

Ballyclare Comrades 4(1) v Limavady United 1(1)

Bluefin Sports Championship, Saturday 9th February, Dixon Park.

Limavady United went down to another heavy defeat on Saturday, but the score was harsh on the Roesiders, who competed well in the first half, but familiar defensive failings gifted the hosts the goals which keep them bottom of the table with games running out. Yet it was United who took an early lead, going ahead in the second minute. A corner on the right cleared all the defenders and found McCarron at the back post who stabbed the ball home from close range.

Sadly for the visitors, they were only able to hold the lead for five minutes, as Adam Wright was able to lope forward as United's defence backed off, and he had time to calibrate his sights before firing in to the top corner from twenty yards. Some allowance can be made, as the Roesiders' makeshift defence lacked an experienced centre half, but the hosts were allowed time and space to make the chance. And defensive frailties were on show nine minutes later, as Comrades passed the ball through the midfield before Wells dashed out smartly to block Dobbin capitalising on Robinson's pass.

United were still capable of threatening, and thought they had retaken the lead a minute later, as McCarron tapped in from three yards out, but the offside flag cut short his celebrations. On 23 minutes, an incisive United attack needed a brilliant covering tackle to stop McCarron from bursting through on goal. At the other end, Donnelly saw his deflected effort go narrowly wide two minutes later.

The rest of the half was an even affair, with United shading it on chances created. McCarron drove through the host's defence on 36 minutes but failed to trouble Hazzard's goal. In the final minute of the half, Duffy saw his shot blocked inside the box, as United pressed strongly for the lead. At the break, Sean Friars would have been the happier of the two managers.

The pattern of the game followed the same pattern after the break, and, ten minutes in, McCallion flashed a long range effort narrowly wide. A flashpoint on the hour saw a full scale melee, which ended in a booking for each side. Comrades then hit the front in the 63rd minute, as Donnelly collected a long ball, and- spotting Wells off his line- he lofted the ball over the keeper into the net. Donnelly had a chance to score again a minute later, collecting the ball on the edge of the box, but coming up against Wells, who saved well.

On 72 minutes Donnelly set up Gray for a great chance, but he fired over from ten yards. Three minutes later United's Gary McFadden had a shot from distance, but Hazzard's saved well. United claims for a penalty on 77 minutes, but were awarded a free kick in the edge of the box, which was cleared with some difficulty as United's players strove for the equaliser.

The game turned in 82 minutes, as the recently introduced substitute Trussell was perfectly placed to turn home the ball after McIlveen's shot was parried into his path by Wells. The final twist was a fourth goal in injury time, as Wells' mis-kicked clearance fell to McIlveen for an easy goal.

Ballyclare Comrades: Jack Hazzard, Curtis Woods, Christopher Crane, Samuel McIlveen, Adam Wright (Michael McQuitty 66), John Dobbin (c.), Adam Gray, Jamie Willighan, Thomas Robinson (Christopher Trussell 80), Dean Youle, Gary Donnelly (Andrew Long 84)

Substitutes not used: Joseph Tully, Christopher Getty

Cautioned: Wright (60), Willighan (70)

Limavady United: Paul Wells, Aidan McCauley, Gareth McFadden, Brian McClean (Ryan Devine 73), Nathan Harkin, Caoimhin McCallion, Ryan Logue (Alex Pomeroy 63), Gary McFadden(c.), Sean McCarron, Stephen Duffy (Ryan McCreadie 79), Ryan Doherty

Substitute not used: Connor Brown.

Cautioned: Gareth McFadden (60)

Referee: Mr. Neil Robinson

Roesider Man of the match: Sean McCarron