

Stretham Sporting 0 – 3 Comberton Crusaders

7 Jan 2012

The season resumed today after an unusually long Christmas break and the U11 Boys headed north on the A10 to play Stretham Sporting. The winter has not really kicked in yet so the weather was once again kind and the sun beamed down on the massively oversized pitch.

The opening minutes were pretty even with both side getting chances. Comberton set up in a familiar 3-4-1 formation and kept the shape to fill the space across the pitch. The plan began to pay off as they slowly began to dominate in midfield. Tom Dawes sent a corner into the box with pace, it was cleared but only as far as Ciaran Coyle who had taken up a great position in space on the edge of the 18 yard box. His instinctive shot went just wide of the post but it highlighted the space available.

Stretham went close a few minutes later when they created an opening for a shot after a throw-in on the right. Defensively Comberton kept it very tight with Aaron Biggs, Joe Cary and Matthew Coyle protecting Harry Newman's goal.

Both coaches made changes on 15 minutes but it was Comberton who took advantage. Owen Coyle received the ball on the right wing just over the half-way line and drove forward. George Taylor, moonlighting at centre forward, took up a position on the right side of the box where Owen punted the ball to him. George took the shot perfectly on the turn and slotted it past the keeper to open the scoring.

Aaron, Owen and Tom were combining nicely on the right wing and played some great pass and move football. Towards the end of the first half, Tom received a throw-in on the left wing and went on a trademark mazy run. As space opened up in front of him and he decided to place a shot to the near post and although the keeper got across the ball crossed the line. Comberton finished the half two up.

Comberton continued the second half with the same energy as the first and penned Stretham into their own box for long periods. On the occasions when the home side made it into the Comberton area they were closed down quickly and Joe Cary tidied up at the back.

The chances came in droves but the front men couldn't convert. The build-up play was fantastic and perhaps it was the extra length in the pitch but the final ball just didn't have the pace or accuracy to trouble the keeper.

Joe Cary cleared a Stretham attack and put the ball neatly into the path of the flying Tom Dawes. He ran at the defenders and waited until Owen Coyle was in position in space on the edge of the box. He slid the ball wide to Owen who closed in on the keeper and slipped it expertly past him to move the score to 3-0 to Comberton.

In the final minutes of the game Comberton created multiple chances but Stretham did just enough to keep the score at a respectable 3-0.

Overall this was a great performance by Comberton on a pitch designed for 11 a side. They kept their shape and discipline superbly and worked tirelessly for each other. Stretham have a good home record this season and they may have expected to exploit the unusual amount of space on the pitch but Comberton showed they had learned lessons from a similar situation away at Sutton earlier in the season. The whole team showed quality, discipline and technical ability all over the park and thoroughly deserved the win.

Squad: Harry Newman, Aaron Biggs, Joe Cary, Matthew Coyle, Chris McFarlane, Ciaran Coyle, Alfie Ward, Owen Coyle, Felix Serby, Tom Dawes, Joe McNally, Josh Price, George Taylor

Player of the week: Aaron Biggs