



Vs Dumbarton
27th Aug 2008, Stepps
KO: 6.30pm



What a fine performance from the Strathclyde Lads tonight! Tremendous guts and character aplenty, but the shape, skill and game intelligence shown by the players involved was second to none. Returning to the 1st team arena were David McCall, Andrew Hornell, Calum Murison and Captain Nicky Heggie, strengthening a team that was without Ross "Paddy" Patrick and Ian "Ja" Donaghey. The returning Heggie and McCall saw Davie Hill moved to right-back, a spot he occupied magnificently on the tour up North, and he again showed himself a composed and dogged defender as well as a potent attacking option. Tam McLaughlan paired with Timo Fotheringham in the midfield engine room, allowing Andrew Hornell the room to manoeuvre from flank to flank in front of them with the lightning quick Calum Murison upfront.

The opposing team arrived very late and the referee started the game as early as he could but still ended up 11 minutes late. 'Clyde took the game by the scruff of the neck straight away, with Sean McBride and Jonny Parr in the wide areas laying their intent early by penetrating runs and dogged tackling. The 2 wingers would be a thorn in the side of Dumbarton for the entire game and its no coincidence that they provided 2 assists and 1 goal between them. However the early pressure came from 'Clyde, and had young McBride been a bit more selfish they may have taken the lead earlier than they did as Sean had really earned his opportunity to shoot but chose instead to put the ball across the 6 yard box. Andrew Hornell had been engaged in a tough aerial battle with the Dumbarton number 6 and Capps battling from a long pass by Davie Hill saw Calum Murison rattle the ball home from 8 yards out, giving 'Clyde a well deserved lead. Capp had earlier forced the Dumbarton goalkeeper into a good save with a strong header, and Dumbartons Number 1 proved quite adept at coming for and collecting crosses in the 6 yard box. The goalkeepers strength was quickly identified by the players and coaching staff at the side of the pitch, and the instruction went on for McBride and Parr to penetrate the back four and hit the by-line before cutting back the ground ball as opposed to flying crosses in. With Stuart Bone on as a first half sub for the injured Calum Murison, this adjusted tactic almost paid dividends but Bonesy was inched away from a Capp cutback, and also called offside after Capp flicked on. His protests later got him a yellow card and a 5 quid fine...

At the half, it was 1-0 but a strong showing from 'Clyde had almost seen them score "First, then Second" in the first half. At half-time, the call was merely to repeat the first half performance whilst trying to exploit the gaps that Dumbarton would inevitably leave when they began to chase the game. In the first few minutes, Andy Hornell doubled the lead after Jonny Parr and Davie Hill had terrorised done the Dumbarton left side and won a free kick, which Sean McBride drove low and Capp turned home from 6 yards. With 'Clyde in the driving seat, Dumbarton would have to come out and chase the game. Dumbarton increased the intensity of their aerial bombardment, which Shanta and Heggie were relishing, which also meant Timo Fotheringham and Tam McLaughlan could pick the ball up and bring Jonny and Sean into the game on the counter attack. Several times fullbacks McCall and Hill would link with their respective wingers and get 'Clyde forward, forcing Dumbarton to turn and chase towards their own goal. With Danny Gillespie on for Tam McLaughlan, the door was firmly shut on Dumbarton through the middle, so they had to continue being direct, which meant a lot of ball turned over to 'Clyde.

With Pete Hamilton dominating in his box, Dumbarton couldn't get through, and it was from one of Hamiltons claimed crosses that Jonny Parr again bombed off down the right hand side, twisting and turning as 2 players closed on him, Jonny broke to the goal line and whipped a low cutback cross towards the penalty spot where Sean McBride opened up his magical left foot and buried it for a well deserved 3-0 victory. An excellent start to the Caledonian league season for the Uni lads, with more strength on the sidelines meaning competition is going to be strong for places in this exciting team...