



Valley Rovers versus Coolaney United

14th September 2013 Connacht Cup Match

It was a bright sunny Saturday afternoon at the grounds of the Coolaney Community Park where Valley Rovers square up to Coolaney United. With the Sounds of the local cattle mart in the background, both Teams pose for team photos and then just after 2pm the Referee Tommy Oats blows the whistle for kick off. Straight off Coolaney attack into the glaring sunlight and most of the action is in the Valley Rovers half as the Valley defenders work hard at keeping Coolaney from scoring their first goal. Coolaney play with such a passion that play stops for a few minutes as two strikers from Coolaney crash into each other just outside the Valley Rovers box, but after a quick check both are fine and play continues.

On the 7th Minute the excellent Valley keeper Sean Caulfield makes a great save from a well taken Coolaney corner. This won't be the first time that Sean will be called on to save the day. Within one minute of that save, Coolaney's Cathal Davy kicks from an awkward angle and buries it in the back of the Valley Rovers net to make it 1-0.

However, undaunted by this setback, straight away Aiden McManus from Valley gets the ball and makes a powerful but wide shot and the Coolaney Goal. Again Sean Caulfield saves two brilliant shots as Coolaney's No7 puts the pressure on Valley. A lot of messy play now around of the Goal mouth of Valley Rovers as after 20 minutes, Valley have to keep defending as Coolaney keep attacking. Their persistence pays off because after 21 minutes Coolaney No 8 Conor Matthews scores a great goal to make it 2-0 as Valley begins to look tired.

But Valley still have a few players who can run both sides of the pitch and with Carl Jennings feeding some great long shots up to Keith O'Reilly, he tries to get past the Coolaney keeper but to no avail. Adam Gaffney does some great fast defending to hold the score the same after 24 minutes but after 25 minutes Conor Matthews from Coolaney scores his second Goal of the Match to make it 3-0. There is a quick Sub change by Valley and its back to the game. Valley narrowly save themselves another result as the ball rolls past the Valley Goal as Coolaney try for the fourth. But Valley keep getting some great breaks and blast the Ball up the pitch to Carl Jennings who shoots ...but again just misses the Goal. Coolaney have another player down but after a minute all is well. We are into extra time now of around 3 minutes and the whistle blows.

As it stands at half time 3-0 to Coolaney.

The Second half sees Valley playing with a few new substitutes including TJ Davey who makes his present known after the first minute with his speed and ball control. Again Carl Jennings nearly finds the back of the net after 3 minutes. Valleys seem to have lifted their game and are getting a few good shots on goal now. Valley makes another Sub Change and after 6 minutes Declan Cunnane narrowly misses the Coolaney Goal. So close he narrowly misses the goal again a few seconds later. Carl Jennings follows up with another great shot but finds the keeper. After 13 minutes of Valley pressure, Dillon Gallagher finally finds the net to make it 3-1.

Again Coolaney come back and David Caulfield has to make a nice save. Valley keep up the pressure but the defending by Coolaney is superb in their discipline and determination. After 19 minutes Coolaney make a sub change and Valley have to defend hard as Coolaney come back on the attack and after 27 minutes a lovely cross to Peter Connolly No 12 from Coolaney makes it 4-1. Coolaney make a Sub change but Valley Rovers however, keep pushing up and Coolaney are forced to make some great saves and have some serious defending to do to keep Valley from scoring. After 34 Minutes Daniel Devine from Valley Rovers scores a great goal over the head of the Coolaney keeper to make it 4-2

Coolaney fight on and Valley Rovers goalie makes some great saves. Carl Jennings has another few shots on Goal to try and bring the Valley Rovers score up, but too late as the whistle blows and it's all over. 4-2 to Coolaney and to be honest they were the better team on the day. But don't forget Valley Rovers were just unfortunate as they had some great chances that just eluded them. A great match to watch and Coolaney played an excellent host to Valley rovers. Congratulations and thanks to all players for such great play and team spirit.

Conor Clarke

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