



## Ballyclare Comrades 0-3 PSNI

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2017 – Bluefin Sport Championship

Match Sponsor: Studio 51 Hair Design, Main Street, Ballyclare

Ball Sponsor: Anonymous

Report courtesy of the Newtownabbey Times

### Ballyclare Comrades team

(4-4-2)

1. Paddy Flood
22. Gary Brown
5. Chris Rodgers 🚩 (37')
23. Dean Youle
16. Matty Parker 🟡 (25')
7. Michael O'Hanlon
4. Samuel McIlveen
8. JB Dobbin 🟡 (36') 🚩 (76')
11. Adam Gray 🟡 (79')
24. Stewart Nixon 🚩 (67')
10. Mark Kelly

### Substitutes:

2. Curtis Woods 🟢 (37') 🟡 (77')
17. Thomas Robinson
18. Jason Johnston 🟢 (76')
19. Kyle Mackie 🟢 (67')
26. Geoff McKinty

**PSNI:** Williamson, Ferguson, McCrory, McDermott, Wright, McClurg, Anderson, Moody, Watts, McDowell, McWilliams. Subs: Montgomery, Wilson, Adamczyk, Kirk, Cairns.

Ballyclare Comrades lost their undefeated record, and surrendered their Bluefin Sport Championship pole position when beaten by PSNI at Dixon Park, where they never recovered from conceding two goals in the opening six minutes. Jamesy Kirk's lads added a third before the break, and then held out to secure the 3-0 win, that leaves them level on points with Comrades in joint second spot, one point behind new leaders, Knockbreda.

Paddy Flood, back in goal after missing four matches, had to retrieve the ball from the net as early as the 4<sup>th</sup> minute, when McWilliams back-heeled the ball to Watts who made no mistake from close range.

Home fans were shell-shocked two minutes later, when McDowell dribbled his way down the left flank before firing in to the bottom corner of the net, and with the policemen completely on top they almost got a third moments later. Former Comrades midfielder, Jonny McClurg, had a clear run on goal, and only a last-ditch sliding tackle by Flood outside his box averted the danger.

Comrades eventually managed to get to the other end where John Dobbin's volley flashed wide, but with Anderson and Moody prominent in midfield, Jamesy Kirk's well drilled side continued to call the tune, and it came as no surprise when centre-half Wright advanced to head in number three from an Anderson corner.

In the 37<sup>th</sup> minute Comrades defender, Chris Rodgers, was stretchered off and taken to hospital suffering from suspected concussion, with Curtis Woods taking his place alongside Dean Youle at the heart of the defence.

The Reds gradually were coming more in to the game, and in the 42<sup>nd</sup> minute a Mark Kelly thrust down the left resulted in him playing the ball across the face of the goal, but the in-rushing Michael O'Hanlon in his first start of the season just failed to get a touch at the back post.

In added time Comrades were thrown a life-line when Ferguson conceded a penalty, and Sammy McIlveen's well directed spot kick seemed a winner, until Williamson dived to clutch the ball at the base of the post, so the policemen turned round with their three goals' advantage intact.

During the second half the policemen seemed to have adopted a "what we have we hold" policy, so that Comrades were often buzzing in or around the penalty area, even after losing Stewart Nixon who retired with a head injury. High balls in to the box were capably dealt with by McDermott and Wright, with Williamson not seriously tested, so that despite forcing several corners in the final quarter the Reds were unable to prevent the whitewash.

Thankfully Chris Rodgers was discharged from hospital on Saturday evening and he hopes to be back in action soon.

