

Sunday, 25TH September 2011
Geoff Stockham/Matt Holligan

ESSDA Soccer Sevens *Maradona* Division

ACO Win Game of the Half's to Make it 5 Out of 5 Against Bonnyrigg Sides

AC Oxfangs 4 Bonnyrigg Rose *Reds* 1

Half-Time 0-1

Scorers

Zac (2), James (2)

ACO Man of the Match

Today's MOTM was a straightforward choice this week, not taking away the performance of the other players but this week's MOTM kept AC in the game in the first half and then made some more excellent saves in the second half. Aaron is this week's MOTM, with some excellent saves and brilliant choice-making when coming out for the ball - he kept us in the game when we were slow to start and kept it going throughout the match.

This was ACO's third league match against Bonnyrigg Rose *Reds*, and the previous two had seen ACO come out on top.

Both sides started very confidently with lots of short passes around the midfield. Neither side seemed able to find the right ball through the defence, and Brodie and Kieran were in control at the back to begin with. Max finally managed to thread a ball through to Zac, but his shot was blocked. Then Bonnyrigg broke through at the other end but Aaron was out quickly to make a good save with his legs. Christopher then took one shot full in the face, but it didn't seem to affect him as he then showed a lot of skill to power into the Bonnyrigg box. Brodie was following him up and sent a ball across the box where Max and Leo both collided while trying to score. Max sent a strong cross in from the left that had the defender scrambling the ball over the bar to clear.

ACO were piling on the pressure now, with plenty of balls into the box, but it was Bonnyrigg that got the first goal after ACO gave the ball away in midfield. The Bonnyrigg attacker ran forward and finished well. The goal seemed to unsettle ACO for a while, as there was panic in the box after Bonnyrigg sent a hopeful ball in. ACO calmed it down with nice ball along the line from Kieran to Max, and he sent the ball to Zac in the box, but his shot was saved. There was some good tracking back to defend from ACO as well with Leo coming back to help out the defence on a number of occasions, including one great last-ditch tackle in the ACO box.

ACO were finding a regular outlet along the left wing with Kieran finding Max with some accurate passing along the line. Max took a quick throw to set Zac free, but the Bonnyrigg defence got back to clear just in time. From the resulting corner Leo headed the ball on to Zac but the ball hit his knee and went just wide. Bonnyrigg started attacking more towards the end of the half, but Aaron was there to make another good save with his feet. Then Brodie shielded the ball towards the goal line before winning a goal kick.

Half-Time: 0-1

ACO started the second half with a great passing move from end-to-end, with almost every ACO player touching the ball. Bonnyrigg broke back immediately, and Liam's strong clearance took an unfortunate

deflection back past him and nearly set Bonnyrigg clear, but Cillian was across to cover. Bonnyrigg were having a few chances, and Aaron made a great save, then pounced on the loose ball bravely.

James then showed great anticipation when he heard the Bonnyrigg coach suggest their player pass back to the keeper. He sprinted to try and intercept the back pass and got there first but Bonnyrigg recovered well with a crunching tackle to stop him. James then had another great chance with a shot that was turned round the post by the keeper. He then squared the ball to Kieran but his shot was straight at the keeper. Finally the pressure paid off as James pounced on a poor clearance and knocked the ball past the keeper to equalise.

This seemed to be the encouragement that ACO required, as they then dominated the last quarter of the match. Zac had a couple of shots go just wide, and some good pressure in midfield led to James having another shot saved. James fired the corner in but it rebounded to him, so he sent a high ball back into the box that Zac turned in with the outside of his foot to give ACO the lead. Soon after, Zac had another goal after a quick break left him completely free against the keeper. He nearly got a hat-trick straight after when Kieran sent a great cross to the far post, but the ball bounced awkwardly for him and went behind.

ACO continued to press, and James pounced on another poor clearance but his shot went over the bar. Bonnyrigg piled forwards but Cillian and Liam combined to force the ball out for a corner. Aaron collected this well and set up a quick break with a ball to James. He raced out of midfield and scored again with a smart finish to the far post. ACO had turned around the game in the second half.

Full-Time: 4-1

Coaches Message:

1st half, well what can we say, sleeping still, not at the races, began passing it around at the start but never really got into the game, lucky to only be 0-1 down at half time. Second was a different team, started to pass the ball around, get a few shots away, started to communicate a bit better. Took our chances when we needed to and some excellent defending in both halves kept us in the game. Well Done and see you Thursday.

Please note our Match Reports are written from an AC Oxfords perspective and are primarily intended for the benefit of our players, officials and supporters. Understandably, our match reporters will focus on our own performance but this does not imply that the contribution of the opposing team has been deliberately undervalued.

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