



## Ballyclare Comrades 1-2 PSNI

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2019 – Bluefin NIFL Championship

**Match Sponsor: Anonymous**

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

1. Ben McCauley
8. JB Dobbin
6. Michael McQuitty
20. Adam McCart
21. Adam Gray
22. Matthew Henry 📉 (68')
24. Gary Donnelly 📉 (30')
15. Jordan Malone 📉 (85')
11. Ciaran Dobbin
14. Joe Tully 📉 (74')
9. Fra Nolan

### Substitutes:

19. Tom Hegan
23. Jonathon Doey
4. Samuel McIlveen 📈 (68')
7. Thomas Robinson 📈 (85')
26. Lukasz Adamczyk 📈 (74')

**PSNI:** Di Giorgio, MacLeod, Whittle, Harland, Turk, Hutchinson, O'Neill. McAlister, Tumelty, Cabraleay, Anderson. Subs: Green, Best, Gauthier, Martyn, Moody.

Comrades poor run of results continued with a disappointing defeat at home to PSNI.

In Paul Harbinson's first game as manager he made a number of changes to the starting line-up, bringing in fit again 'keeper Ben McCauley. as well as Adam McCart, newly returned Adam Gray, JB Dobbin and Fra Nolan.

The home side started well and looked dangerous going forward. In the 6<sup>th</sup> minute in-form striker Joe Tully forced a good save from 'keeper Di Giorgio with a well struck free-kick from just outside the box.

At the other end, on 9 minutes, the ball was slipped through to Cabraley in the box, but Ben McCauley was there to make a good block to deny the PSNI striker.

Comradees continued to have most of the play and in the 11<sup>th</sup> minute they were unfortunate not to take the lead when Joe Tully hit a great free-kick effort from 30 yards, which cannoned off the crossbar, Then, a minute later, Tully was again in the centre of the action, this time running onto a long ball played forward by Michael McQuitty and getting in a shot from 15 yards. However, the effort was too close to the 'keeper who was able to save.

The home side kept the pressure on and on 16 minutes the ball wasn't gathered by the 'keeper from a Gary Donnelly corner and a scramble ensued, which saw Michael McQuitty get in a shot which was blocked and the ball was eventually hacked clear. Very much against the run of play, on 19 minutes, PSNI grabbed the lead. The ball was played to Cabraley in the box and he showed great footwork to make space for a shot from 13 yards which found the bottom corner of the net.

Comrades had a chance of a quick equaliser two minutes later when a free-kick played into the box was only punched towards Joe Tully by the 'keeper, but his resulting first-time effort was stabbed just wide from near the penalty spot.

On 23 minutes the home side defensive fraility was exposed again when the visitors doubled their lead. A corner was played in to the near post, where Whittle was there to nod in rather too easily from inside the 6-yard box.

In the 30<sup>th</sup> minute Comrades managed to reduce the deficit when Gary Donnelly got to a ball played into the box by JB Dobbin before the 'keeper, rounded him and calmly slotted the ball into the unguarded net from a tight margin.

This was the last significant action of a first half where Comrades were on the front foot for most of the time, but still went in to the break behind.

The first action of the second half saw PSNI come close on 50 minutes when O'Neill did well to make space for a shot from 25 yards and Ben McCauley had to dive to acrobatically tip the ball over the bar.

In the 54<sup>th</sup> minute the home side threatened when a ball played deep to the back post by Matthew Henry saw Fra Nolan sliding in to connect, but his effort flashed wide of the target.

Comrades continued to press for the equaliser, with Ciaran Dobbin a particular threat on the right. In the 62<sup>nd</sup> minute he received a long diagonal ball on the wing, cut inside and fired in a shot from 14 yards, only to be denied by a fine save from Di Giorgio who spread himself well to block.

As the half progressed the home side's attacking threat failed to translate into chances and they became increasingly frustrated. Indeed, on 89 minutes, PSNI might have increased their lead but for a good save by Ben McCauley from a well struck Anderson free-kick.

The last action of the game, five minutes into injury-time saw the home side with a chance to snatch a late point. Substitute Lukasz Adamczyk did well to set up a chance for Fra Nolan to shoot from 8 yards, but his effort was a tame one and the 'keeper saved comfortably.