Match report

Shannonside U12 Boys (Amber team) vs. Granagh, Sat 09/12/23 @ 11:00, League Div2

It was gale force winds in Shanagolden as we welcomed Granagh for our 4th league match of the season. This was a game we dominated from start to finish with the strong winds having a huge bearing on the match for both teams. We won the coin toss & our captain Cillian O Malley opted to play with the wind 1st half. From the 1st whistle, it was attack at every opportunity, led by our attacking wing backs, Tomas Greaney and John Hanlon, who spent the entire 1st half in Granagh's half. Luke Fitzgibbon started brightly, controlling the centre and playing clever balls through to ever running Michael Cribbin, James Tobin and Cillian O Malley ahead of him. The wind at this point was causing major disruption as through balls just flew away and our corner kicks and free kicks outside the box were difficult to deliver. Michael hit a rocket on 10 minutes that just whistled past the Granagh post. Credit to Granagh, they defended brilliantly, always getting a block or foot in to disrupt our attackers, with Michael, James & Cillian getting closed down quickly. Dale Fitzgibbon and Adam Lawlor were introduced on 15 minutes and brought renewed energy. Adam was asked to do so much running off the ball to create the space inside and he did it brilliantly. Dale, playing in midfield finally broke the deadlock, by dancing around 2 defenders and burying the ball to the bottom right corner, an absolute brilliant finish for his 2nd of the season. It was Luke's beautifully timed and accurate through ball that found him, brotherly love! 1-0 and thoroughly deserved and they continued to pile forward with James Tobin continuing his fine form from recent matches and posing a threat for every attack. James and John on the LHS were causing the Granagh defence all sorts of problems, over lapping runs, inside / outside, these two are really developing a fantastic understanding. Their energy, work rate and field position is fantastic. Just 3 minutes before the break and totally against the run of play, Granagh were level. A long range shot from near the corner flag, took a deflection, was assisted by the wind and looped over Jack Fitzgibbon and off the post and in. There was nothing Jack could do and it was probably only the 2nd or 3rd time Jack touched the ball the entire half. 1-1 at half time.

Second half started same as the first half, with the lads enjoying all the possession, but playing against the wind, which actually suited them more as they played some lovely passing moves to move the ball up the pitch. On the Right hand side, Tomas Greaney was playing an absolute stormer of a game, constantly over lapping and getting into the box, earning corner after corner. He just never stops and again, never gets beaten in a 1v1. Granagh, aided by the wind, were more of a threat in the 2nd half and this is when Noah O Malley and John Keane were superb. Noah in the right place at the right time and John sweeping up any balls over the top and limiting the Granagh attack the long range shots that rarely troubled Jack. As the half wore on, we just couldn't find the breakthrough that our play deserved. Granagh did have a period of pressure with 2 corners in quick succession, but as ever, Noah marshalled the defence and John K cleared the lines. With 10 minutes remaining, Tomas made another bursting run down the right, skipped past the Granagh defender and a lovely cut back to James in the box and the shot was just wide. Luke had a fierce drive from outside the box and the Granagh keeper made a brave diving save to his left to deny him. Moments later, Luke rattled the post with a fine effort, this time Dale returning the favour with the assist, but still no luck and that was all that was missing. It was just one of those days, but despite not getting all the points, it was the performance that was most pleasing, on another day, many of those opportunities go in. Darragh Whelan is still injured, but he was there supporting his teammates, it was a game that needed his finishing skills and dancing feet and hopefully we will see him back before the end of the year.

Thanks to the parents for their continued support and to P. Manning who refereed an excellent game, allowing the game to flow throughout. Next game is away to Dromore on Thurs 28/12/23, time TBC and 2 days later, away to Carrig Celtic on Sat 30/12/23, time TBC.

Team: Jack Fitzgibbon, Tomas Greaney, John Keane, Noah O Malley, John Hanlon, Michael Cribbin, Luke Fitzgibbon, James Tobin, Cillian O Malley (C), Adam Lawlor, Dale Fitzgibbon. Scorer: Dale Fitzgibbon x1