



## **Ballyclare Comrades 2-0 Ballinamallard United**

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2018 – Bluefin Sport Championship**

### **Ballyclare Comrades team (4-4-2)**

- 19. Kyle Rowe
- 2. Curtis Woods
- 5. Adam Wright
- 23. Dean Youle
- 11. Adam Gray
- 7. Joe McWilliams 🟡 (68') 🔴 (78')
- 10. Eoin Kane
- 8. JB Dobbin
- 17. Thomas Robinson ⚪ (22') 🔴 (78')
- 12. Jason Johnston ⚪ (45') 🔴 (83')
- 16. Jamie Willighan

### **Substitutes:**

- 3. Christopher Crane 🟢 (78')
- 6. Michael McQuitty
- 4. Samuel McIlveen 🟢 (78')
- 24. Gary Donnelly
- 14. Joe Tully 🟢 (83') 🟡 (87')

**Ballinamallard United:** Connolly, Taheny, Campbell, Mullen, McCartney, Kelly, Glynn, Edgar, Cashel, McCann, Henderson. Subs: Arkinson, Harney, O'Reilly, Warrington, Robb.

Comrades secured the three points against Ballinamallard with an excellent all-round performance under the lights at Dixon Park.

Manager Stephen Hughes made one change from the starting line-up, with Eoin Kane coming in for Gary Donnelly in midfield. Christopher Crane and Michael McQuitty were available again and took places on the bench, but Gary Brown remained out injured. Both sides opened in lively fashion. The first chance came in the 16<sup>th</sup> minute, when a mazy run by the excellent Thomas Robinson saw him cut infield and get into the box, where he managed to keep possession before laying the ball off to Eoin Kane for a strike from 9 yards. However, the effort lacked the power to unduly trouble Connolly in the Mallards goal. On 22 minutes Comrades, who had been looking increasingly dangerous, opened the scoring. Thomas Robinson got in a strike from the edge of the box, through a number of bodies, which took a slight deflection before finding the back of the net. The visitors almost equalised within a minute. A long ball split the Comrades defence and Campbell got on the end of it, before striking a fierce shot from 16 yards, which cannoned back off the post.

Mallards came close again in the 26<sup>th</sup> minute, when McCartney got into a good position on the left side of the box, before striking a shot narrowly wide of the far post from 9 yards. The action continued in a very entertaining first half and Comrades created some decent chances. On 35 minutes Joe McWilliams slid the ball through to Jamie Willighan, whose resulting effort from 9 yards was blocked by the 'keeper. Then, in the 41<sup>st</sup> minute Curtis Woods set up another chance for Willighan, but his shot from 14 yards went wide of the target.

The lively Willighan was again in the thick of the action when he hit a curling shot from 20 yards, which Connolly did well to tip over the bar. However, in the 45<sup>th</sup> minute, from resulting corner, the 'keeper could do nothing to prevent Jason Johnston powering in a header from 7 yards, after he got on the end of a well-delivered Joe McWilliams corner. The second half began with Comrades again mostly on the front-foot. Chances were maybe not coming as frequently as in the first half, but the home side looked pretty much in control. The visitors did have a spell of attacking around the middle of the half, but the Comrades defence stood firm.

As the game entered its latter stages it was the home side who looked more likely to score again. In the 75<sup>th</sup> minute Jamie Willighan's cross found his strike partner Jason Johnston, but his downward header from 6 yards saw the ball bounce up over the bar.

Three minutes later Jamie Willighan had a chance to score the goal his general play deserved, when he dived to get his head to a ball played into the box by Adam Gray. However, his effort from just outside the 6-yard box went narrowly wide.

In the 85<sup>th</sup> minute Comrades were denied another goal by the frame of the goal, when substitute Joe Tully got a glancing header to a cross played in by Adam Gray, only to see the ball come off the far post. Then, in the 88<sup>th</sup> minute, Curtis Woods' ball into the box found the head of Jamie Willighan, whose effort from a central position was kept out by the well-placed Connolly.