

Elite Under 19 FAI Cup Waterford United 5 - St Patrick's Athletic 2



Waterford United winger Johnny St. Ledger in control against St. Pats in the FAI Under 19 Cup

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Tommy Griffin and his charges continue to turn on the style and on Saturday last at the RSC they defeated St Patrick's Athletic emphatically in the Under 19 Cup.

They had won the previous five league games to move into second place on the league table and now t have moved into the quarter final of this competition following a game which produced some wonderful football and brilliant goals.

The manager brought in a few young players for this game and they certainly proved that they were up to the mark so things are going extremely well for this talented outfit who play the game in the proper manner.

The opening goal of the game arrived on five minutes when a brilliant move saw Conor O'Reilly turn provider for Johnny St Ledger, who set up Josh Aimiuhi and after his shot was blocked into the path of Ross Fitzpatrick, he bundled the ball over the line from an acute angle with his left-foot.

It took a super save from Waterford United goalkeeper Shane Morrissey on 16 minutes to keep his side in front when Ian O'Brien got his head on the end of a right-wing cross from Ethan Keogh but the netminder dived to his left to save well.

There was nothing that Morrissey could do about the levelling goal St. Patrick's Athletic scored after 26 minutes when a fine move saw Thomas Mulrooney play the ball out to the left for Conor Mahony who drilled an unstoppable left-footed shot to the far corner of the net from the left side of the penalty area.

The visitors from Inchicore were reduced to ten men in controversial circumstances four minutes later when referee Shane Dunphy judged that defender Ross McKenna was last man when bringing down Josh Aimiuhi and a straight red card followed before Andrew O'Connor drove the resulting free at keeper Evan Gaffney.

While it was the hosts that got off to the perfect start in the first half, the tide turned in favour of the ten men six minutes into the second half when Ian O'Brien pounced on a loose ball before unleashing a thunderous right-footed shot from 20 yards that flew into the top corner of the net past a helpless Shane Morrissey.

But there's no doubting that this goal sprung the Blues side into life as they went onto play some of their best football of the season to date.

The equalising goal arrived on 57 minutes when Patrick Fitzgerald set up Cormac Breslin with a neat pass, who in turn found St Ledger and after sending Andrew O'Connor clear down the left channel, his cross deceived keeper Gaffney before finding the top corner of the net.

O'Connor changed the game in favour of the home side two minutes later as the Blues outfit struck the front for the second time when he got on the end of a superb Fitzgerald cross before looping the ball over keeper Gaffney with an excellent header.

Niall McCabe's right-wing corner kick was headed back across the goal by Patrick Fitzgerald for Johnny St Ledger to power a close range header to the net for the Blues fourth goal on 82 minutes.

The magnificent second half performance of the Blues side was rubber stamped with a fifth goal in the final minute when a cross field pass from Andrew O'Connor set up Conor Whittle out on the right and he beat Evan Gaffney with a cracking effort.

Waterford United: Shane Morrissey, Conor O'Reilly (Conor Whittle `46), Andrew O'Connor, Kevin O'Connor, Patrick Fitzgerald, Killian Cantwell, Dean Reidy, Cormac Breslin, Josh Aimiuhi (Gavin Purcell `76), Ross Fitzpatrick (Niall McCabe `62), Johnny St. Ledger

St Patrick's Athletic: Evan Gaffney, Ross McKenna, Curtis Murphy, Daniel Campbell (Adam Walsh `81), Stephen Dunne, Sam Verdun (Stephen Hogan `64), Ethan Keogh (Robbie Doyle `38), Thomas Mulrooney, Ian O'Brien, Jack Bayly, Conor Mahony

Referee: Shane Dunphy (Wexford)