



St. Mary's Football Club

Match Report

Saturday 12th November 2011

St Mary's FC 3 – 3 Ballynahinch

St Mary's U13's and Ballynahinch served up an exciting game of goals at Ormeau Park on Saturday which finally ended 3 - 3 after the game swung from end to end.

The St Mary's management made a number of player changes and positional swaps to freshen up the squad. Owen McGrath took on an advanced midfield role instead of his traditional centre half position and immediately began to control the early midfield exchanges ably supported by Anthony (Anton) Scott. An early through ball from Owen gave Gerry Girvan a chance but the goalkeeper saved. On the left side Matthew McCarron was making strong runs and he combined well with Curtis McVeigh to set up Owen McGrath but his shot went over. However, it wasn't all one way and after hesitation on the right wing a Ballynahinch effort went just over. Next Gerry Girvan combined with Nathan Lavery to set up Owen again but the tall Ballynahinch keeper saved again.

At the back the new central defensive pairing of Ciaran Magee and Eoin Sullivan had settled well and with this solid base St Mary's took a better control of the game. Ryan McAleenan and Luke Walsh exchanged positions on the right and worked well together to counteract the earlier Ballynahinch left wing threat. With confidence growing Owen won the ball in midfield to drive forward and set up Anton on the edge of the penalty area. Anton's great strike forced the keeper into another great save but top scorer Gerry Girvan reacted quickly to tuck the rebound away and give St Mary's a 1 - 0 lead. Ballynahinch though pushed back and it took a great save from Adam Carlin to stop an instant equaliser. At the other end another good run and cross from Matthew set up Gerry but his effort was just over.

Half time 1- 0. With such a big squad the management wanted to give as many an opportunity as possible so a couple of changes were made to introduce Lorcan Murray and Conor Maitland. As the team settled with the new changes the second half started badly and when the ball wasn't cleared far enough a wonder strike from the Ballynahinch midfielder left Adam with no chance. Before long another defensive mishap allowed Ballynahinch to take a 2 - 1 lead to shock St Mary's. As the game neared the final whistle all the remaining substitutes, Conor Corry, Niall Gilleece and Fionntan Resoto were called upon and the boys forced everything they could. Curtis took a throw in on the left and from there Owen cut inside and fired and tremendous drive into the far corner to bring the match level again. The excitement level grew as it looked as if a first win of the season might still be on the cards and a penalty claim was turned down by the referee. Suddenly the game switched as Ballynahinch broke away and their strong forward run created a chance which was deflected away from goal by an arm and the referee this time did award a penalty! This was duly put away for 2 - 3.

However, the St Mary's spirit now came through and after good work by Niall Gilleece and Gerry Girvan the ball fell to Owen inside the penalty area. He swivelled and swept the ball past the keeper to level the game again!

Another last effort to steal the win in injury time failed to materialise and again the boys had to settle for a draw - fourth draw of the season.

Whilst a win wasn't achieved nevertheless there were a lot of promising performances and the hard work on the training field over recent weeks is beginning to show promise.
Well done to all 16 boys for efforts and indeed their never say die attitude!

Team: Adam Carlin, Luke Walsh, Curtis McVeigh, Eoin Sullivan, Ciaran Magee, Ryan McAleenan, Owen McGrath, Anthony Scott, Gerry Girvan, Matthew McCarron, Nathan Lavery.
Subs: Lorcan Murray, Fionntan Resoto, Conor Corry, Conor Maitland, Niall Gilleece.