

Sunday, 5 September 2010
Martin Sheach

SYFA South East Region Cup 1st Round

ACO's Jekyll and Hyde Performance

AC Oxgangs 5 Spartans Whites 2

Half-Time 3-0

Scorers

Harry, Kerr, Callum, Elliot, Lewis

ACO Man of the Match

No single player took this game by the scruff of the neck so it is almost unfair to isolate any individual for praise. However, this week, Shaun (full of energy and running and never far away from the action) shades it from Callum, who proved again he is one of the best at picking out a pass and was rewarded with a goal.

What a difference a goal makes. Fifteen to 20 minutes had passed and ACO were toiling to break down their third division opponents when Rob and Shaun worked the ball down the left and the left-back whipped over a ball for the charging Harry to direct a header superbly – and bravely - past the onrushing keeper.

It was like a huge belief injection. Suddenly the boys were full of zip, the passing was quick and accurate and it was not long before they were two up. A series of accurate Harry corners from the right had gone unrewarded but this time Murray connected, a defender headed out, and Kerr was on hand to return the ball with interest.

The third goal was not long in coming, Callum coolly slotting the ball into the right-hand corner of the net after some good exchanges down the right.

Half-Time 3-0

The second half was a catalogue of missed chances as ACO slipped back a gear from their 15-minute barrage in the opening period.

First to draw a blank was Fin who ballooned a left-foot chance high over the bar but the game was effectively over as a contest a few minutes later when Ross's free-kick deceived the defence and Callum was handily placed to slide the ball across goal for Elliot to tap in.

Lewis and Shaun then passed up chances before Spartans pulled a goal back. Awarded a free kick some 25 yards from goal, the ball was sweetly struck by Harvey (arguably one of their best players) and it soared past Gully, who had no chance.

Elliot then joined the “miss” brigade when he glanced a header over the bar before ACO grabbed their fifth. There was perhaps a hint of offside as Lewis found the ball at his feet following a Ross shot but the striker wasted no time in dispatching ball into the net

Callum scooped over the bar as ACO went seeking a sixth but they were caught on the hop when the impressive Harvey escaped the defence to put in his striker and with Gully hopelessly exposed he had a simple job to convert.

There was still time for Tom to blast over the bar before the final whistle.

Full-Time 5-2

All in all a routine win against a side who allowed ACO the room to play. It would be churlish to criticise the defence for being caught on the hop occasionally as they pushed on because they know that against tougher opposition they will not have the luxury of time and space afforded by a Spartans side who, despite being outplayed, never gave up over the 70 minutes and who had two or three players who kept ACO on their toes.

If there is a minor criticism it is in the strike rate. While five goals is a decent return in anybody's book, far too many chances went abegging. We need to be sharper in front of goal.

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