



St. Mary's Football Club

### **Match Report**

ST MARYS COLTS v WILLOWBANK

The Colts returned to Ballysillan this week and in the early stages were clearly more at home on the bigger pitch. They fell behind against the run of play in the first period when Stuart Smyth in nets made a good one handed save at full stretch to keep out a long range effort but was unable to block the follow-up which fell kindly for the Willowbank forward. Conor Small was strong at the centre of the Defence throughout and was ably assisted by Niall Davey and Patrick O'Hanlon. The lads played some great football through midfield with Conor O'Neill and CJ Fulton combining well and creating chances for Robert Robertson and Conor Young. Robertson hit the post with a great effort before the equalizer came when O'Neill latched onto a long throw from Fulton and struck a sweet right foot half volley into the bottom corner.

There was a role reversal for the second goal when O'Neill and Fulton worked a great short corner. O'Neill passed the ball inside the full back and Fulton rifled home into the top corner leaving the keeper with no chance. David Lauro worked hard in midfield and Small marshalled the Defence winning a number of challenges with sheer commitment and determination but also using the ball well in possession. 1 move saw several passes exchanged before Fulton pulled back to Odhran McAtamney at the edge of the box and his drive struck the top of the cross bar. Willowbank got themselves back into the lead before O'Neill found another equalizer with his 2nd of the match. He bravely slid in at the back post in front of the defender to get on the end of Fulton's low cross. The lads were unlucky not to go in front when Young found himself in on goal but the keeper did well to dive at his feet and block his effort. Despite being on top throughout St Marys again found themselves behind when Willowbank scored from close range after a corner that wasn't cleared. Almost from the kick-off Fulton went on a mazy dribble past 3 Willowbank defenders and as he cut in from the left the defence opened up for him and he need no invitation to smash a low shot into the bottom corner.

St Marys were then on top but the match was marred by an injury to Fulton who had to be carried off after a very poor tackle as he again dribbled his way towards goal. O'Neill went close with resultant free-kick when his effort was cleared off the line but thereafter the match fizzled out.

It was a solid performance with some great forward play and the lads continue to make good progress with their passing awareness and movement. The lads were concerned for Fulton who was excellent on the day and we are pleased to report that he has been left with a bad bruising and swelling but no serious injury.

MAN OF MATCH - CONOR SMALL