

HIGHLAND LEAGUE

MONDAY NOVEMBER 8 1999



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Fort take it away at last

HAIRN COUNTY 4
FORT WILLIAM 1

FORT recorded their first win of the season - and one of their best away victories.

Three early goals in the space of seven minutes set the visitors on easy street and Fort boss Dave Milroy felt his side should have scored more.

Milroy said: "We actually made loads of chances and could have won by a much more convincing margin."

"We treated the game like a cup tie and it was great to notch up our biggest away win."

He added: "The atmosphere was buzzing on the bus home and I'm really sorry that we'll now be out of action for a couple of weeks, with Scotland's game on Saturday."

"The players worked really hard and got just reward for all their efforts. I know it's just one result but it gives us a platform."

Fort hit the back of the net three times in the first 13 minutes with Paul MacDonald's sixth-minute strike paving the way.

Four minutes later, Graham McKenzie pounced on a Colin MacLeod mistake to rattle in No. 2 and when the same player netted from close range three minutes later the Fort players could scarcely believe it.

Stuart Vane added a fourth goal when he got on the end of another fine run by McKenzie to slush the ball past Harold Annand.

Gary Nicol scored what was no more than a late consolation goal for County.

WICK ACADEMY 0
BUCKIE THISTLE 2

BUCKIE kept in touch with the leaders with a hard-earned win over a spirited Academy outfit.

Jags boss Allan Scott said: "Wick Academy certainly gave us something to think about as they matched us on determination and could have taken the lead on a couple of occasions."

Graham Green got on the end of a Mickey MacPherson cross to slide the ball home for the opener before Steve Rattray sealed the points when he tucked away a deep John Scott corner kick.

Academy's hopes of a comeback were dashed when influential midfielder Martin Gunn was red-carded for a wild challenge on Levi Stephens in the 66th minute.

FIXTURES This week involves Highland League clubs:
ACADEMY - Dundee City
BUCKIE THISTLE - Forth
HAIRN COUNTY - Forth
HAIRN COUNTY - Forth
HAIRN COUNTY - Forth
HAIRN COUNTY - Forth

Victory is not so elementary for Watson

PETERHEAD 4
DEVERONVALE 2

DESPITE the resignation of their manager Ronnie Brown the day before, Highland League champions Peterhead ran out convincing winners over the Banffers at Balnolzie.

"I found it very difficult to lift myself before the game and it was certainly a

day of mixed emotions as both Ronnie Brown and Mitch Ravidge are friends of mine."

Watson added: "I had a good chat with the players before the game and they responded well by going out to defeat a much-improved Vale side."

Deveronvale boss Malcolm Murray felt that his side started well but failed to harness the wind in the second half.

Murray said: "We were the better side in the first period playing against the wind but four bad mistakes cost us the game, although Jamie Watt hit the post with the score at 1-1 and had that gone in things might have been different."

Vale took the lead when striker-turned-midfielder Charlie Rowley fired the ball under Ivor Pirie in the ninth minute. Peterhead responded with a

Colin Milne header on the quarter-hour mark and in the 33rd minute Richie Livingstone pounced on indecision in the visitors' defence to chip the ball over Jim Will.

Two more goals within the space of four minutes - from Gary Clark and a second strike from Colin Milne - helped Peterhead maintain second spot, only four points behind Broch.

Noble gesture inspires Forres

CLACH 2
FORRES MECHANICS 2

CLACH once again failed to shine at Grant Street, being a late goal only minutes after scoring the equaliser.

Manager Graeme Bennett said: "We're creating plenty of chances but there's certainly a lack of confidence in the squad, although I thought we were worthy of a draw until Forres grabbed that late goal."

Mechanics manager Fraser Kelias was full of praise for some of his side's elder statesmen.

Kelias said: "I thought that Mike Noble was the man of the match, closely followed by both Jonathan Bellshaw and Gordon Connolly."

"Although we played well, I was annoyed by the loss of that late goal."

Mike Noble gave the Can-Cans a second goal in a matter of minutes from the end Mark Holmes notched the equaliser.

With injury-time approaching, Gordon Connolly got on the end of a Charlie Brown cross to seal the points.

COVE RANGERS 2
RUSSELL McFee double helped the hostesters earn a share.

Brora boss Andy MacLeod said: "Russell is having a good spell since we moved him back into the middle of midfield, hitting four goals in his last three games."

Cove manager Bob Summers absolved trialist goalkeeper Stephen Elliot for a couple of mistakes.

Elliot spilled a Murray effort to allow McFee an easy tap in before Mike Beattie netted the equaliser with a low drive.

