

**Sunday, 1 May 2011**  
Malcolm Henderson

### **Division 3 League Cup Semi-Final**

# **Blues Claim Final Spot With Late Strike**

## **AC Oxfangs *Blues* 1 Edinburgh City *Whites* 0**

**After Extra-Time**

**Half-Time 0-0**

**Scorer**  
Mitchell

### **Man of the Match**

There is no MOM this week as the whole team played so well in what can only be described as the best performance of the season.

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This was another semi final against Edinburgh City *Whites* who we have been unable to beat at three attempts so far this season and threw away the last semi-final against them.

They are a much improved side now and only lost the Paladin Cup by a single goal to the all conquering Dunbar side. The Blues form in the league has dipped recently and this game was going to make or break the season.

It was a lovely morning as the Blues kicked off and it was an unusual starting line up. Royce was in goal with Max and Nicky as full backs, Matty and Andrew were back as central defenders. The five man Midfield had Scott, Fudge and Ben in the middle with Jamie and Mitchell out wide. Elliot was the lone striker.

The game started well for the Blues and Jamie was unlucky early on as his chance was cleared off the line having placed it passed the keeper. The Blues defence was on top and the midfield were working well to deny City possession and Royce had very little to do, but his kicking from hand was putting pressure on the city defence. The Blues were rushing their shots from just outside the box and were not troubling the City Keeper.

### **Half-Time 0-0**

The second half saw City make changes and attack more but the defence was solid and unusually there was more determination in the tackling and heading of the ball.

Charlie came on to give Jamie a rest and the Blues continued to press but could not provide the piece of magic that would win the tie. There was a scare when a City forward found himself clear with the ball 5 yards in front of goal but was correctly ruled offside. Kai then came on for Fudge who had played well and was all over the pitch. It was a measure of the Blues commitment that Kai and then Matty were both involved in clashes of heads with City players.

The game flowed from end to end and both defences and midfields were tackling with determination and it was no surprise that the referee brought normal time to an end with the scores level.

### **Full-Time 0-0**

## **Extra-Time**

The first period of extra-time saw the same commitment from both sides as the heat started to take its toll on the players.

There were gaps opening up in the midfield but both defences were on top still. Scott, Ben and Kai were still running all over the park but Elliot was tiring and Jamie came back on.

The chances were few but Andrew, Nicky, Max and Matty were having their best games of the season and City were limited to few chances.

Half time came and there was only ten minutes left for the tie to be won.

The second period saw the same determination and both sets of coaches were hoping the game would be won with a piece of genius rather than a mistake.

As the thought of making sure your best players for a penalty shoot out were on the pitch started to enter into the mind there came the piece of brilliance that deserved to settle the tie.

Mitchell controlled the ball out on the left, cut inside and curled the ball into the top corner. The keeper had no chance and with only a few minutes remaining the Blues comfortably held out to record a famous win and book themselves a place in the final against Eskmill.

## **Result: 1-0**

This was a great win in which every player played their part. There was a determination to win the ball that has not been seen before and if they play like that in the final they have every chance to lift the trophy.

I should add that although Jacob, Hamish and Chris did not get on, they all played an important part in the group games that led to our appearance in the semi-final. With a cup final place up for grabs there is all to play for in our remaining league games.

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