to getting an equaliser. Adam Gray drove into the left side of the box and played the ball across where it broke to Jason

Johnston. He managed to get a shot away from 8 yards, but the ball came off defender Watt and struck the post.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> minute, Limavady came close when Gill sent a rising shot just over from 12 yards, after he got on the end of a corner.

Clifford Adams' men continued to press and in the 24<sup>th</sup> minute they grabbed a deserved leveller. Gary Brown took advantage of a slip by an opponent to drive forward up the middle of the field, before slipping the ball to Adam Gray. He then advanced into the box and hit a fine finish wide of 'keeper Wells and inside the post from 14 yards.

The visitors continued to do most of the attacking from a base of dominating the midfield area. They were first to the ball most of the time and forced Limavady to defend desperately. In the 33<sup>rd</sup> minute they came close to taking the lead, when Stewart Nixon robbed a defender near the by-line and played the ball in to Jason Johnston, whose first time effort from 4 yards went just wide of the target.

Five minutes later, Comrades came close again, when Thomas Robinson dropped his shoulder and took on a defender on the right side of the box, before hitting a shot from 8 yards, which shaved the angle of bar and post.

The travelling supporters will have felt that their side should have gone in at the break with a lead, but they didn't have to wait long in the second half before Comrades hit the front. In the 48<sup>th</sup> minute Adam Gray drove forward up the centre of the pitch before playing the ball to Jason Johnston. He then crossed the ball from the left edge of the box toward Stewart Nixon, who headed home from 5 yards.

Three minutes later Comrades went 3-1 up, when Thomas Robinson crossed from the right side of the box to find the head of Jason Johnston, who finished from 6 yards.

Comrades were now rampant and created a series of further chances. In the 54<sup>th</sup> minute Stewart Nixon got his head on the end of a Samuel McIlveen free-kick, but saw his effort from 7 yards miss the target. Then, a minute later, Nixon's well-struck low shot from 17 yards had to be turned wide by Wells. The 'keeper was again called into action on 56 minutes, when he was well-placed to save a Jason Johnston header from 5 yards after a corner.

Somewhat out of the blue, the home side got back into the game in the 58<sup>th</sup> minute, when Lee Harkin's shot from just outside the box, hit the arm of Adam McCart and the referee awarded a penalty, which Hume converted confidently.

This set-back didn't phase Comrades at all and they soon reasserted their control of the game. In the 62<sup>nd</sup> minute a corner was only cleared out to Adam Gray, 15 yards from goal, who then hit a sweetly struck volley through the crowded box and into the back of the net.

Two minutes later Comrades had a three-goal advantage. A corner was not adequately cleared by the home side and Stewart Nixon played the ball back into the box to the far post, where Adam McCart was there to head powerfully in from 3 yards.

On 67 minutes the home side's miserable day got even worse, when Watts was red-carded for a crude challenge on Gary Brown, which led to the dynamic attacking midfielder having to leave the action.

Comrades were now in complete control and could easily have added to their tally, but for some last ditch defending and good goalkeeping from Wells.

In the 79<sup>th</sup> minute Samuel McIlveen got on the end of a looping ball just outside the box and hit a volley which flew inches wide of the target.

On 85 minutes the influential McIlveen slid a ball through to substitute Chris Rodgers, who looked set to score from inside the 6-yard box, only to be denied by alert 'keeping from Wells, who was quick to block.

In the 89<sup>th</sup> minute Limavady grabbed a consolation goal, again against the run of play, when Comrades were caught out with a ball played through to Hume, who advanced to finish into the bottom corner of the net from 13 yards to complete his hat-trick.

A minute into injury-time the home 'keeper was again called to make a good save, when he blocked Stewart Nixon's effort from 7 yards, after the Comrades striker had produced a lovely turn in the box to make space for a shot.