

Midlothian reach semi final of Blue Flames Summer Cup



On Sunday, Midlothian's Walking Footballers competed in the prestigious Blue Flames Walking Football Club second annual Summer Cup Tournament at the Blue Flame Sports Centre in Benton, Newcastle.

Blue Flame have a huge membership and regularly attract thirty plus at normal walking football nights. Such was the local interest that the hosts fielded four sides in the tournament. There were also teams from Redcar in York, Middlesbrough, Sunderland, Seaton Carew, Glasgow and Hibs' Football Fans in Training.

The format for the tournament was three groups of five with the winners of each group plus the best placed runner up gaining places in the semi final. Each game was refereed by fully qualified referees.

The games were played at state of the art facilities which would have left most SPFL clubs green with envy

Midlothian were forced to shuffle the pack due to some of the regulars being unable to play. This meant that striker Kenny McDonald dropped back into the goalkeeping position, whilst veteran Jim Shepherd and Davy Whyte played as main defenders with Ali Patterson in the middle and Mike Addison up front. Ian Anderson and Vivian Wallace were the subs.

Midlothian eased through the first two matches without conceding a goal, beating Blue Flames A 2-0, then repeating the score-line against Blue Flames D.

There was a bizarre twist in the third game against Seaton Carew B when Midlothian scored twice before losing their first goal of the tournament. The players left the pitch with both

teams convinced the result was a 2-1 win to Midlothian however it later came to light that the referee had reported the score as a 1-1 draw. After an appeal was considered the referee's decision stood and the draw was recorded as the official score. This made the final group game of vital importance and Midlothian got back on track with a swashbuckling performance to come back from the early loss of a goal to win 2-1 against Sporting Chance.

The first semi final saw Midlothian paired with the impressive Seaton Carew A who had not conceded a goal throughout the group matches. Seaton controlled the game from the start and gained a two goal lead within five minutes, before Midlothian began to assert themselves prompted by the inspiring Davy Whyte. Seaton Carew were stunned by a long thunderbolt from Ali Patterson which rattled the back of the net to make the score 2-1 midway through the game however any hope of a comeback was quickly extinguished when the Englishmen upped a gear and scored a third goal with four minutes to go. This proved to be the final score.

Seaton Carew A went on to defeat Sunderland 1-0 in the final leaving Midlothian's Ali Patterson as the only player to score against them in the entire tournament.

The Midlothian Squad were delighted with the team's overall performance in the competition and made many friends with their neat and attractive passing style which controlled and dominated many of the games. The entire squad gave their all however Davy Whyte deserves a special mention for his driving performance and he was clearly one of the best players in the tournament.

The Midlothian club will be playing their next game in Portugal in a tournament which will be featured in the Edinburgh Reporter.