



Limavady United 3-3 Ballyclare Comrades

Saturday 10th November 2018 – Bluefin Sport Championship

Ballyclare Comrades team (4-2-3-1)

1. Paddy Flood  (8')
2. Curtis Woods  (67')
6. Michael McQuitty  (23')
12. Jason Johnston
11. Adam Gray  (88')
4. Samuel McIlveen  (34')  (51')
8. JB Dobbin
10. Eoin Kane  (36')
22. Gary Brown  (83')
17. Thomas Robinson  (9')
14. Joe Tully  (56')

Substitutes:

3. Christopher Crane  (23')
20. Taylor Kirk  (9')
24. Gary Donnelly
9. Chris Trussell  (83')

Limavady United: Wells, O’Kane, McFadden, McMullan, Friars, Devine, Duffy, McCauley, McCarron, Hume, Doherty. Subs: Brown, McConnell, Boyle, Pomeroy.

In a hugely entertaining encounter at Limavady Showgrounds, Comrades produced a superb second half performance to rescue a point, after playing most of the match with ten men and an outfield player in nets, Manager Stephen Hughes had to do without his regular centre-back partnership of Adam Wright (injured) and Dean Youle (suspended). Jamie Willighan was also unavailable. Michael McQuitty and Jason Johnston were the partners in the centre of defence and Gary Brown made a welcome return, after a lengthy spell out with injury.

Comrades started very brightly, taking the game to their opponents. In the 6th minute Thomas Robinson produced a good run across the pitch and into the box, where he struck a shot from 14 yards, which was deflected just wide off a defender. Two minutes later, in a defining moment of the game, Comrades ‘keeper Paddy Flood was shown a red card, after advancing from his box to bring down Hume, with the Limavady striker having been played through by a ball over the top. Taylor Kirk

came on to take the 'keeper's jersey, with Thomas Robinson the unfortunate player to be sacrificed.

For a period after going down to ten men Comrades looked to be coping fairly comfortably and still posed a threat going forward. In the 20th minute Eoin Kane saw his shot from the edge of the box go just wide, after taking a deflection off a defender's leg.

The visitors suffered another blow midway through the first half, when Michael McQuitty had to leave the play with an injury. This necessitated a reshuffle at the back, with Curtis Woods moving into the middle and Eoin Kane filling in in an unfamiliar right-back role.

Limavady gradually began to make their numerical advantage tell, by getting more of grip on possession of the ball. In the 33rd minute they hit the front. A good ball played forward set Hume free and he made no mistake, slotting past the advancing Kirk from the edge of the box.

The home side now had their tails up and on 35 minutes they came close to doubling their lead, when the dangerous Hume did well to make space for a shot inside the box, but his effort from 12 yards was fired low just wide of the far post.

On 43 minutes Limavady struck what looked to be the killer blow, when a neat passing move ended with the ball being played across to Hume just inside the box and he made no mistake with a first-time finish that gave Taylor Kirk no chance. There wouldn't have been too much optimism amongst the travelling support going into the second half, but the Comrades players had other ideas. Right from the restart they looked up for the challenge. Four minutes in, they came close to reducing the deficit, when a corner played in by Samuel McIlveen found the head of Curtis Woods, whose effort from inside the 6-yard box came back off the crossbar. Two minutes later the visitors did get on the scoresheet. A free-kick was won 25 yards from goal in a central position. Samuel McIlveen stepped up to take it and his sweetly struck effort took a slight deflection, with the ball hitting the underside of the angle of bar and post and coming back down over the line.

Comrades continued to pour forward, despite playing with ten men. In the 55th minute they worked the ball well inside the box and Gary Brown got in an effort from 13 yards which forced a good save from Wells. From the resulting corner Limavady's Friars was penalised for a handball, Joe Tully stepped up to take the spot-kick, calmly converting, despite the 'keeper going the right way.

The visitors were now buoyant and in the 62nd minute they came close to taking the lead, when Joe Tully tried an effort from 30 yards, which caught the 'keeper off his line, but the ball went narrowly over the bar.

Limavady cleared their heads for a spell and threatened to regain the lead. In the 66th minute Hume played in McCarron, who looked set to score, only to be denied by Kirk, who had done well to block having rushed off his line. Then, on 68 minutes Duffy struck the crossbar with a shot from 20 yards.

A minute later the home side were awarded a penalty for a handball inside the box. Hume stepped up to take it, but saw his effort touched onto the post by Taylor Kirk. The stand-in 'keeper was the hero, but two minutes later he failed to hold onto a ball played into the near post and it squirmed out of his grasp to the feet of Duffy, who had the simple task of tapping in from close range.

Comrades were not downcast and continued to press forward. This was always likely to leave them exposed at the other end and on 86 minutes McCarron had a great chance to seal the points, only to see his effort from inside the box kept out by the leg of Kirk, who spread himself well.

Time was running out for the valiant visitors, but they never gave up and were rewarded in the 88th minute with a deserved equaliser. Adam Gray made enough space in a crowded box to get in a shot from 15 yards, which Wells was able to get his hand to, but couldn't prevent the ball going in, just inside the post. This secured a point for Comrades, which had looked very unlikely at half-time.