



H&W Welders 3-0 Ballyclare Comrades

Saturday 21st December 2019 – Bluefin NIFL Championship

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

1. Ben McCauley
22. Matthew Henry 🏴 (70')
23. Jonathon Doey
15. Jordan Malone
3. Lee McCune
4. Samuel McIlveen 🟡 (68')
7. Thomas Robinson
24. Gary Donnelly 🏴 (55')
10. Jake McNeill
21. Adam Gray
14. Joe Tully 🏴 (70')

Substitutes:

19. Tom Hegan
18. Kevin Hagan
8. JB Dobbin 🟢 (55')
11. Ciaran Dobbin 🟢 (70')
26. Lukasz Adamczyk 🟢 (70')

H&W Welders: Miskelly, McMurtry, Nelson, Harrison, McMurray, Deans, Graham, Davidson, Arthurs, Gwiazda, Ferguson. Subs: Smith, Dornan, Wright, Curran, Grierson.

Comrades produced a disappointing display to fall to defeat at H&W Welders. Manager Paul Harbinson made some changes to the side which had won at PSNI the previous Saturday. With Curtis Woods unavailable, Matthew Henry returned to the starting line-up after a period out with injury. Jonathon Doey also returned from injury to replace Adam McCart, whilst Thomas Robinson was preferred to Ciaran Dobbin, who dropped to the bench.

The first ten minutes of the match belonged to the visitors who looked a real threat. In the 7th minute Thomas Robinson produced a run in from the wing before firing in a low shot from 20 yards which forced a scrambling save from Miskelly.

A minute later Adam Gray ran at the home defence and made space for a shot from just inside the box, but the 'keeper was well placed to save.

The hosts reacted to Comrades' dominance of the opening minutes of the game with a tactical change and they soon began to come much more into the game. As the half progressed the visitors struggled to pose the threat they had earlier and Welders began to look the more likely side to score.

In the 32nd minute Ferguson beat the Comrades offside trap and attempted a lob over the advancing 'keeper from the edge of the box, but his effort drifted just wide of the target. Then a minute later Ben McCauley had to be alert to save from a Gwiazda effort struck from the edge of the box.

On 38 minutes the hosts hit the front. A great cross in from the left found the head of Ferguson and he sent a bullet header into the net from 8 yards.

Welders continue to control the remaining minutes of the half and on 42 minutes Ben McCauley was called into action to make a save from a Davidson free-kick struck from 27 yards.

The second half opened in terrible fashion for Comrades when they conceded a second goal inside the first minute. A cross in from the right saw Arthurs leap highest 6 yards out to power an unstoppable header into the net.

Welders continued to dominate and on 50 minutes they came close when Ferguson controlled the ball at the edge of the box and turned before striking a shot low just wide of the post.

Comrades had a rare chance in the 53rd minute and were unlucky not to pull a goal back when a corner played in by Gary Donnelly saw the ball glanced on by the head of Adam Gray and onto the inside of the post, only to come back out and be cleared to safety.

Any hopes of a comeback were virtually ended on the hour. Comrades gave the ball away cheaply in their own half and it was played forward quickly to Ferguson who took it down beautifully before clinically finishing from 16 yards.

The visitors could do little to get back into the game, although they continue to try, and the remaining half hour saw Welders remain in control, seeing out a comfortable victory.