



Ballinamallard United 5-0 Ballyclare Comrades

Saturday 24th August 2019 – Bluefin NIFL Championship

Ballyclare Comrades team (4-5-1)

1. Tom Hegan
2. Curtis Woods ■ (52')
23. Jonathon Doey
6. Michael McQuitty
3. Lee McCune
22. Matthew Henry
10. Jake McNeill ↘ (56')
4. Samuel McIlveen ↘ (75')
24. Gary Donnelly
11. Ciaran Dobbin
14. Joe Tully ↘ (64')

Substitutes:

18. Kevin Hagan
8. JB Dobbin ↗ (56')
15. Jordan Malone ↗ (75')
7. Thomas Robinson
16. Jamie Willighan ↗ (64')

Ballinamallard United: Connolly, McEvoy, Taheny, Smyth, McManus, Campbell, McIlwaine, Kelly, Cashel. O'Reilly. Morris. Subs: McCann, Arkinson, McCartney, Warrington, Currie.

Comrades's rollercoaster start to the season hit a major dip with a heavy defeat at Ballinamallard, in a game where they looked well in contention in the first half. Manager Stephen Hughes was forced to make some changes for this match. With Ben McCauley injured, Fra Nolan unavailable and Kyle Beggs departed for Glenavon, in came Tom Hegan, Lee McCune and Ciaran Dobbin. Joe Tully replaced Jamie Willighan up front.

The game started with either side coming close inside the first two minutes. First, from a corner, Jonathon Doey saw a goalbound header cleared off the line by McManus. Then, at the other end, Smyth's header was kept out by a saw low inside his post by Tom Hegan.

Both sides looked dangerous going forward and a goal looked inevitable. When it came, it was the home side who got it in the 18th minute, McEvoy slamming the ball home through the crowded box after a lay off from Campbell.

On 20 minutes Comrades had a strike on goal, when Matty Henry unleashed a powerful shot from just outside the angle of the box, which strung the hands of 'keeper Connolly, forcing him to save the second attempt.

A minute later, Ciaran Dobbin broke the offside trap and looked set to score, but over elaborated allowing blocks from defenders Morris and O'Reilly to deny him. The visitors then should have been level on 23 minutes, when Joe Tully got on the end of a ball played into the box, but his toe-poked effort from 8 yards went the wrong side of the post.

At the other end the hosts still looked dangerous and in the 29th minute O'Reilly sent a fine dipping effort inches over the bar from just outside the box. Then, three minutes later, a ball over the top from Taheny set McIlwaine free and Tom Hegan had to produced a good block at his near post.

The action continued in the 33rd minute. Curtis Woods got forward and sent a teasing ball across in across the 6-yard box, where Joe Tully slid in to send an effort narrowly wide.

Comrades went in at half-time one down, but their performance gave hope for the second half. However they were to be made to pay for their earlier missed chances. Mallards struck again six mintes after the restart. Cashel got free on the left and sent a low ball into the box, which was duly dispatched from 6 yards by lethal striker Campbell.

A minute later Comrades had a chance to reduce the deficit when Ciaran Dobbi fired in a shot from 16 yards after a run across the box. However Connolly made a good save.

Moments later, the pivotal moment of the game saw the visitors reduced to ten men, when a clash on the wing saw Curtis Woods react by raising his hands to an opponents face and the referee sent him off.

The home side were now in complete control. In the 59th minute they looked like adding to their lead, when Campbell took the ball around the 'keeper, but he was denied by a fine covering block from Jonathon Doey.

Then, on 67 minutes, McCartney got in a fierce shot to the near post, which Tom Hegan did well to keep out and then grab the ball at the second attempt with Campbell ready to pounce.

It wasn't long however before Mallards had their third goal. On 70 minutes, Campell deftly redirected a ball played in from a cross and sent it over Tom Hegan's head from the edge of the box.

The game was now lost for Comrades, but they still tried to get some consolation. On 76 minutes newly introduced substitute Jordan Malone did well to beat a man on the right and then cut inside to send in a low shot from 16 yards which forced Connolly to save low inside his post.

Seconds later however it was 4-0, with McIlwaine firing a shot into the back of the net from 14 yards.

On 78 minutes Comrades forced a save from Connolly after Jonathon Doey got in a header from a Ciaran Dobbin cross. However, two minutes later, the hosts got their

fifth goal, with Campbell finishing inside the far post after getting on the end of a ball in from Currie.

Three minutes into injury-time, Comrades were fortunate not to concede again when a poor clearance from Hegan landed at the feet of Currie. He attempted to send the ball back over the 'keeper from just outside the box, but his effort went wide of the target.