

North Wellington Whiskey's vs Island Bay

Raroa

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Terry McKenna

OK, so we start the game on fire 3-0 up after 20 minutes and playing like a million bucks. What a surprise, Ludo scores the first goal after a brilliant piece of interplay between the forwards Kevin, Terry and Ludo, who looked completely at home in each other's company. Terry slipped a beautiful ball to Ludo who slotted it home with all the confidence of a striker about to complete his sixth hat-trick of the season!

Then came probably the goal of the game, maybe season, as Mike found Ludo from a throw in who then volleyed it into the penalty area to find Terry battling in front of the defense to volley it across the goalie to make it 2-0, poetry in motion! Not long after we were again on the attack and the ball ended up on Terry's chest who dropped it onto his foot to Kev who beautifully chipped it over the goalie 3-0 up at half time. This was brilliant football from a team who was clearly going to continue in this vein and record a huge margin of victory.

What happened? At half-time we lacked any sort of leadership and direction – What were the subs going to be? Where was the team talk? Who was going to play where? Who was going to referee the second half? So many questions, but so few answers! Phil had done a great job as referee and we were all concerned that we could not follow up such a good performance. It eventually got sorted but we were not a cohesive unit going onto the pitch to start the second half and it showed! We lacked commitment, we lacked unity and soon it was 3-1, then 3-2 then unbelievably 3-3!! This can't be, I remember feeling this way when watching a certain Rugby World cup semi-final several years ago, the dominant and favourite team was being taken to pieces by a bunch of upstarts that should know their place and meekly submit to the inevitable! But they didn't. Well not straight away anyway.

The turning point came when we replaced referee Kev (a much better player than referee) with Dave (a much better....., no not really) and decisions started to go our way. Was this a coincidence? Or was it our pressure that began to tell and the opposition started making mistakes or had the 'quiet' word with Dave and cash transaction assisted his decision making? I'm not telling. But soon we had a much disputed penalty awarded which Ludo (our specialist penalty taker) easily slotted home. 4-3 to the good guys.

Very soon after we were awarded another penalty and despite some people saying it didn't go in, I'm writing the report and can say without doubt that it went in and we were 5-3 up (I know this to be true as at the clubrooms the result was 6-3 on the board). Anyway we got another goal late in the game – Ludo's third and we were comfortable 5-3 winners (I still think it was 6-3 as I had my back to the goal as soon as I took the penalty and cannot confirm that it did not go in).

So I got player of the match for sportsmanship, apparently the penalty didn't go in and that's because I felt the first penalty was awarded after it came off the middle of the opposition defenders back, which to referee Dave happened to look like an arm! Stiff shit I say, he should never have turned his back on the ball – what a plonker, he deserves a penalty for cowardice, you wouldn't see Paul doing that!

Overall a fair result with the better team winning despite having a nana nap for 20 mins at the start of the second half. We can win this competition, but we must keep focused for every minute of every game.