

Shelshocked Blues Exit Cup



Paddy Barrett wins this tackle against Shelbourne in the FAI Cup at Tolka Park on Friday night last.

Shelbourne - 1
Waterford United - 0

An incredible amount of squandered chances saw Waterford United bow out of the FAI Cup in Tolka Park on Friday night last.

For the second time this season the Blues dominated against the Reds but one again lost out by a single goal.

The young Waterford team were ravaged by injury and no less than six changes had to be made from the team which had beaten Shamrock Rovers in the league four days previously.

The substitute's bench only had three outfield players and two of those players were not fully fit. Given those problems this was an excellent display by the young Waterford team despite the fact that too many goal scoring chances were not taken.

The Blues midfielder Kevin O'Connor was voted 'Man of the Match' by the media corps in the Drumcondra venue. The hosts created the first chance of the game on nine minutes when Dylan Connolly beat Blues defender Paddy Barrett for pace inside the penalty area to go one on one with keeper Kevin Burns but the latter stood firm to make a superb save to deny the Shels attacker from close range.

Blues midfielder Thomas Croke came to his sides rescue less than two minutes later when Conor Murphy set up Jordan Keegan

down the left but his teasing cross was cut out as the home side tried to set down an early marker in the contest.

They had another golden opportunity to strike the front on 13 minutes when the dangerous Dylan Connolly got space this time out on the left side of the penalty area but despite putting in a cross, striker Lee Murtagh just couldn't control the ball four yards out as Burns collected.

It came as no surprise that Shelbourne were rewarded for their dominance as they went in front on 17 minutes when Brian Gannon released the ball down the right channel for Conor Murphy, who crossed for striker Jordan Keegan and after turning onto his left-foot, his effort from 12 yards gave keeper Kevin Burns no chance.



Paul Quilty on the attack for the Blues against Shelbourne in the FAI Cup at Tolka Park last Friday.

The Blues should have found themselves back on level terms four minutes into the second half when Doherty picked up a pass down the left from Philip Drohan before putting the ball on a plate for Paul Quilty but somehow he failed to find the net from deep inside the area and minutes later, Kevin O'Connor struck the top of the crossbar with an angled shot.

Blues goalkeeper Kevin Burns produced a magical save to deny the home side their second goal of the game on 59 minutes when Jake Donnelly did well out on the right side to crack in a fierce drive that looked destined for the back of the net but his stunning effort was tipped over the bar.

Quilty missed another great chance to find the back of the net on 64 minutes when Doherty linked up with Conor Whittle, who sent in a cross that the centre forward looked certain to score on this occasion but again he missed in front of an open goal.

In stoppage time the Blues were guilty of missing a glorious chance to level when Jack Doherty sent in a right-wing free kick that broke to Conor Whittle, who fired into the path of Thomas Whitty but he blazed over from close range.

There was another opportunity for the Blues to level matters seconds later when a long Vinny Sullivan ball fell to Jack Doherty on the volley on the edge of the penalty area but his well struck shot went narrowly wide.

SHELBOURNE: Greg Murray, Brian Gannon, Philip Hand (Simon Dixon '78), Ryan Robinson, Lee Desmond, Jake Donnelly, Keith Quinn, Dylan Connolly, Jordan Keegan (Gareth Coughlan '69), Lee Murtagh, Conor Murphy.

WATERFORD UNITED: Kevin Burns, Conor Whittle, Gary Delaney, Paddy Barrett, Gavin O'Donovan, Jack Doherty, Kevin O'Connor, Thomas Croke, Philip Drohan (Thomas Whitty '77), Vinny Sullivan, Paul Quilty (Shaun Corcoran '89).

REFEREE: Rob Harvey (Dublin)