



Ballyclare Comrades 3-1 Newington YC (after extra-time)

Tuesday 18th September 2018 – Toals County Antrim Shield (First Round)

Ballyclare Comrades team (4-4-2)

1. Paddy Flood
20. Taylor Kirk 🚩 (59')
6. Michael McQuitty
23. Dean Youle
3. Christopher Crane
21. Scott Gault 🚩 (59')
4. Samuel McIlveen 🚩 (53')
12. Jason Johnston
11. Adam Gray 🚩 (70')
14. Joe Tully 🚩 (103') 🚩 (110+2')
16. Jamie Willighan 🚩 (3')

Substitutes:

2. Curtis Woods 🟢 (59')
5. Adam Wright
10. Eoin Kane 🟢 (70')
17. Thomas Robinson 🟢 (59')
7. Joe McWilliams

Newington YC: Caughwell, McFall, R Gowdy, Pierce, Bradley, McDonnell, Burns, Donnelly, Doyle, Derry, Scollay. Subs: Hughes, J Gowdy, Logan, Gilgunn, Carson.

Comrades progressed to the next round of the Toals County Antrim Shield, but only after being pushed all the way by Newington YC under the lights at Dixon Park. Only four players who started the Championship game at Portadown at the weekend were in the starting line-up for this match, with the opportunity taken to give games to a number of players with not many minutes under their belt so far this season. Taylor Kirk and Scott Gault made their competitive debuts for the club. Things could hardly have started better Comrades as they hit the front inside three minutes. Adam Gray's cross into the box was not cleared and the ball fell to Jamie Willighan, who made no mistake from 7 yards. If any home supporters thought this game was now going to be a cakewalk, their view was soon changed, as Newington quickly responded, coming close on in the 6th minute, when Donnelly got on the end of a cross into the box, volleying against the bar from 8 yards, with 'keeper Paddy Flood maybe getting a touch.

The visitors were playing with confidence and had plenty of the game, looking particularly lively going forward. On a number of occasions the Comrades defence was stretched to keep them at bay.

At the other end, the home side huffed and puffed, but lacked the final ball to create much in the way of a threat. However, on 30 minutes, they came close. Good work by Scott Gault set up a chance for Jamie Willighan to shoot from 11 yards, but his effort came back off the base of the far post.

A minute later, Paddy Flood, making his first appearance of the season, had to be alert to keep out an effort from Burns from just outside the corner of the 6 yard box. In the 42nd minute Michael McQuitty came close with a glancing header from 5 yards, after a free-kick was played into the box.

Comrades opened the second half building some attacking momentum, In the 51st minute Adam Gray forced a good save from Caughwell, who did well to block a well-struck shot from 16 yards. Then, in the 58th minute, Jamie Willighan ran across the box, taking the ball past the 'keeper, but off balance he couldn't turn the ball into the unguarded net.

All the while, Newington had continued to look dangerous and had plenty of possession. On the hour they struck what was a deserved equaliser, when Donnelly got on the end of ball played into the box to find the net from 8 yards.

As the half progressed play continued to be evenly balanced, with Newington looking as likely to score again as the home team.

Comrades were finding the visitors' defence hard to crack, but on 75 minutes good work by Eoin Kane allowed Jamie Willighan to get in a shot from just inside the box and Caughwell had to grab the ball under the bar.

A minute into injury-time Comrades had a decent chance to avoid extra-time, when Jason Johnston set up Willighan for a strike from a good position 11 yards from goal, but his effort went over the bar.

The game went to extra-time of two periods of ten minutes each. The only real chance of the first of these came ten minutes in when Thomas Robinson hit a good strike from the edge of the box, which Caughwell had to save low just inside the post.

Three minutes into the second period of extra-time Comrades grabbed the vital goal. Thomas Robinson did very well to play the ball in from the right side of the box and find Joe Tully, who was there to tap in from close range.

Newington then threw everything forward, attempting to get the equaliser in the limited time available. As is often the case in these circumstances, they were vulnerable to a breakaway. Two minutes into injury-time, with almost the last kick of the game, Joe Tully slotted the ball past the 'keeper, after running clear from the halfway line.