

ELLERSLIE AFC - CLASSIC MATCH

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In their visit to Michaels Avenue on Sunday 6th July, with the memory of the 3-3 draw fought out their last year still strong, Feltonmix Metro out-gunned Ellerslie 3-1 proving to be too strong on the day. The game started at a fast pace with Feltonmix Metro enjoying the better of the early exchanges and Ellerslie resorting to break-away attacks. IN the twelfth minute, Stuart Roberts slipped the ball around the advancing 'keeper, who inevitably had to bring him down. Not the way the referee saw it. He amazingly waved play on seeing nothing wrong with the tackle.

Continuing to press forward, Sakdy Phommahaxay, Willie Thompson and Chris Walley produced fine moves and continually harried the Ellerslie defence. Thompson came close with a couple of shots, and Danny McHenry forced a fine save from the Ellerslie 'keeper.

Ellerslie were thriving on their break-aways, and forced Wayne Roach in goal to produce two successive fine saves, and it was from one of these moves that Rab McNeill, after thirty-two minutes, broke into the penalty area goalward bound. Unceremoniously dumped, the referee had no hesitation in awarding the penalty.. This was duly converted and Ellerslie were ahead, 1-0.

There was only ten minutes to go until the break when Kenny Harlock, who had been competing well in the midfield and had produced some fine shots, was involved in an awkward tackle and it was obvious from his reaction that it was serious. Harlock was assisted from the field, and it was later announced that had broken his leg. It was an unfortunate incident, but purely accidental, and I am sure everyone would like to wish Kenny a speedy recovery.

Sean Hird came on for Harlock, and with his first touch of the ball, he forced another excellent save from the Ellerslie 'keeper who by this time was proving to be having a great game, to the joy of the Ellerslie team and it's supporters and the frustration of the visitors.

Four minutes from the interval, Roberts broke down the right hand side, cut back into the area drawing both the goalkeeper and the left fullback, and attempted to chip the ball to McHenry who was waiting at the far post with an open goal.

Sensing the danger, the Ellerslie fullback quickly reacted and stuck his hand out to prevent the cross, but it drifted over to McHenry who still slotted the ball before the 'keeper could react.

Unfortunately for McHenry, the referee had already blown for the penalty.

The referee booked the player for hand-ball, but the player must have thanked his lucky stars when he realised that he was to stay on the field. Hird took the responsibility for the penalty and calmly slotted the ball past the 'keeper to tie the game up. Half time came and the score remained 1-1.

In the second half, the Metro team came at the Ellerslie team with renewed vigour, and laid seige to the Ellerslie goal. Thompson suddenly found plent of space out on the left, and Benny Hall seemed to have the run of the right hand side of the field, constantly taunting the opposition with his weaving runs.

Darren Jackson replaced Stuart Mair, who still was not quite right following the injury he sustained in

the previous game against East Coast Bays. Steve Goddard came on for Chris Walley, and the fresh legs seemed to raise the game a notch in favour of Metro. In a spate of ten minutes of furious football, Goddard, McHenery and Hall all came close.

Twenty minutes from time in yet another Feltonmix Metro attack, the ball rattled around in the Ellerslie penalty area like some bizarre pin-ball game, but it would not go in.

Moments later, the Ellerslie 'keeper was forced off his line to tidy up a through ball, but his momentum carried him out of the area. Hird's attempted chip bought a fingertip save. A Metro goal was destined to come.

And it did. Fifteen minutes from the end, a flowing move through the middle of the park saw Goddard supplying a precision pass to McHenery who finished the move in style, picking his spot, and calmly slotting home to give Metro the lead.

The third and final goal came after O'Mara had released Thompson out wide on the left. As Thompson approached the penalty area, he cut back in, and unleashed a terrific shot that saw the ball rocket into the back of the net. In all, the result needed, with the winning goals coming just as the Metro Spectators nails were down to the quick.