Andy McCran's inwinding corner ended up in the back of the net on the hour mark but McFee once again came to Brora's rescue when he stroked the ball home after Elliot's clearance had fallen to Donnan Murray.

LOSSBURNHUTH 0
ROTHIES 1

ROTHIES skipper Colin Smith fired home a 53rd-minute penalty to give the Speysiders victory.

Lossie manager Jim George felt his side probably did enough to call a share. He said: "Both teams played some good football but it took a soft penalty award to give Rothies the points."

Smith calmly slotted the penalty past Doak to take the Speysiders into a highly respectable mid-table position.

Huntly's silverware is Guided by Russell

FRASERBURGH 0
HUNTLY 2

HUNTLY deservedly picked up their fourth qualifying Cup in the past eight years with a professional performance over a Fraserburgh side who disappointed.

Dave Morland's masterly display at the heart of the Huntly defence laid the foundation for the Black-and-Gold midfield to catch the shots, with young Russell Guiding showing composure far beyond his years.

Skipper Morland was delighted to get his hands on the trophy once again.

He said: "It's not often you can say that Paul Keith wasn't in the game much and that's down to the whole side. I think we turned in our best performance of the season. Ronnie Smith and Paul Keith did very well to stop Michael Stephen putting over the type of dangerous balls he's well known for."

Stronger
Morland added: "That's the second time I've been in the winning side in the qualifying Cup and getting to the final and doing well gives a huge lift to the whole club. There's no way Huntly are out of the league race as we've brought in a few young lads who are starting to gel."

"Russell Guided seems to come on stronger towards the end of the game, unlike the older lads like myself who are looking for the final whistle."

Huntly manager Phil Brown paid tribute to his side and young Guided in particular.

Bonnyman said: "I thought that Ronnie Smith, Paul Black and Dave Morland especially were tremendous in blunting the thrust of Paul Keith and Michael Stephen."

"Russell Guided is a cultured player with the ability to go all the way in the game. The higher you go in the game, the more you need the ability to use the



Huntly celebrate at Borroughs after clinching another qualifying Cup success.

simple pass and Russell is able to do that. Martin Stewart is always a threat. Even when he's not going so well and you might be tempted to take him off, you think twice."

Broch boss Charlie Duncan was clearly disappointed by his side's lacklustre performance.

He said: "I was disappointed that we had one or two players only half-fit for the game, but I said before the match that their strength was the defensive part of Morland and Paterson

and that's the way it turned out to be. I think we played better today than we did against Peterhead to get to the final, but at the end of the day I think that Huntly deserved their win and Dave Morland and Andy Paterson were outstanding."

Duncan added: "Hopefully, our squad, with several new youngsters in it, will learn from the experience of playing in the qualifying Cup final and will stand them in good stead for the future."

Fraserburgh went into the match without suspended skipper Kris Hunter and Paul Keith took over the role of captain.

The Broch also included teenage midfielder Scott Mackie in place of ex-Huntly striker Brian Thomson - but his roles were reversed in a 64th minute substitution.

Huntly dominated a game, which badly needed a goal to spark it into life. But it took until the 69th minute for a typical piece of Martin Stewart

opportunity to give Huntly a deserved lead.

His first close-range effort was cleared off the line by Russell McBride but Stewart was first to rebound to chip the ball over keeper Billy Gordon into the roof of the net from four yards.

Fraserburgh went in search of the equaliser and came close in the 77th minute when substitute Brian Thomson's header from a Goddes cross flew inches wide. However, in the final minute,

JUNIOR FOOTBALL

Lads Club get the drop on Luger men

by Dave Macdermid

THERE were mixed fortunes for North-east sides involved in the second round of the O.V.D. Scottish Junior Cup.

Goals from Colin Sherriffs and Robbie Duncan gave Lads Club an excellent victory away to Luger Borewey Thistle who had taken an early lead through Ian Rae.

Craig Stewart, Gordon Troop (2) and Jason Sutherland were all on target as Sunnybank swept aside East Kilbride Thistle at Heatherlyfe. The visitors dominated the game with 10 men after keeper Gary Wardlaw was sent off.

Strikers from Steve Crombie and Martin Low, an own goal and a Keith Hay drive gave FC Stroud a comfortable success at Broughy Athletic.

Inverurie Lovers were in seventh heaven after thumping New Elgin at Harlaw Park in a game which saw Ryan Spencer (2), Alan Selbie (2), Lenny McDonald, Craig Ross and Stuart Mitchell all find the net.

Cruden Bay once found themselves down at home to Bankfoot Athletic. But goals from Allan Cooper, Mark Jones and Neil Ellis forced a replay in a 3-3 draw.

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