Match report

Shannonside U12 Boys (Amber team) vs. Inter Kenmare, Sat 14/10/23 @ 14:00, National Cup, Round 2

Our 2nd Round National Cup fixture brought us to Kenmare on Saturday 14th October for a 2pm Kick off. Full squad available on a dry, sunny afternoon. Bright start by the boys, taking the game to Kenmare. Our midfielders John Hanlon (captain for the day), Luke Fitzgibbon and Michael Cribbin were full of running and were getting their tackles in and looking to play through Balls to John Keane up front. The work rate from these 3 in midfield is tremendous and each of them had a shot on goal within the 1st 15 minutes. We were enjoying the better possession and had some excellent passing moves. John K created a ½ chance for himself, but the ball just wouldn't come down quick enough for his right foot rocket. A definite let off for Kenmare, if he had connected, it was a certain goal. Against the run of play, we conceded by a brilliant piece of play by their No. 10 + 12 left Jack with no chance. The bench was needed as James Tobin, Adam Lawlor and Cillian O Malley made their entrance. Instant impact as their energy in midfield allowed us to gain the upper hand again. Cillian was having his best game and its brilliant to see his development. James Tobin brought a calmness to our play and looked to play 1-2's at every opportunity. Adam was just everywhere, closing down the spaces and looking to play that through ball to the front players. Just before ½ time, Dale Fitzgibbon drove into the Kenmare penalty area and got through 3 defenders and placed the ball into the bottom corner. 1-1. What a goal and what determination, he had no right to score, but Dale just never gives up and has a brilliant attitude. It was well deserved for a good 1st half performance.

At half time, the only message was to up the work rate even more. The team that finished the 1st half started the second half in order to keep the momentum going. Within 5 minutes of the restart, Darragh Whelan danced his way through a tight Kenmare defence and somehow squeezed the ball into the bottom corner. 1-2. Excellent play and with a newfound release of energy they started playing more to their potential. The game was opening up and with some great interplay between John, Luke and Michael they released Darragh and he doesn't miss, 1-3. From the restart, Kenmare went more direct, but the back 3 of Tomas Greaney, Noah O Malley and Dale Fitzgibbon stood firm. It is testament to these 3 players that Jack Fitzgibbon had only 3 saves to make the entire match. They say that if a player gets past Tomas once in a game its luck and it will not happen a 2nd time! Noah, expertly marshalled the defence in his 3rd start of the season and is definite future captain material. We call him the new Maldini! Darragh, now in full flow scored his deserved hat-trick (his second in only 3 games!) in the 52nd minute to make it 1-4 with 8 minutes of normal time to go. Another fine move, as the team worked the ball from defence to attack in 5 passes and Darragh calmly finished. There is no better finisher in the league.

Kenmare threw everything forward and piled on the pressure. John Keane, now playing at right back made a lung bursting run to cover a ball over the top and saved a definite shot on goal. Sean Cribbin made a no. of blocks, clearances and driving runs forward to relieve the pressure. After going up for a corner, he made a chance for himself dancing past 3-4 tackles but narrowly missed the target. With 5 minutes remaining, Kenmare got their 2nd and deservedly so, a fine powerful finish leaving Jack (AKA Allison Becker) with no chance! The game was getting scrappy and the referee found an additional 4 minutes of injury time and it was getting a bit too close for comfort. Luke and John H dropped deeper to help out the defence and they made countless tackles and clearances. How they had the energy at this stage of the match is just unbelievable. They are a formidable central midfield partnership. Michael used his strength to relieve pressure down the left hand side and won 3 throws in quick succession. After 64 minutes of play, the referee blew the whistle to the joy of the travelling supporters. A well-deserved win against a very good Inter Kenmare side and we look forward to the 3rd round of the National Cup.

Many thanks to all for making the trip and to Mike Gavin and the Inter Kenmare club for hosting us and the refreshments afterwards, it was very much appreciated and full credit to them for such generous hospitality and best of luck for the remainder of the season. Also thanks to our referee for the day for officiating. Team: Jack Fitzgibbon, Tomas Greaney, Noah O Malley, Dale Fitzgibbon, Michael Cribbin, John Hanlon (C), John Keane, Luke Fitzgibbon, Darragh Whelan, Adam Lawlor, Cillian O Malley, James Tobin, Sean Cribbin, Josh O Mahoney, Sam Lewis. Scorers: Darragh Whelan x3, Dale Fitzgibbon