

Comberton Crusaders FC

Waterbeach Colts 2-10 Comberton Crusaders 9th September 2007

Newly promoted Crusaders put down an early marker at Waterbeach with an emphatic 10-2 victory to get the season off to a great start. Seven different scorers opened their accounts in a fine all-round display, and both teams did justice to the occasion by playing their football in a sporting manner.

From the first whistle the Comberton boys looked hungry, and after the first of many trademark left-wing runs it was Tom's subsequent throw-in to Joe that enabled the striker to run in from a narrow angle, sliding the ball across the face of goal for **Charlie** to tap in at the far post. The early advantage was soon doubled when Tom again produced a telling long throw, this time **Joe** letting the ball run before turning and hitting a rising shot from the edge of the area that arrowed into the top corner.

With barely five minutes gone and already 2-0 down the hosts started to push Crusaders back with some probing wide moves that had defenders turning. Defensive debutant Mark was soon battling to keep the Waterbeach attackers at bay, and Paul and Teddy both made important interventions as the hosts forced two corners in quick succession. Crusaders relieved the pressure momentarily, but the ball was returned with interest, catching the Crusaders defence too far advanced and allowing an unmarked attacker to take aim and lob over Harry into the far corner.

For a while Crusaders were restricted to breakaways as Waterbeach continued to press, but Harry was dominant in goal, claiming a low cross under pressure and calling well to his defence. A run from Joe made a chance for SamH that was well saved, and a Crusaders corner led to a succession of blocked shots before Teddy fired over. With half-time looming and Crusaders hunting for a third goal, like London buses, three arrived in quick succession. First Alex went on a probing run before firing into the box, where Joe's lunge laid the ball to **Tom**, who made no mistake with a low shot into the far corner. Then Joe went on a run himself before releasing **SamH**, whose powerful low drive gave the keeper no chance. In between, Waterbeach managed a shot that flew just over, but the score reached 5-1 as Alex jinked his way into range for a hard low shot, the keeper's parry falling for **Callum** to turn it just inside the post.

Soon after the restart Waterbeach burst through and looked dangerous before James tidied things up with a perfectly timed tackle. Crusaders then resumed the scoring when Tom put the ball into the danger area and **SamB** profited from a defender's scuffed clearance to prod home from close range. Almost immediately Harry claimed well after good battling from Jamie and Paul, and from his long clearance Callum controlled skilfully before releasing Tom, his raking cross turned in deftly at the near post by **Peter's** late run. A similar move led to Crusaders' eighth goal, this time SamB releasing Callum and Tom to exchange passes before **Tom** stroked the ball confidently inside the far post.

A brief spell of possession enabled Waterbeach to launch the ball forward, winning a penalty when a Crusaders defender inadvertently handled when jumping. Harry guessed correctly but the well-struck spot-kick bulged the net to make it 8-2. The hosts were denied a third when CT and Mark intervened robustly, only for Crusaders to again show their greater finishing power when **Callum** collected a defender's back header from SamH's chip and drove low to the keeper's left. In the final minutes Crusaders laid siege to the Waterbeach goal, with Mark and Milton combining down the right for Jamie to shoot over, and SamH doing likewise after good work by James and Charlie. Double figures were registered when **Joe** latched on to Charlie's throw and evaded two defenders before lashing into the roof of the net, and at the final whistle Crusaders were still pressing for more goals.

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