



Portadown 3-1 Ballyclare Comrades

Saturday 15th September 2018 – Bluefin Sport Championship

Ballyclare Comrades team (4-4-2)

- 19. Kyle Rowe
- 2. Curtis Woods
- 18. Adam Wright  (76')
- 23. Dean Youle
- 11. Adam Gray
- 7. Joe McWilliams  (51')
- 10. Eoin Kane
- 8. JB Dobbin  (30')
- 17. Thomas Robinson
- 12. Jason Johnston
- 16. Jamie Willighan  (69')

Substitutes:

- 3. Christopher Crane  (51')
- 6. Michael McQuitty
- 4. Samuel McIlveen  (30')
- 18. Gary Donnelly
- 14. Joe Tully  (69')

Portadown: Dunne, Hall, Flynn, Larkin, Thompson, Lavery, Kilmartin, Mackle, Salley, Braniff, Murray. Subs: Storey, Carmichael, Carson, Wilson, Douglas.

Comrades suffered their first defeat of the Championship campaign when they fell to defeat at Portadown.

Unsurprisingly, after the excellent display in the win over Ballinamallard, the starting line-up remained unchanged. However, the side failed to produce anywhere near the same level of performance in what was an off day.

The early signs for the visitors were reasonably good as they made a bright start. However, there was little to trouble either 'keeper in the opening stages of the game.

Portadown were just beginning to build some momentum when they hit the front in the 23rd minute. Braniff played in a free-kick from just inside the Comrades half and Salley got on the end of it to head past 'keeper Rowe from 6 yards.

The rest of the half was rather scrappy. There was little in the way of goalmouth action. However, in the 34th minute, Comrades tested the home 'keeper for the first time, when a good link up in the box between Eoin Kane and Jamie Willighan ended

with Kane getting in an effort from a tight angle 5 yards out, which Dunne had to turn wide of the post.

Comrades went in at half-time one goal behind, but still well in the game. However, they failed to show up in the second half, as Portadown came out looking much the hungrier side.

The home side pressed from the restart and soon grabbed a second goal. On 49 minutes Lavery got free just outside the 6-yard box and managed to poke an effort inside the near post from a tight angle.

Five minutes later Portadown scored again. Salley put a great low ball into the 6-yard box from the right and Murray was there to half-volley in from close range.

The home side continued to look capable of adding more goals. On 58 minutes, the dangerous Salley got in a shot from an angle 10 yards out, but Kyle Rowe was able to make a save.

Comrades hadn't appeared capable of any sort of comeback. However, on 68 minutes, they were given an unexpected lifeline. A hopeful ball played into the box by Thomas Robinson was misjudged by defender Hall, who headed into his own net. This bit of good fortune did not spark any serious recovery from the visitors and Portadown continued to look the more like side to score. In the 81st minute Douglas muscled his way through to get in an effort from 13 yards, which came back off the far post. Then, three minutes into injury-time, Murray broke through on goal, after taking advantage of defensive uncertainty, before blasting over from a good position 14 yards out.