



League Cup Match: 07-02-10

Match Report 9

Man of the Match: Harry Brown

Special Mention(s): Richard Lyons / Ed Steeden

Goal Scorer(s): Frank Allison 1, Ciaron Lyons 1

CPR Spartans 2 Pinewood Pumas 2

#### First Half:

After last weeks mauling against Pinewood in the League Cup, I'd be lying if I said I wasn't a little apprehensive ahead of the game and I suspect I was not alone. From the kick-off, wow what a difference!! To a man, what an incredible transformation as we saw the Spartans play the kind of football we know they can play. We didn't give Pinewood space to even breath and immediately took control. It was clear that Pinewood, like rabbits caught in the headlights, were stunned and shaken as they realised they had a completely different match on their hands. The football we were watching was a joy to behold and in stark contrast to that we witnessed 7 days earlier. The breakthrough came following a period of Spartans pressure when after a corner by Luke, Ciaron's strike on goal was parried by the keeper only to be slotted in by a vigilant Frank, coming on as a substitute, with his first touch of the game to put us in the lead, 1-0. From the restart we went straight back at them and within a few minutes we earned ourselves a free kick about 25 yards from Pinewood's goal. Liam stepped forward and thumped the free kick, only for a collective groan to ring out from the Spartans band of supporters, as we saw the ball rebound off their cross bar. As if that wasn't difficult enough to swallow, shortly after a superb cross by Liam, Ciaron's strike hit the crossbar and Luke, alive to the situation, was the first to react and pounced on the rebound, with a follow up strike of his own. Ironically, the fact Luke struck his shot so sweetly probably accounted for the 2nd round of pain for the Spartans fan club, as yet again, the ball hit the woodwork, only this time, bouncing to safety. Had we have taken a 2-0 lead at this point, few would have thought that unjust. With some great off the line defending from Alexander, Andrew and Joe, 1-0 remained the score as the half time whistle was blown.

#### Second Half:

However, 'Murphy's Law' working as it does, within a matter of minutes of the Kick-off Pinewood dug out an equaliser, 1-1. With Gary having moved Josh out to nullify the threat from their right winger and moved Harry into the vacant centre back position created, it was becoming clear that the two lads were thriving in their new roles. With a fantastic team spirit, Nick, Richard and Ed a formidable force in midfield, coupled with the lads playing the football they are clearly capable of, we once again looked the team mostly likely. Sure enough with only 10 minutes left on the clock Luke's free kick found its way to Frank who crossed it to Ciaron, who scored with an excellent finish to restore our lead, 2-1. It was at this time that we saw a run from Harry that typified the spirit and leadership he had shown from the moment the match started. Harry, having taken a pass, burst forward in to Pinewood's half. Despite attempts from the opposition to stop Harry, like a man possessed, he battled through challenge after challenge, to eventually win us a throw-in deep into opposition territory, a fantastic moment, and one that could only inspire teammates and supporters alike. Pinewood then began pushing forward with great determination. James to the rescue again with some fantastic goalkeeping skills as always. However with only a few minutes left Pinewood forced home an equaliser, 2-2. Happily, despite them going close again, the match eventually finished, 2-2. Stand out performances included Harry, Richard, Ed & Josh, although praise has to go to every member of the Spartans for what was a superb come back after last weeks performance.

Unfortunately Sam Wellard's sustained old and new injury forced him to sit the game out, appreciation from all the team for his support.

#### Man of the Match: Harry Brown

Harry, a fantastic superb performance, you certainly rose to the challenge. You dominated your position and you certainly gave the Pinewood forwards a run for their money, frustrating them, time and time again, never giving them an inch to move or play. Attitude, commitment, desire and spirit was first class. I was extremely happy with your performance, very well done Harry, keep it going.

#### Special Mentions: Richard Lyons / Ed Steeden

Guys you both had a really tough job to do for this game and you both certainly didn't let me down. You both held the team together with parallel disciplined positional play, every challenge was followed by another, backing each other, tackle after tackle, even your attacking and supporting play was in unison. A brilliant gutsy solid performance which displayed all attributes, well done boys.

#### Previous weeks League Cup tie - CPR Spartans 1-7 Pinewood Pumas

A complete contrast to the above match. The Spartans as a team in general, definitely suffered from not playing for quite a while. Acceptable facts; a lack of fitness, sharpness and cohesion. Non acceptable facts; no desire, attitude, spirit or commitment, to a certain extent, mostly expected, not expected, basic defending errors. We have thankfully moved on, we are now back on track, well done boys.

#### Man of the Match: James Blair

Not many keepers are awarded a MOM with a scoreline that high, but if it wasn't for your overall performance, it could have been a cricket score, some great shot stopping which highlighted your agility, well played James.

#### Special Mentions: Liam Farrell / Ciaron Lyons

You both had very a similar game, albeit different positions. You both single - handedly stood out and gave a good account of yourselves, a very positive display, commendable workrate and commitment, I couldn't have asked for any more from you two, well done guys.