



## Portadown 2-0 Ballyclare Comrades

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 – Bluefin Sport Championship

### Ballyclare Comrades team

1. Paddy Flood
5. Chris Rodgers 🏴 (53')
6. Michael McQuitty
23. Dean Youle
3. Matty Parker 🟡 (76')
17. Gary Brown
4. Samuel McIlveen 🏴 (75')
8. JB Dobbin
11. Thomas Robinson 🏴 (75')
18. Stewart Nixon 🟡 (21')
9. Mark Kelly

### Substitutes:

2. Curtis Woods 🟢 (53')
14. Adam McCart
7. Joe McWilliams 🟢 (75')
10. Eoin Kane 🟢 (75')
12. Chris Middleton

**Portadown:** McGaughey, Neill, Hall, McCallum, Larkin, Kilmartin, C Lavery, Wilson, Salley, Douglas, George. Subs: McKenna, Carmichael, Henderson, McCullough, S Lavery.

Comrades slipped to a defeat after a tepid performance at Portadown, to severely dent any hopes of making the promotion play-offs.

The one change for Clifford Adams' men from the starting line-up saw Paddy Flood returning from injury in goal to replace Alan Blayney, who himself picked up an injury in the previous game.

The visitors started brightly enough and tested Portadown 'keeper McGaughey in the 4<sup>th</sup> minute, with a Thomas Robinson shot from the edge of the box that had to be saved low just inside the post.

It wasn't long however, before the home side began to gain control of most of the play, pressing Comrades back into their own territory. Despite this, there hadn't been any serious threat to Paddy Flood's goal until the 24<sup>th</sup> minute, when a Portadown were awarded a penalty. Gary Brown was adjudged to have brought

down Neill inside the box. The decision looked open to question, but that didn't matter to Salley who confidently dispatched the penalty kick.

Comrades had a great chance to level the scores four minutes later. It looked the balance of the game had changed significantly in the visitors' favour, when Samuel McIlveen's shot from 15 yards was kept from entering the net by Neill's hand. The referee had little choice but to award a penalty and send off Neill. McIlveen stepped up to take the spot-kick, but his effort was saved by McGaughey.

Despite spurning this chance to level the scores, Comrades now had a numerical advantage. However, there was little sign that they would make the most of this and Portadown continued to look the better side. They managed to increase their lead in the 38<sup>th</sup> minute, when a great cross from the left from Chris Lavery found the head of Salley, 7 yards out, and he made no mistake sending his effort out of the reach of Paddy Flood.

Comrades went in at half-time with much to do, but they didn't look very much like turning things around in the second half. Portadown looked worryingly comfortable and might have increased on 49 minutes, when Chris Lavery got in on the left side of the box and was only denied by a good block from Paddy Flood, who was alert in advancing from his goal.

Understandably, the home side were largely content to defend their lead and Comrades therefore had a good deal of the ball. However, there was little in the way of threat from the visitors and Portadown kept them at bay with ease.

The travelling supporters were frustrated by their team's lack of efforts on goal. Indeed, the only shot on target for Comrades in the second half came two minutes into injury-time, when Gary Brown's well-hit effort from 25 yards was comfortably saved by McGaughey.