

Eilean an Fhraoich Cup 1st Round, 1st Leg:

Harris 3 (1) Carloway 3 (2)

Mark Morrison 29, 48 Donnie Macphail 24
James Maclean 65 Kenny 'Docus' MacDonald 41, 89

At Rally Park Tarbert

Monday June 3rd 2013

Referee: David "Spider" Macleod

Asst Referees: Robert Mackay and Calum "Chancey" Macleod

Gordon Craigie

Cameron 'Tiger' Macarthur Domhnall Mackay (capt) Louis MacDonald
Stuart 'Bubble' Macdonald Donnie Macphail Murdo 'Squeg' Macleod Andrew 'Tago'
Maclver Kevin 'Barra' Macneil

Scott Macaulay Kenny 'Docus' MacDonald

Subs: Ben Smith (Andrew 'Tago' Maclver) 85

Subs not used: Colin Maclean, Jack Maclennan

With team manager Kevin Anderson unavailable, team selection for this tricky away tie to Harris was left in the hands of his assistant "Windy" Miller. It was also difficult to gauge if the ineligible Calum Tom Moody was at the game on a spying mission (Lochs play the winners of this tie) or, as he claimed he was, stepping into the role of the vacant position of assistant manager!!!

Due to the rules of the EAF Cup, David Beaton, Moody, Seumas Macleod, Fraser Macleod and Kevin 'Gochan' Macleod were ineligible and DI and Crossley were unavailable as a result of injury, from the team who had lost so narrowly to Avoch the previous Saturday. It was, therefore, a much changed line up which faced the Hearachs in this first round tie.

Carloway welcomed into the fold the evergreen duo of Gordon Craigie (West Side) and Louis MacDonald (Rangers Supporters Club). Stuart "Bubble" Macdonald and Donnie Macphail (both Athletic) also made the line up, and joining them, albeit on the bench, was Stornoway United keeper Jack Maclennan featuring for "Na Gormaich" for the first time.

There was also a welcome return for Andrew "Tago" Maclver, at home from Africa for a short break, making his first appearance of the season. Young Cameron Macarthur also started in a three man defence together with captain, Domhnall Mackay and Louis MacDonald. Murdo 'Squeg' Macleod and Kevin "Barra" Macneil made up the five man midfield together with the aforementioned Maciver, Stuart 'Bubble' MacDonald and Macphail. Spearheading the attack were Scott Macaulay and Kenny 'Docus' MacDonald, and joining Maclennan on the bench were youngsters Ben Smith and Colin Maclean.

Gordon Maclennan, who had been so effective on the road to last year's final, was unavailable as was Billy Anderson who was still suffering from a thigh muscle injury.

Harris themselves were also much changed from the previous three

encounters of the season as they bolstered their line up with the inclusion of Roddy Morrison (Lochs), Eoghainn Macphee (United), James Maclean (making a rare appearance) and Norman Macleod (United) *(who misses out on Carloway selection by a generation, as his paternal grandfather was the Rev Norman Macleod [Tarmod Iain 'Alasdair] from 3 Borrowston)*. Harris veteran and former midfield powerhouse cum defender John "Fuggy" Macdonald, at 42 years of age, was a surprise inclusion as the Harris custodian and despite playing out of position he was to have a very sound game between the posts.

This game also marked the debut of former Athletic player, David "Spider" Macleod, as a referee in the senior ranks.

Harris started brightly and took the game to Carloway without causing any real threat to Craigie in the Carloway goal but Mark Morrison, with his pace and trickery, did give the Carloway faithful some anxious moments. Roddy Morrison was also prominent in the early stages with his prompting balls. The early stages of the game swung from end to end with arguably the best opportunities falling to Carloway but they were all squandered with the majority of them best summed up by the old footballing cliché "high wide and handsome."

However, the breakthrough did arrive on the 24th minute when a rare Kenny Docus goalbound header was cleared by Fuggy off the line. Unfortunately for the keeper, his clearance went straight to Kevin "Barra" whose headed attempt hit the bar and Donnie Macphail followed up to bundle it into the net from three yards out **(0-1)**

Shortly after the restart, Macaulay won the ball in midfield, flighted a ball through to Kenny 'Docus' who was unmarked on the corner of the 18 yard box but he totally mishit his shot and another opportunity went abegging.

