

# Limavady United 0(0) v. Institute 0(0) AET

## Limavady United win 3-1 on penalties

Eventsec North West Senior Cup Final, The Showgrounds.

Limavady United finally had something to smile about as they won the Senior Cup for the tenth time in dramatic fashion, as goalkeeper Connor Brown stepped up to convert the crucial penalty to give his side a 3-1 win after 120 minutes of honest endeavour but few chances. But United will care not one jot that this was an eminently forgettable final, and instead focus on the fact that their threadbare squad won the cup against all the odds. Remarkably, they finished with a 39 year old- the oldest player to win a medal for the club, and two seventeen year old debutants, who may well be the youngest.

Playing in a strong and blustery wind, both sides nevertheless managed to play constructive football. United's makeshift side was certainly not overawed by a strong Stute side, and coped well with their rivals. In the 14th minute, McCready found the side netting, and two minutes later United were presented with a glorious chance, as Kelly stumbled over the ball and Pomeroy, following in, deflected the ball just wide of the post. United's midfield, so often overrun this season, was as effective as it has been all season, with Devine and McCauley both nipping at the heels of their opponents.

On 24 minutes, Jake Morrow fired a free kick in a dangerous position high over the bar from twenty yards out. The next chance, in what was in truth a fairly mediocre half, did not arrive until the 40th minute, when McCready's long range daisy cutter from outside the box was saved by Brown at full stretch. At the break, it was hard to pick a winner.

After the restart, both teams stepped up their intensity, as the pitch held up well under a leaden sky, with the teams stretching the play. Ryan Doherty had a good chance on 48 minutes, but he rushed his chance and fired wide. On 55 minutes, the industrious Pomeroy cut in from the left at the by line, but as he tried to shoot in from an acute angle the ball was deflected behind. Shortly afterwards, Jake Morrow's deflected effort spun high before falling on to the crossbar.

United's next chance was a 69th minute Devine volley which sailed over the bar, and ten minutes later Gary McFadden picked up a loose clearance from Kelly, well out of his goal, and tried an audacious chip from distance, but was off target. With two minutes left, Doherty had a shot, but it went straight to Kelly, and in the last minute McCready went down in the box, and his incredulity when no penalty was awarded earned him a caution for his protests.

Extra time was a predictably cagey affair, with few chances. McBride had a volley that went narrowly wide on 105 minutes, and in the 118th minute United won a free kick in a dangerous position outside the box, but although Doherty skilfully beat the wall, he could not bend the ball into the net. That was the last chance of open play, but with penalties beckoning, United had already achieved a moral victory by going toe-to-toe with their exalted opponents, and - to their great credit -probably just edging the balance of play.

In the gathering gloom, the penalties began with both sides missing their opener, through Doherty and Dean Curry-each seeing his effort saved by the keeper, but then Friars and Dean Curry scored to leave the shoot out tied. Gareth McFadden put United ahead, but ex-Roesiders McCready and Brown both missed, as did McCauley. Needing one more score to win, United handed the ball to their keeper Connor Brown, and he made no mistake, blasting the ball home to give Sean Friars his first trophy as United manager. The big question is now, can his team push on and achieve Championship survival?

Limavady United: Connor Brown, Marcus O'Kane, Gareth McFadden, Emmet Friars, Hugh Carlin (c), Aidan McCauley, Gary McFadden (Jack Reid 124), Stephen Duffy (Finn Whiteside 75), Alex Pomeroy (Ryan McCreadie 99), Ryan Doherty.

Substitutes not used: Paul Wells, Oran Whiteside.

Cautioned: Gareth McFadden (8), Doherty (29), McCauley (93).

Institute: Ray Kelly, Dean Curry (c.), Dean Power (Jamie Dunne 55), Callum Moorehead (Stephen Curry 75), Jake Morrow, Aaron Jarvis, Gareth Browne, Jamie McNytre, Joe McCready, Thomas McBride (Ryan Morrow 105), Shaun Leppard

Substitutes not used: Colm McLaughlin, Emmet McGilloway.

Cautioned: McCready (90).

Referee: Mr. Gareth Stewart (Castledawson).

Roesiders Man of the match: Ryan Devine