



Ballyclare Comrades 1-4 Loughgall

Saturday 23rd March 2019 – Bluefin Sport Championship

Match Sponsor: Montgomery Distribution

Match Sponsor: Brackenwood Property & Estate Management

Ball Sponsor: Paddy Kelly

Comrades team (4-2-3-1)

1. Jack Hazard
15. Andy Long
2. Curtis Woods
5. Adam Wright 🇮🇪 (55')
3. Christopher Crane
10. Eoin Kane
8. JB Dobbin 🇮🇪 (55')
17. Thomas Robinson
24. Gary Donnelly 🇮🇪 (55')
11. Adam Gray
16. Jamie Willighan 🇮🇪 (7')

Substitutes:

18. Chris Getty
6. Michael McQuitty 🇮🇪 (55')
20. Taylor Kirk
4. Samuel McIlveen 🇮🇪 (55')
14. Joe Tully 🇮🇪 (55')

Loughgall: Buchanan, McVeigh, Rea, Upton, D McCullough, Neill, McConnell, Ferguson, Hoey, Gibson, Campbell. Subs: Smith, Stewart, S McCullough, Ferris.

Comrades suffered a chastening afternoon and ended up well beaten by Loughgall at Dixon Park.

Manager Stephen Hughes made a couple of changes to his starting line-up, with Christopher Crane returning from suspension and Jamie Willighan coming in up front. Chris Getty and Joe Tully dropped to the bench.

There was little sign of what was to come when the home side took the lead in the 7th minute. Gary Donnelly did very well to bring the ball down and then trick his way into the area, where he was brought down and a penalty awarded. Jamie Willighan stepped up and calmly slotted the ball home from the spot.

Comrades' joy was however short-lived. Three minutes later, the visitors were back on level terms, their first serious attack ending with Jamie Rea slamming the ball high into the net from 13 yards.

A minute later, Loughgall had the lead. Comrades were caught out on the left side of the box and from 14 yards out Peter Campbell fired in a shot which somehow squeezed in at the near post.

The home side's early promise had now dissipated and Loughgall looked the more dangerous side. However, Comrades might have equalised on 32 minutes, when Adam Gray did very well to get to the by-line at the post, but his attempt to squeeze the ball in from a very tight angle was blocked for a corner, when a pass to the unmarked Jamie Willighan may have been a better option. From the resulting corner, Andy Long saw his looping header from 9 yards touched onto the bar by 'keeper Buchanan.

Aside from this however Loughgall looked more likely to score again and it was no surprise when they added to their lead in the 41st minute, when Jordan Gibson headed in at the near post from a corner.

Comrades came out with a lot to do in the second half and on 49 minutes they came close to reducing the deficit, when a fine strike from Eoin Kane, hit from 20 yards out, forced a very good save from Buchanan.

Comrades made a triple substitution on 55 minutes to try to change things and there was some improvement. On 69 minutes, one of the introduced players, Joe Tully, saw a fine overhead effort from 11 yards turned wide by the 'keeper. From the corner Jamie Willighan got his head to the ball at the edge of the 6-yard box. His effort came back off the post and across the line, but didn't go in.

Then, on 71 minutes, Tully was again in the action as he got behind the visitors' defence, only to see his effort from 8 yards blocked by the impressive Buchanan.

As the game entered its final stages the some of the fight looked to have gone from the home side and it was Loughgall who dominated. On 79 minutes Ferris' shot from 12 yards forced a good save from Jack Hazard, Then, from the resulting corner, Smith's header from 10 yards was headed off the line by Andy Long.

In the 82nd minute, Hazard again had to make a good save, this time from a well-struck Campbell free-kick, hit from 20 yards out. However, there was nothing Hazard could do to prevent Loughgall getting a fourth goal in the 87th minute, when after he had done well to block a Smith strike, Nathaniel Ferris was there to knock home the loose ball from close range.