

Lewis and Harris League:

## Carloway 6 (3)

*Gordon "Tago" Macdonald 12, 57, 73  
Domhnall Mackay 15  
Kevin "Gochan" Macleod 17, 74*

## Ness 2 (1)

*Domhnall Sheocaidh 26 (pen.)  
Calum Macleod 78*

*At Cnoc a'Choilich*

*Ref.: Annaline Ingram*

*12.7.10*

*Gordon Craigie*

*Ed Ansell Calum Moody Domhnall Mackay (capt.) Donald MacIennan  
Kevin "Gochan" Macleod Kenny "Beag" MacIennan Murdo "Squegg" Macleod Benn  
Esslemont Gordon "Tago" Macdonald  
Seumas Macleod*

*Subs. used: Kevin Anderson (Seumas Macleod 75); Donnie Macphail (Benn Esslemont 84);  
Calum Fraser (Gordon "Tago" Macdonald 84).*

After a fitful victory of sorts at Garrabost and last week's misery at Barvas, Carloway were desperate to recapture last season's sparkling form which carried them to within a breath of the 2009 League title and Lewis Cup success, and, hopefully, propel them towards end-of-season Coop and Lewis Cup glory. Availability (and lack of it), plus an brave attempt to re-calibrate the machine, dictated Peter Dokus's bold reshaping of his battle group: Andrew Maciver, Dan Crossley, and Archie Macdonald did not feature, but Kenny MacIennan and Seumas Macleod returned; Andrew V.P. Macleod and Donnie Macphail dropped to the bench and this allowed Ed Ansell to drop to the back four, with Kenny Beag in central midfield, Benn Esslemont starting to his left, and Seumas Macleod leading the charge.

And charge it was, in the first half hour, as the Blues burst out of the traps like men with something to prove. After initial Ness pressure, which resulted in a corner on the left being scrambled away rather untidily, na Gormaich exploded down the wings, as Gordon Tago delivered a passable impression of his namesake, Flash, with a rapid succession of blistering runs and rocket-style cutbacks, allowing Kenny Beag to send a low right-footer just past from 18 metres, then Gochan to head inches over from 14.

Moments later, a third cross was not met cleanly directly in front of goal. It was fitting that Tago opened the scoring a minute later. An unnecessary foul on the halfway line permitted Squeg to loft in a high, deep cross from out on the right; Iain Gillies came, but misjudged and flapped the ball to his right where it landed neatly for Tago to sidefoot into the empty goal from 8 metres. Three minutes later, an Esslemont corner on the right was headed out, met by a Carloway head which nodded it left, and Domhnall Mackay outdid Luis Suarez with an instinctive right-foot curler round the defence and into goal via the far post. Next Flash Gordon soared down the left once more to release Gochan losing his marker to round the keeper and convert.

At this point, the Niseachs were reeling: Gochan and Tago were stretching Kevin Graham and co. and their pace was pulling their markers, allowing space for the tireless running of Macleod and Esslemont to exploit; Angie Campbell was fully occupied quelling the assertive thrusts of Kenny Beag in the centre of the park, and this isolated the neat play of Andrew Macleod and

Sheocaidh up front, while Lee Johnson seemed out-of-touch.

However, football is anything but predictable and Ness were unexpectedly thrown a lifeline 9 minutes later: a break on the left led to a flick goalwards from the goal-line striking a hand: a rather weak penalty was awarded but it had denied the Niseachs an advantage. As usual Sheocaidh delivered a textbook penalty, sending Craigie the wrong way as he calmly sent it into his bottom right-hand corner. Someone should have filmed it and sent a copy of to the Ghanaian national squad! This is how you do it, chaps!

A minute later a Calum Tom chop enabled Campbell to rattle Craigie's crossbar with a beautiful free-kick strike wide on the left about 22 metres out. Ness were now back in contention and a minute from half-time had an incredible double miss as Macleod ghosted on to a defence-splitting through ball, inside DI MacIennan, behind Mackay, but Craigie, unbelievably, touched his flick from 8 metres on to the post; Johnson, following up, somehow managed to send the rebound past.

The second half opened evenly: on 47 minutes Kenny Beag sent a drive just past from 12 metres and Craigie had to move sharply to block from Johnson on 54 minutes as Ness threatened on the right, but three minutes later the Blues seemed to have finished the Niseachs off, when Gochan won the ball on the right from Graham and charged into the box, to square for Tago to convert from 14 metres centrally.

Another Gochan run set up a Seumas Macleod header just over before Ness once more incredibly resurrected themselves: on 66 minutes an ambitious 35-yard free-kick from Campbell flew just over, before Macleod beat the defence to run clear towards the right of the box; Craigie came, and he lifted the ball neatly over him from 20 metres - only to see it come back off the left-hand post. No wonder the Ness boys looked up to the heavens! Then Fate punished them further with two Carlaway goals in a minute: an Esslemont ball from the left was nodded home by Tago from 8 metres, before Esslemont slipped the ball though to Gochan running behind the defence to fire home. The flag went up, but the referee let it stand. It definitely wasn't Ness's night! Lee Johnson fired past from 12 metres before Calum Macleod finally achieved what appeared an impossibility on the night: scored for Ness - when he neatly flicked home off a deflection, 8 metres out, on the left.

Carlaway certainly produced a display full of energy, pace, and invention, with sound performances all round and Tago and Gochan in devastating form on either wing. This of course unsettled the Ness back line and spread to the rest of the team; playmaker Campbell was unable to impose himself against Kenny Beag, despite almost breaking Craigie's bar in the first half, and Sheocaidh and Macleod were unsupported; despite this, the Niseachs created chances, and Campbell and Macleod were denied by bad luck while Johnson had a night he'll want to forget.

The changing nature of na Gormaich's attacking formation confused the Niseachs: was it 4-4-2 or a 4-2-3-1? Who were the forwards? Was it Tago (who appeared on the right for a period in the second half), or Gochan, or Seumas Macleod (who cropped up everywhere and was desperately unlucky not to score)? Even Benn Esslemont performed as a left-winger often, rather than left midfield, while, at times, Ed Ansell and Calum Moody were more like

midfielders than defenders. Totaalvoetbal, you know.

Ness Man of the Match: Andrew Macleod.

Carlaway man of the Match: Kevin Macleod (despite his Yakubu-like miss on 87 minutes!).