



Ballyclare Comrades 1-1 Loughgall

Saturday 22nd February 2020 – Bluefin NIFL Championship

Match Sponsor: G-Mac Tyres, Larne

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

1. Ben McCauley
2. Curtis Woods
6. Adam McCart
15. Jordan Malone
3. Lee McCune 🟡 (90+2')
8. JB Dobbin
17. Tom Mathieson
4. Samuel McIlveen 🔴 (90')
11. Ciaran Dobbin 🔴 (81')
21. Adam Gray 🔴 (76')
24. Gary Donnelly ⚫ (23')

Substitutes:

18. Kevin Hagan
12. Kurt Cooper
22. Oisin Barr 🟢 (90')
7. Thomas Robinson 🟢 (81')
16. Nathan O'Neill 🟢 (76')

Loughgall: Turker, Kerr, Rea, Murdock, Lyttle, Ferguson, Malone, McCullough, Hunter, Campbell, Hoey. Subs: Gibson, McConnell, Neill, Copeland, Scott.

In a game played in wet and windy conditions on a heavy pitch, Comrades and Loughgall managed to serve up an entertaining draw.

Without a recognised striker in the absence of Fra Nolan, home manager Paul Harbinson went with Gary Donnelly up front, whilst JB Dobbin returned to the starting line-up.

The in-form visitors playing with the wind at their backs in the first half, hit the front early on. In the 5th minute a ball played out from the back by Curtis Woods only

found an opposition player and it was fed to Campbell on the left, who then played in a perfect cross for Hunter to head home from 6 yards.

The visitors now pressed to add to their advantage and Comrades had to defend resolutely to keep them at bay.

The home side then began to work their way into the game. In the 14th minute a free kick played into the box broke to Tom Mathieson who shot from 14 yards, but his effort was turned wide by Turker. Then, two minutes later, a cross played in by Ciaran Dobbin from the just outside the box deceived the 'keeper and struck the crossbar.

On 23 minutes Comrades were back on level terms. A free kick floated into the box found Gary Donnelly in space and he made no mistake, slotting the ball in from 8 yards.

As the wind strengthened the hosts began to struggle to get the ball out of their own half, but their defence held firm, not allowing Loughgall any real chances for the rest of the half. In fact, the best chance before the break came at the other end, when on 43 minutes a great through ball from Samuel McIlveen set Tom Mathieson free. He advanced towards goal and drilled in a shot from 16 yards only to be denied by a great save from Turker who managed to tip the ball onto the bar.

The early part of the second half saw Comrades press with the wind now behind them. In the 48th minute a cross played in by JB Dobbin found the head of Tom Mathieson 10 yards out and his effort drifted just wide of the target. Then, on 53 minutes, Gary Donnelly slid the ball through to Adam Gray who ran into the box, but his resulting effort from 13 yards was too close to the 'keeper.

The wind then began to lessen in strength and with this Loughgall began to assert some control. On 65 minutes they had a great chance to regain the lead. Campbell played the ball into the 6-yard box from the left and Hunter looked to only have to turn the ball in from close range, but somehow he scooped it over the bar.

The visitors remained the more potent looking side for the remainder of the game, but the home defence dealt well the pressure put on them.

A minute into injury-time Loughgall were reduced to ten men, when McCullough was red carded after receiving a second yellow card after a crude foul on recently introduced substitute Oisin Barr. Despite their numerical disadvantage it was the visitors who were to have a great chance to snatch victory with the last kick of the game. Three minutes into added time the ball found Campbell in a great position 10 yards from goal and he looked set to score, only to be denied by a vital save from Ben McCauley.