

Watergrasshill Utd A – County Cup Champions 2008

County Cup Final: Watergrasshill Utd A 0 – Ballincollig A 0 (AET) (Hill win 4-3 on Penalties)

The season ended for the Watergrasshill Utd A team with a nail biting penalty shoot out victory over Ballincollig in Turners Cross last Sunday week, the bank holiday weekend. The game ended all square at full time and again at the end of extra time but this score line was not a fair reflection of the game as it was an end to end game with numerous chances created at both ends unlike your typical tight finals.

The game began with Ballincollig taking the game to the Hill for the first twenty minutes as the Hill boys took time to shake off the nerves of their first final in Turners Cross for the club. However once settled into the game the Hill began to hit Ballincollig on the break with the two front men for the Hill, Johnny Dorgan and Jacob, causing endless problems for the Ballincollig defence and always looking a threat once on the ball.

Indeed it was Jacob who created a few half chances before providing the best chance of the game to Johnny Dorgan after Jacob had got behind the Ballincollig defence and whipping the ball across the square beating the defenders and goalkeeper leaving Johnny with an easy finish for a striker of his ability. However Johnny put the ball to the left of the post much to the shock of the large Hill crowd in attendance.

At this point the game turned into an end to end game with Ballincollig creating a few chances, one in particular where Hill keeper Aimee Butsana made a great save when one on one with the Ballincollig striker. Paddy O'Regan struck a sweet volley from the edge of the box which nearly crept in but for a good save from the Ballincollig keeper as the game ebbed and flowed and the first half ended at a frenetic pace.

The second half was more of the same with the Hill dominating immediately and creating chances on the break. Kieran Coakley came on to replace Abdullah in midfield and made an instant impact with some good runs from midfield and making the Hill more of an attacking force. The back three of Kieran Foley (captain), Michael John O'Sullivan and Aimee were solid in defence while wingers Pips and Eddie Moynihan had the thankless job of man marking Ballincollig's pacey wingers. Gavin Daly came on for Aimee left back with Pips going into the back line with Gavin slotting in on the right wing and began causing the Ballincollig defence with all sorts of problems. Pa Mooroney, Kieran Coakley, Jacob and Johnny Dorgan all had half chances to win the game in normal time while Aimee keeper made a string of fine saves to keep Ballincollig at bay and so extra time was needed.

Ballincollig had the better of the exchanges in the first half of extra time while the Hill had the stronger second half as Ballincollig began to tire and the Hill subs with Morgan Foley introduced for Eddie Moynihan at the start of extra time full of running. However the best chance in extra time fell to Ballincollig when a blistering shot was finger tip on the crossbar by Aimee and as it rebounded down on the goal line, Aimee reacted quickly to plug the ball from the foot off the oncoming Ballincollig striker to complete an amazing double save much to the awe of the Hill supporters.

Scoreless after full time and extra time lead to the dreaded penalty shoot out and the Hill sorted out their first 5 penalty takers with the rest of the players number for the sudden death if needed. Ballincollig took the first penalty which was excellently saved by Aimee much to the delight of the Hill supporters and the Hill looked to be in the driving seat. However up stepped team captain Kieran Foley to take the Hills first penalty which was saved by the Ballincollig keeper and the shoot out took another turn. Ballincollig scored their second penalty and the pressure was back on the Hill as Pips walked up to take the Hill's second. Pips scored and we were back level at 1 all with 2 penalties each taken. Again Ballincollig scored their 3rd penalty and up stepped underage substitute Gavin Daly to dispatch the Hill's 3rd penalty and we were back level at 2 all with 3 penalties taken and the pressure was back on Ballincollig and the tension in the ground was unbelievable. Aimee the keeper had got close to the 2 penalties scored and he saved again low to his right to save Ballincolligs 4th penalty and his second save in the shootout much to the joy of the large Hill crowd and players. Paddy Regan stepped up to coolly slot home the Hill's 4th penalty which put the Hill in control of the shoot out. Ballincollig scored their 5th penalty and all the pressure was on impressive second half substitute Kieran Coakley to win the County Cup for the first time in the young clubs history. And that he duly did with a peach of an effort high to the right hand corner of the goals to send off jubilant scenes of celebration between players and supporters alike. Kieran Coakley and Aimee Keeper were both smothered with players as they took the applause for this great penalty shoot out victory. Michael John O'Sullivan, an underage player with the club playing his first year of junior football, was awarded with the Man of the Match award after a commanding display from the back with some outstanding breaks forward. However word has to be given to Aimee Butsana, our keeper, for his string of fine saves throughout the game and indeed his two memorable and decisive saves in the penalty shoot out. Kieran Foley gladly picked up the Cup and thanked Ballincollig for such a great game and the celebrations commenced long into the night.

It was a fitting end to the season for our A team as they were just tipped off of winning their league where they only lost one league game all season but had too many draws which cost them dearly.

The club would like to thank all of our supporters that turned out in huge numbers in Turners Cross and hope they enjoyed our celebration barbeque in the Fir Tree bar on the Monday. The club would also like to thank all of our sponsors on the day from gear sponsors, The Fir Tree bar and Foley Plumping & Heating Services along with all who contributed to advertisements in our match programme. We would like to sincerely thank Watergrasshill, Glenville, Bartlemy and Rathcormac National Schools for allowing us to parade the cup in their schools in front of our underage members.