

Lewis and Harris League:

Carloway 6 (5) Ness 0 (0)

Dan Crossley 10

Andrew 'Tago' Maciver 14, 27, 37

Donnie Macphail 29

Ali 'Tolsta' Maciver 83

Referee: Calum 'Chancy' Macleod

At Cnoc a Choilich

Friday 6.7.12

David Beaton

Ali 'Tolsta' Maciver Seumas Macleod Gus Maciver Donald 'DI' MacIennan

Billy Anderson Domhnall Mackay (Capt.) Murdo 'Squeg' Macleod Donnie Macphail Dan Crossley

Kevin 'Gogan' Macleod

Subs.: Paul Forster (Billy Anderson) 68, David Macleod (Dan Crossley) 80, Chris 'Christy' Smith (Ali 'Tolsta' Maciver) 83, Calum Iain Macleod

On Friday, Carloway's busy week continued with their third match in five days. They were reacquainted with Cnoc a Choilich after over six weeks since their last home match and six matches on the road.

After returning to winning ways on Wednesday with a fine victory over local rivals Westside at Barvas, the team was in better spirit for this encounter. However, the management team still had to shuffle the pack once again as Kevin 'Gochan' Macleod and Kenny 'Dokus' MacDonald were unavailable. The former had sustained an ankle knock in the match with Westside whilst the latter was off-island attending a wedding.

Their places in the starting line up were taken Andrew 'Tago' Maciver who was available again after Wednesday, and Billy Anderson who was making his first appearance of the season.

Ness travelled to Carloway for this match having finally ended a 20 match winless streak against Carloway, in the most recent clash between the sides in the Jock Stein Cup semi final, which ended 2-1 in their favour.

However, any suggestion that the visitors were relishing this fixture were quickly dispelled just ahead of the match when Ness goalkeeper Donald 'Sweeny' Macsween announced that Ness were missing up to seventeen players, and he didn't even know half the team! They must have left Ness with an empty bus, and bundled in any unsuspecting young males they could find en route to Carloway!

To be fair to him, it was an unfamiliar looking side, and very young even by recent Ness standards. Star player Andrew 'Bubble' Macleod was missing and four players were making their debuts for the club, Innes Macdonald, Andrew Macmillan, Angus 'Bubble' and David Smith. Also coming in to the

side was the experienced Iain Murdo Macleod, who made two appearances for Carloway towards the end of last season, to add to his two outings for the club in the Eilean an Fhraoich Cup in 2006.

After the recent good weather in the islands, Friday brought about a change. There was mist throughout the day and a strong northerly blowing straight down the park.

Carloway started the match playing towards the James Street end and into the strong wind. In order to combat the conditions, Na Gormaich adopted a solid looking 4-5-1 shape in the first half, with Billy Anderson wide right and Andrew 'Tago' handed the lone striker role. Whilst Maciver may not be unfamiliar with such an advanced role, he has been deployed mostly in a defensive or midfield duty.

Ness immediately took the game to Carloway in the opening stages and forced a corner in the opening minute. An early shot was then sliced wide of goal. Jack Dunlop was showing some good skill in the midfield as the visitors enjoyed the majority of possession and territory. Carloway were trying to keep the ball on the deck and had a couple of promising phases of play too.

The Blues took the lead in the 10th minute when Dan Crossley picked up the ball on the left hand side near the touch line and about 25 yards from goal. He took a look up and unleashed a thunderbolt into the goalkeeper's left 'postage stamp' corner for a spectacular opening. It was no mean feat, given the strong wind.

Four minutes later, Carloway made the score 2-0, when Domhnall Mackay played a low through ball for Andrew 'Tago' Maciver to outpace the visiting defence and slot home.

The momentum was now very much with Carloway after these two early goals. It gave the team confidence to knock the ball about create further openings as they adapted to the conditions. Ness were by now being overrun and their cause wasn't helped when Jack Dunlop was forced off after receiving a knock.

Andrew 'Tago' Maciver was causing havoc in the visitor's defence with his strength and running. He seemed to be relishing the role and after 20 minutes he dropped back to receive the ball in midfield, chased his own ball forward, drove towards goal and was prevented a second by the keeper's legs. Donnie Macphail was next to try his luck with a shot from just outside the box which narrowly cleared the bar, after receiving a nice lay-off from Domhnall Mackay.

Carloway continued to dominate and in 27 minutes it was 3-0. Donnie Macphail took a throw in on the right touchline just inside the Ness half to Billy Anderson. He played a through ball in the inside right channel to Andrew 'Tago' Maciver who side-stepped his marker at the edge of the box, drove nearer to the target and placed the ball in the net with ease. The advantage quickly became 4-0, when Gus Maciver played in Andrew 'Tago' Maciver

whose shot was blocked for a corner. When the corner was played into the box, Billy Anderson had a shot blocked on the line. It broke to Donnie Macphail about 12 yards out to stroke home.

