



Valley Rovers versus Ballymote Celtic

5th September 2013 Division 1 Match

It was a bright September evening out on the freshly lined and freshly mowed park Ailbhe in Geevagh where Valley Rovers under 14 boys lined up for their first match of the Season against Ballymote Celtic. Kickoff started at 7.05 and straight away Ballymote put Valley under pressure with a free kick that went over the Valley Rovers crossbar. Two great saves by Valley Rovers Sean Caulfield in the first ten minutes meant that Valley had their work cut out for them. TJ Davey, Adam Gaffney, and Daniel Devine from Valley Rovers had some great defending to do to keep Ballymote at bay.

Then after 11 minutes Dylan Gallagher scored the first Goal of the Season from a brilliant pass from Declan Cunnane to make it 1-0. Now with the advantage on their side... Valley had a few nice shots on goal and started to put Ballymote under pressure. After 21 min of play Dylan Gallagher fed a lovely ball to Declan Cunnane who put it in the back of the net to make it 2-0 to Valley Rovers.

The pressure continued and after 27 minutes Declan Cunnane again found the Ballymote keeper to deny them the elusive 3rd goal. But Valley Rovers had also to work hard to keep Ballymote from scoring and again TJ Davey , Daniel Devine, and Adam Gaffney cleared the ball to the relief of the Valley spectators. Karl Jennings, Captain of Valley Rovers had a great chance at one stage, but over the top bar of the Ballymote goal it went to nearly make it three up..

A quick Substitute change for Ballymote and back to play and almost immediately Karl Jennings scores a fantastic Goal over the head of the Ballymote keeper to make it 3-0 after 30 minutes of play. Then just as they thought it was all over.... after another 2 minutes, an unfortunate messy own Goal by Valley changes the score to 3-1. Half time and its all to play for.

Two substitute changes by Valley and its back to the game. With the Sun nearly down, Valley Rovers had the advantage with little or no glare as the second half started. Dylan Gallagher nearly scores as the ball just rolls wide one minute into the second half. But Ballymote fight on, and another save by Valley rover's goalie Sean Caulfield keeps them from the elusive second Goal. Valley Rovers Dylan Gallagher tries again and from a free kick goes wide. Another Great shot by Ballymote hits the outside of the net proving that both sides of the field are getting plenty of excitement. Again Karl Jennings comes back and just misses a great goal as the ball hits the Ballymote crossbar and bounces back wide.

Ballymote make a substitute change and then really pile on the pressure playing now with more confidence as the 12th minute of second half passes. Ballymote's great defending rob Karl Jennings and Dylan Gallagher's constant attempts at goal.

More changes as Valley Rovers replace one substitute and Ballymote change two after 24 minutes

The pace of the match is really intense now as both sides attack and defend. Ballymote are the stronger side now with more attacks on Goal and in the 30th minute of play, Barry Cafferty from Ballymote scores and gives Ballymote a fresh lease of life. Spurred on by this, Ballymote play harder and within 1 minute their Captain Aaron Reynolds scores a great goal making it all even now at 3-3

Tired legs now as the light was fading and Valley tries in vain to get the fourth goal to gain a win. The Crowd are now shouting for both sides and Karl Jennings tries in vain to get it past the Ballymote keeper. Final whistle blows and it's all over.

The referee was the excellent Terry Butler who ensured that all players, coaches and spectators complied with all regulations and did a superb job at keeping all things fair and within the rules.

Final score 3 -3 and a great match to watch as both teams were in my opinion very equally matched. Congratulations to all players for such great play and team spirit.

Conor Clarke

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