



The 2nd Teams 1st league match of 2009 took place in some of the worst weather conditions this reporter has ever seen, with dwindling light, gale force winds and torrential rain not making for much of a spectacle. The rather convoluted directions and somewhat Spartan changing rooms (shared with 3 other teams at the same time including the opponents) meant the 'Clyde were not able to go through their normal pre-match routine, but the lads merely got on with it, it bothered Vinny a lot more than the players!! With Ruiridh Fraser, Owen Robinson, Callum MacIver, Michael Sutherland and goalie Mike McKenzie all missing it meant the return of John Rox, Tam McLaughlin, Steven Stirling and Paul Shanta, with 2nd team debuts for Dave Paterson in goal and Steven Beggs who had just helped the Saturday morning 'Clyde team go top of their respective division.

The warm up was its usual high standard from the boys and Phil Murray won the toss and elected to go with the wind in the first half, which meant the 'Clyde would be able to go back to front very quickly and hopefully rain shots and crosses down onto the East Kilbride goalkeeper. Unfortunately, the old demons of 3 passes followed by no shot were evident in the lads dominance of possession, which meant they were diluting their own advantage by not shooting. As with the majority of games 'Clyde have played this season, they dominated possession in both halves, but in the first they fashioned an excellent goal from the red-hot Niall McLure, working the ball from David Paterson in goal through defence midfield and attack to Niall on the right, who cut in and lashed home with his left foot across the goalkeeper. A great goal from one of this years key performers.

'Clyde had hoped to capitalise on this, but over-playing inside the 25 yard mark instead of shooting saw several opportunities to pressure the EK goalie spurned, and despite dominating possession always looked susceptible on the breakaway. It took a point blank save from Dave Paterson after the first of many shocking refereeing decisions allowed EK's centre forward to stay 5 yards offside and get his attempt on target. Thankfully, Dave was up to the job and preserved the 'Clyde halftime lead.

The second half was a bizarre occasion, as East Kilbride had 3 efforts at goal and virtually zero possession, yet scored all 3 with the help of the wind and another 2 shocking refereeing decisions, letting a handball stand that was so blatant the boy should get a tryout for the New York Knicks, then being allowed to go on and score. EK's 2nd was thrown into the goal by the wind after an opportunist strike and the third saw Phil Murray penalised after an excellent tackle that saw 'Clyde on the break, make 6 passes and get into the EK half before the ref decided to award a free kick that no-one had appealed for. Suffice to say the EK lad got a good strike on target that was well aided by the wind and saw them go 3-1 ahead.

At the side of the pitch, 'Clydes small but efficient bench of the subs and Vinny was dwarfed by EK's 5 subs and 5 (count 'em) coaching staff who proceeded to march up and down the touchline almost barging 'Clydes spectators out the way as they screeched to their players. One rather amusing comment of "This is a poor side, we should be 6 up" was heard by Vinny and Paul Shanta and safe to say he has inherited his brothers short fuse... However he made a telling contribution when he calmed down and went on as a replacement for Phil Murray.

Prior to this, Stevie Beggs and John Rox had come on for Steve Stirling and Wee Hammy respectively, and provided a quantum leap in pace and directness that was badly needed at the 3-1 mark. Both lads had played 90 mins in the morning for the 3rd team yet showed no ill-effects and upped the tempo for 'Clyde by barraging the EK backline with tackles and shots, whilst their movement and touch left them chasing shadows. This created chances for Ross Wilson and Tam McLaughlin which the keeper pushed away, however 'Clyde forced 8 corners into the wind whereas EK had forced none in the first half and it was from the set piece that 'Clyde would get back into the game.

A Ross Wilson 30 yarder was tipped over by the keeper and the resultant corner was aimed for Paul Cross but EK slapped it away to the edge of the box where Tam McLaughlin was lurking. Tam had had an excellent game so far with Ross Wilson in the engine room and his confidence was high enough to volley first time into the bottom corner and give 'Clyde a fighting chance...

They would take it.

With Rox, Beggs and Younger More Talented Shanta on, the formation was changed to 343 just before Tam scored his first. Yet more possession and combinations down the right involving Euan, Shanta and Niall were causing EK a lot of problems and last ditch tackling combined with dubious refereeing kept the score at 3-2. It was then Moray Grant foraged 60 yards from the back down the left hand side and delivered the ball to Beggs who combined with John Rox to get in a delivery that Mark Docherty forced the keeper to turn wide. Beggsy merely replicated the corner that saw tam score the first time and a little lay off from Crossy was again good enough for Tam to volley into the bottom right hand corner for the more than deserved equaliser. The ref then blew for full



Vs Rolls Royce EK
Saturday 10th January
East Kilbride
KO 2.00 pm



time and its fair to say the reaction of the EK players and staff was disappointing, but `Clyde did not deserve to lose that game.

Afterwards, Vinny Bryson said "As usual, I was very proud of the players for their tremendous effort in these terrible conditions but sometimes we are guilty of overplaying when a shot would do, especially with the wind in our favour in the first half. EK did exactly what I wanted us to do, but I knew we would create chances given the amount of possession we always have. Its great to have the players who can adapt in-game to a change of formation and that's exactly what our bench was able to contribute when they went on."