The home side continued to create chances and Dan Crossley was giving a virtuoso performance in midfield. He created another opening for Andrew 'Tago' Maciver when he played a sublime ball to the striker with the outside of his foot to take out three opponents. This opportunity was foiled but Na Gormaich created another when neat play from Domhnall Mackay and Donnie Macphail found Ali 'Tolsta' Maciver. He squared the ball for Andrew 'Tago' but the shot was blocked.

In the 37th minute, Na Gormaich were in easy street and scored another well worked goal to lead 5-0. Domhnall Mackay passed to Murdo 'Squeg' Macleod who played in Andrew 'Tago' once more. The striker swept home a fine effort high to the keeper's right to complete his first hat trick.

Half time score Carloway 5 Ness 0.

Following such a dominant first half display, both sides knew the match was well won. The only question now was, by how many would Carloway win? The Blues adopted a more open 4-4-2 for the second half, with Billy Anderson partnering Andrew 'Tago' Maciver up front.

The chances continued for the home side, who now had the benefit of the wind at their backs. Andrew 'Tago' had another effort go wide after being played in by Domhnall Mackay.

In addition to the midfielders creating numerous chances, full backs Ali 'Tolsta' Maciver and DI Maclennan began pouring forward at every opportunity to provide support.

Ness did try to stem the tide and had a couple of chances of their own early in the second half. The Ness substitute dragged his shot harmlessly wide after Carloway didn't properly clear their lines. Craig Harris shot over the bar with a half chance, on the hour mark.

In the middle of the park, the visitors' Innes Macsween, who is apparently training to become a man of the cloth, was constantly seeking to impart his words of wisdom and knowledge on his hard-pressed team mates as they faced wave after wave of attack. Perhaps he was also seeking divine intervention, as the biggest threat to Carloway was the thickening mist as the match progressed.

Midway through the second half, Billy Anderson made way for Paul Forster. The substitute went into left midfield and this meant Dan Crossley switching wings to the right to fill the spot vacated by Anderson. Foster almost made an immediate impact with a goal, but as he stretched for the ball about 6 yards out he couldn't find the target.

Dan Crossley continued to torment the visitors with his midfield runs. One such run in the 72nd minutes began in his own half and he skipped past numerous tackles and kicks, eventually slipped his shot just wide. Then Ali 'Tolsta' burst forward on the right wing and managed to prevent the ball from going out for a goal kick. He swivelled and crossed an inviting ball for Andrew 'Tago' Maciver, who headed just over, as the Ness goal continued to lead a charmed life.

Seumas Macleod and Gus Maciver formed an impenetrable defensive partnership as the rest of their team mates sought further reward for their efforts. Maciver blocked well from Lee Johnson after a rare foray forward by the visitors.

In the 77th minute, a corner by Ali 'Tolsta' Maciver was met by the head of DI MacIennan and was inches away from being converted. MacIennan is desperate to break his scoring duck so he can end the constant reminders about this he receives from his team mates.

With 10 minutes to play, Dan Crossley was withdrawn from the action and replaced by young speed merchant David Macleod. This was no respite for Ness as Macleod looked lively and eager. From one such move on the right in the 83rd minute, the ball broke to Ali 'Tolsta' Maciver. His cross cum shot fizzed across the keeper and into the net to make the score 6-0. This was Maciver's last involvement in the game as he was immediately hooked and Chris 'Christy' Smith was given a run out.

David Macleod had a chance late on but his well struck shot was too close to the keeper.

So, there was the only goal of the second half and the match ended with an emphatic 6-0 victory for Carloway.

This was a good performance from Carloway, who took the game by the scruff of the neck in the first half and had the game won early on. In their previous two matches this week, Carloway had to battle back from two goal deficits. This performance ensured the supporters were not made to fret for a third time before the result was known.

Ness will have been glad to hear the final whistle and emerge with a result which, although a heavy defeat, could have been worse. They battled away and will be encouraged that only one goal was conceded in the second half.

There were many strong performances from the home side. Seumas Macleod and Gus Maciver impressed at the back and ensured a clean sheet. The midfield was dominant and creative, none more so than Dan Crossley who was outstanding, and Andrew 'Tago' Maciver led the line well and took his chances well in scoring a fine hat trick. Something the team has been crying out for in many matches this season.

Man of the match – Andrew 'Tago' Maciver.