Carlaway were to rue their wasted opportunities in the 29th minute when an innocuous looking cross from the right found Mark Morrison and he headed the ball across the face of the goal into the bottom corner of the net to Craigie's left **(1-1)**

This was followed up shortly afterwards by a Benn Esslemont effort from 30 yards which just went over the bar of Craigie's goal. There was a further anxious moment when, with Carlaway committing men forward, Kenny 'Docus', at the corner of the 18 yard box, attempted a pass which went astray and Harris broke away up the left wing. Thankfully, Domhnall Mackay was alert and made a timely intervention to clear the danger.

The game continued to flow from end to end, without any clear cut chances being created by either of the two sides until the 41st minute when Kenny 'Docus' found himself with space on the Harris 18 yard line. However, he managed to scuff his shot, but somehow the ball contrived to trundle into the net under 'Fuggy' Macdonald's body. **(1-2)**.

It was obviously a disappointingly poor goal for the Hearnachs to lose and especially so for 'Fuggy' who had hardly put a foot wrong up until that point. In the remaining minutes of the half Harris managed a Roddy Morrison effort which just went over the bar and Mark Morrison also had a shot cleared off the Carloway line.

H T – Harris 1 Carloway 2

The early opportunities in the second half fell to Carloway when "Barra" was presented with a half chance after a Domhnall Mackay header from a "Squeek" free kick fell at his feet, but he managed to put it wide of the post.

The 48th minute saw the Harris equalisier as despite two fine defensive headers by Louis Macdonald the ball arrived back in the Carloway box, fell at the feet of Mark Morrison who tapped the ball into the net from three yards out **(2-2)**

The loss of the goal stung Carloway into action and on the 50th minute a Macarthur pass found Macaulay just inside the corner of the 18 yard box, he dribbled past two defenders moving along the line of the box and he manoeuvred himself into a position to unleash a shot which 'Fuggy' managed to stop but failed to hold, however there was no Carloway player running in to take advantage. This was followed shortly afterwards by another Macaulay left foot shot which again was well saved by Fuggy.

Carloway continued to press and a neat inter passing move between three players presented Andrew "Tago" MacIver with an opportunity but his attempted lob was weak.

In the 58th minute, Macaulay picked the up the ball near the corner of the Harris 18 yard box and powered his way to the byeline, dribbled past two defenders along the byeline and he sent a perfectly weighted pass to Kenny "Docus" MacDonald who was unmarked, 14 yards from goal, and although his shot was powerful enough it was too near 'Fuggy' MacDonald, who made another decent save.

Eventually, in the 65th minute, Harris were presented with an opportunity as from a Carloway attack the ball was sent over the top of Carloway defence, landed at the feet of James Maclean who bore in on goal from the right hand side, reaching the corner of the 18 yard box. Craigie attempted to come off his line, hesitated momentarily, ran out to close down Maclean but this delay was enough for Maclean to compose himself and lob the ball over Craigie into the net, to the rapturous applause of the home support and Maclean himself disappeared underneath his teammates as they fell on top of him to celebrate his fine finish. **(3-2)**

The Harris goal seemed to deflate Carloway for a short while but by the 70th minute they were back on the attack. An exquisite bit of skill by Macaulay, on the byeline, allowed him to glide past two defenders, another perfectly weighted ball found 'Docus' once again unmarked and from a yard out, to the

disbelief and consternation of the Carloway support, he managed to hook the ball over the bar.

However in the 89th minute 'Docus' atoned for this miss, when Macaulay won the ball in midfield sent a ball in behind the Harris defence to him and he coolly slotted the ball past the onrushing 'Fuggy' from 12 yards to even up the tie and keep Carloway's 2013 unbeaten record on Lewis and Harris soil intact and also set up an interesting second leg tie. **(3-3)**

This was another excellent advert for the Eilean an Fhraoich cup and it must have been a bitter disappointment to the Hearnachs, who contributed so much to the tie and came within minutes of winning their first competitive match since, ironically, they won the Eilean an Fhraoich cup final in August 2011 (when John 'Fuggy' MacDonald was the manager of the team, he informed me). The Harris players to a man gave their all, were committed and tackled robustly (maybe a shade too much at times!!) and, my man of the match, Mark Morrison, along with Roddy Morrison, Kyle Macleod and 'Fuggy' just stood out that bit more than their team mates.

Although this fixture may not have seen Carloway at their best, none of the players was found wanting and what was encouraging was that they did not panic or capitulate on going behind, but continued to be patient looking and probing for an opening which did finally come. It should be noted that they played a very capable and much transformed Harris team and along with man of the match Macaulay they were best served by Louis Macdonald, Kenny "Docus", Cameron Macarthur, and their captain, Domhnall Mackay.

Harris Man of the Match: Mark Morrison

Carloway Man of the Match: Scott Macaulay