



St. Mary's Football Club

Match Report

St. Mary's Thunderhawks v Aquinas Astros 11/02/2012

The Thunderhawks had their first IFA mini soccer game of 2012 on a morning with pleasant conditions. Solitude was a new venue for the team and it was bigger than the usual pitches they have been used to but it'll stand them in good stead for moving into 11 a-side games next year. Both teams started brightly and exchanged possession on several occasions. It was St. Mary's who took their chances first when David Smychzek took advantage of the ball breaking on the right side of midfield. He cut inside on his stronger left foot and shot from about 15 yards out to see the ball deflected in at the near post by the Aquinas goalkeeper who was close to keeping the ball out.

Aquinas took advantage of some counter attack football in the second period and their captain led by example and was instrumental in their play. Solid defending from Patrick O' Hanlon and Denis Price was progressed throughout the game as they began to close down their opponents and put in vital tackles when called upon. Captain Odhran O' Boyle marshalled the defence at the heart of the team and made some excellent last ditch challenges to keep the Saints in it. Michael Armstrong showed his qualities an arguably these seasons most improved player in midfield. He wasn't afraid to put in a tackle and use his strength and with intricate play with Smychzek, they were definitely the creative spark in midfield.

Ben Skillen and Adam Kelly ran the channels brilliantly and attacked the Astros defence at every opportunity providing plenty of crosses for the strikers Aodhan Graham and Robert Robertson. It was Robertson who took his chance on the break from an Aquinas corner and slotted the ball through the keeper's legs after great technical skill to beat two Astro defenders, easily the best goal of the game out of both sides.

Last but certainly not least, it was Stuart Smyth in nets for the 'hawks who claimed the man of the match award. Aquinas had many chances throughout the game and Smyth was more than ready for the task. He made himself big in one on one situations making it very difficult for the opposition attackers to score. His kicking was consistent and with every week he progresses with distance on his distribution. I think the coaches speak on everyone's behalf when they say it's good to be back!