



Ballyclare Comrades 1-4 Carrick Rangers

Saturday 3rd November 2018 – Bluefin Sport Championship

Match Sponsor: Paul Girvan MP

Ball Sponsor: McConnell's of Doagh

Ballyclare Comrades team (4-4-2)

1. Ben Fry
2. Curtis Woods
6. Michael McQuitty 🇮🇪 (63')
23. Dean Youle 🇮🇪 (73')
11. Adam Gray 🇮🇪 (8')
10. Eoin Kane
24. Gary Donnelly 🇮🇪 (79')
8. JB Dobbin 🇮🇪 (34')
17. Thomas Robinson
14. Joe Tully 🇮🇪 (63')
16. Jamie Willighan

Substitutes:

3. Christopher Crane
20. Taylor Kirk 🇮🇪 (79')
4. Samuel McIlveen
22. Gary Brown 🇮🇪 (63')
12. Jason Johnston 🇮🇪 (63')

Carrick Rangers: Hogg, Chapman, Neale, Surgenor, Rodgers, Loughran, Anderson, McDermott, Kelly, Nixon, Smith. Subs: Brennan, Murray, Warwick, McMillen, McCauley.

Comrades fell to a comprehensive defeat at home to local rivals Carrick Rangers, as their recent defensive woes continued.

For this match manager Stephen Hughes was able to welcome back Eoin Kane and Adam Gray. On the other hand, Adam Wright missed out through injury and a goalkeeping crisis forced the selection of Ben Fry from the Under 20 side.

It was imperative to provide protection for the inexperienced young 'keeper, particularly early in the game, but Comrades failed to do this. In the 3rd minute a free-kick was conceded in a central position 22 yards out. Smith stepped up to take it and the Comrades wall parted, allowing him to fire in past the unsuspecting Fry.

The home side reacted well to this disastrous start and were soon back on level terms. Adam Gray produced a superb run down the middle and surged into the box, where he linked up with Jamie Willighan, receiving a return pass before firing the ball low into the net from 11 yards.

The men in red were buoyed by this goal and looked like they could make a game of it, but defensive frailty struck again on 20 minutes to gift Carrick the lead again. The visitors got in much too easily, attacking down the left and penetrating the box, where Dean Youle was forced to slide in with a desperate tackle, conceding a penalty. Smith stepped up to calmly convert the spot-kick.

Two minutes later Comrades threatened an equaliser, when Jamie Willighan did well to take down a ball played over the Carrick defence and fire in a snap shot from the edge of the box. However, Hogg was well placed to make the save.

The home side continued to look vulnerable at the back and in the 34th minute they conceded another penalty. This time it was Curtis Woods adjudged to have fouled and Smith again stepped up to take aim from the spot. Ben Fry made an excellent save to deny him his hat-trick, but Carrick's Kelly was quickest to react to the loose ball, slotting it in from inside the 6-yard box.

Comrades went in at half time two behind and with a lot to do in the second half. There wasn't much sign of them being able to mount a comeback and indeed they might have fallen further behind on 48 minutes, if Kelly had been able to steer his shot into net from 16 yards, after the home side had been unable to clear.

In the 63rd minute the destination of the points was put beyond reasonable doubt when Carrick scored a fourth goal. A Neale corner was headed in from 4 yards by Kelly, giving Fry no chance.

Carrick continued to look the more likely to score for the rest of the game. However, on 67 minutes, Comrades maybe should have reduced the deficit. Thomas Robinson produced a mazy run across the box, before setting up Jamie Willighan for a chance from 9 yards, which he struck over the bar.

Tempers boiled over in the 73rd minute. An incident involving Dean Youle and Carrick's Murray ended with both players receiving a red card.

There were no further goals and Comrades ended a well-beaten side, continuing a poor run of form which in seriously endangering their hopes of a top half position at the split.

