

Jock Stein Cup Semi Final:

Ness 2 (0) Carloway 1 (0)

*Andrew 'Bubble' Macleod 55 Kenny "Dokus" Macdonald 90+5
Jack Dunlop 63*

Referee: Allan Iain Macleod.

At Fivepenny

Monday, 18.6.12

David Beaton

*Seumas Macleod Gus Maciver Domhnall Mackay (capt.) Donald "D.I." MacIennan
Kenny "Dokus" Macdonald Dan Crossley Andrew "Tago" Maciver Ali "Tolsta" Maciver
Scott Macaulay Kevin "Gochan" Macleod*

Subs.: Donnie Macphail (Ali 'Tolsta' Maciver) 57; Murdo "Squeeq" Macleod (Donald 'DI' MacIennan) 77

Calum Iain Macleod, David Macleod, Kevin 'Barra' Macneil

Yellow Cards: Kevin 'Gochan' Macleod, Donnie Macphail; Andrew Maciver

All roads led to Ness on Monday night as an expectant Carlway support converged on Fivepenny machair to see if their team could progress to the final of the Jock Stein Cup. In their way stood Ness, who had not defeated Carlway since 2005. Expectations were certainly high amongst the away support while the opposite could be said of the home support who had watched their favourites struggle so far this season.

Carlway still had Gordon Tago and Calum Moody unavailable through injury but the team lined up on normal recent lines with Ali 'Tolsta' Maciver preferred in the left midfield role. For Ness, Scott Macrury, Kenny 'Parry' Macleod and the incomparable Sweeney provided the experience in what was a very youthful line-up

On a beautiful evening referee Allan Iain Macleod blew for kick off on a pitch that can best be described as dry and devoid of grass. How would Carlway be able to cope with the fiery surface was the question on some of the spectator's minds.

The first ten minutes were largely uneventful with Carlway trying to establish a passing game and Ness relying on long balls to relieve the pressure. Both goalies had to resort to fence climbing as attempted shots at goal landed on the nearby machair or the social club carpark. However Carlway were beginning to dominate possession and from a corner on the right on 14 mins Andrew Maciver saw a header cleared off the line with the subsequent follow up shot by Dan Crossley also cleared off the line. This led to a sustained period of Carlway pressure with chances created and missed by Scott Macaulay, Domhnall Mackay and Seumas Macleod.

I am sure that the groans of anguish from the massed Carlway support could be heard by Stuart Rankin on his camping holiday. Credit must also be given to the Ness goalkeeper for his sometimes unconventional methods of keeping the ball out of the net right out of the Dolly Ban school of goalkeeping.

Ness started to gain in confidence and created their first decent chance on 27 minutes. However, an even better chance was created by Carloway when a long ball out of defence enabled Scott Macaulay to race through on goal. However Sweeney stood up tall and turned the shot round the post with some ease.

On 35 minutes came the first heart in the mouth moment for the Carloway support when out of nothing the Ness centre forward Lee Johnston turned Domhnall Mackay to get a shot in on goal which forced David Beaton into a good save with Seumas clearing the rebound to safety.

This forced Carloway to step up the pressure again, culminating in a 20 yard shot from Andrew 'Tago' Maciver which came off the post. However Ness were starting to look dangerous on the break and again Lee Johnston created a chance this time for Kenny 'Parry' where he shot wide of Beaton's goal. The half ended with a good Carloway move when Scott Macaulay set up 'Docus' to shoot wide.

The first half had seen Carloway dominant in possession and create a multitude of chances. However, they were struggling with the pace of the pitch and Ness showed distinct signs that they could create chances and were not there to make up the numbers

Half time Ness 0 Carloway 0

The second half started with Ness showing more aggression and more adventure. Their Management team evidently making the point that this game was there to be won. On 48 minutes, a Dunlop header was well saved by Beaton. This was countered by another excellent Carloway chance when Macaulay shot wide on 49 minutes. Chances were now being created thick and fast and Ness had a header cleared off the line on 52 minutes. Unfortunately, the inevitable was only delayed for Carloway.

On 55 mins Lee Johnston played an excellent one-two with Andrew 'Bubble' on the right hand side of the Carloway box. This enabled him to get behind DI Maclennan. His finish gave Beaton no chance. 1-0 Ness.

It was to get worse for Carloway. An uncharacteristic error by Gus Maciver gave possession to Andrew 'Bubble', who in turn passed quickly to Jack Dunlop to rifle home a shot from 20 yards. A sublime finish to leave Carloway with a mountain to climb.

Carloway made substitutions with Macphail replacing Ali 'Tolsta' and Murdo Squegg replacing DI. They continued to create chances, the best of which Macphail saw his shot cleared off the line. Of course, when a team tries to chase a game they resort to the long ball tactic. Frustratingly for Carloway this tactic saw the forwards burst clear on many occasions only to be flagged offside by what many of the spectators saw as being marginal decisions, By spectators I mean the ones supporting the away team, the ones supporting the home team applauded the marginal offside decisions.

Ness continued to counter attack and Beaton had to be alert to deny Kenny 'Parry' on 84 minutes. Finally, and deep into injury time, Carloway sprung the offside trap and Kenny 'Docus' shot home. Too little, too late, was the consensus especially for Andrew 'Tago' who was perhaps a bit too vociferous in his dialogue with the Referee's Assistant.

So, more disappointment for Carloway. Again the inability to punish teams and take chances came back to haunt them. Enough chances to win two games were created and subsequently missed. If this team are serious about winning trophies they must develop a ruthless streak and punish inferior teams. The ability is undoubtedly there.

Ness on the other hand must be over the moon to reach a final. They have a youthful, inexperienced team and this result should give them the confidence to further improve. They have undoubted talent especially with young Dunlop, Cupit and Andrew 'Bubble'. At the end of the day it was their collective will to win which succeeded.

Carloway Man of the Match - David Beaton

Ness Man of the Match - Kenny 'Parry' Macleod