



## Ballyclare Comrades 2-2 PSNI

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2018 – Bluefin Sport Championship

Match Sponsor: Agnew, Mitchell & Cairns Accountants, Ballyclare

Ball Sponsor: Ross's Joint, Rashee Road, Ballyclare

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

1. Paddy Flood
2. Curtis Woods
5. Adam Wright
23. Dean Youle
22. Gary Brown 🟡 (44') 🔴 (73')
4. Samuel McIlveen
8. JB Dobbin
3. Christopher Crane
11. Adam Gray ⚪ (58')
14. Joe Tully 🟡 (68') 🔴 (74')
16. Jamie Willighan 🟡 (84') 🔴 (87')

### Substitutes:

20. Taylor Kirk
10. Eoin Kane 🟢 (87')
17. Thomas Robinson 🟢 (73')
24. Gary Donnelly
7. Joe McWilliams

**PSNI:** Williamson, Ferguson, Riddle, Crawford, Simpson, McNeill, D Wilson, J Wilson, Adamczyk, Cochrane, Wright. Subs: Tumelty, McCune, Hamilton, Adair, Waide.

Comrades top-six hopes took a serious blow when they squandered a two-goal lead late on at home to PSNI, to only gain a point from the game.

Manager Stephen Hughes was able to welcome back central defender Dean Youle after a lengthy suspension and he came straight back into the team. Striker Chris Trussell was unavailable, and Joe Tully came in to replace him.

The first threat in the game came from the home side. In the 9<sup>th</sup> minute, Jamie Willighan played a teasing ball into the 6-yard box, which looked set to be converted by Joe Tully, but he was denied by excellent defending from Simpson, who touched the ball away from him at the last second.

At the other end the visitors came close in the 18<sup>th</sup> minute, when a good break forward ended with James Wright getting in on the left side of the box, but 'keeper Paddy Flood was alert and came out to block.

The opening goal came in the 22<sup>nd</sup> minute. Gary Brown played in a dangerously flighted corner and, in attempting to get to the ball, 'keeper Williamson punched the ball into his own net.

The Police reacted well to this setback and had the better of the rest of the first half, with chances to level the scores.

In the 26<sup>th</sup> minute a free-kick played into the box broke to Cochrane, whose effort from 10 yards was kept out by a good save from Paddy Flood. Then, on 35 minutes a low ball in from the left set up McNeill for a chance from the edge of the box, but he didn't catch his effort correctly and Flood was able to save easily.

The home side were perhaps fortunate to go in at half-time with the lead, but they stepped things up at the start of the second half.

On 52 minutes Jamie Willighan broke through into the box, but rather than shooting from a good position he tried to set up Adam Gray and a defender was able to intercept.

Six minutes later Comrades doubled their lead. Gary Brown's ball across the box was cleverly left by Jamie Willighan, allowing it to find Adam Gray, who then calmly placed the ball past Williamson from 13 yards.

The home side were now in control and looked capable of adding to their advantage.

In the 63<sup>rd</sup> minute Jamie Willighan shot just over from the edge of the box. Then, a minute later, Christopher Crane played a great ball across the 6-yard box, but the arriving Joe Tully couldn't get enough on it to finish the chance.

The pivotal incident of the game came in the 74<sup>th</sup> minute. Adam Gray bamboozled a defender on the left side of the box and played the ball into the 6-yard box, where Joe Tully slammed it against the bar from close range. The young striker, frustrated at his miss, kicked out and connected with the 'keeper, earning himself a second yellow card and reducing his team to ten men.

The Police soon took advantage of their numerical advantage and on 79 minutes they reduced the deficit, when Tony Tumelty got free into the box on the left and slid the ball inside the far post from 11 yards.

The visitors now piled on the pressure, attempting to get an equaliser, but it looked as if Comrades were going to hold out. However, with what was virtually the last action of the game, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> minute of injury-time, the Police snatched a point. The ball was played into the box from the left and Kyle Crawford got his head to it from 8 yards, sending it looping into the top corner of the net.