Martin Ingram Memorial Cup

Thursday the 12th August marked the day that former Taunton Youth U16 Team Manager and Tiverton Youth U18 Manager, Martin Ingram passed away. Football development and in particular, youth football was Martin's passion, therefore it was decided to have a Cup competition in his memory between the two clubs which will become an annual event between Taunton Youth FC Community Trust U18’s and Tiverton Town U18’s. Proceeds from match entry are going to Cancer research and the St Margaret’s Taunton Hospice where Martin was well looked after.

It was fitting that there were players who worked with Martin both in the Tiverton and the Taunton Squads, notably with Tiverton Captain Albert Hacker, Dillon Croft, Olly Simkin, Noah Brown, Zach Sydenham, Matt Dodden and with Taunton, Charlie White, and Ollie Wright. The core of Taunton’s Squad comprised of players who have been in the Taunton Youth programme from its concept with Tiverton’s Squad being Martin’s new venture formed last year before he sadly succumbed to cancer. Being a first-time event, both teams were keen to make their mark and with a Taunton kick off there was tension in the air.

From the offset Taunton were confident with goalkeeper Charlie Hawkins a commanding presence at the rear and a solid back three of Ollie Wright, Jake Poole, and Charlie White. A great ball from Jake, received by Ryan Davis who in the first two minutes of the game had a shot on target indicated what Taunton were capable of. Confidently stopped by the Tiverton keeper, we knew this was going to be an entertaining match. Four minutes later Thomas Stone scores for Taunton only for an offside to be given. Tiverton try and settle and start applying pressure to Taunton however some great interception play and footwork by Charlie White and Lewis Wright means the attempt to break through is thwarted. Adam Willis has a shot on target forcing the Tiverton keeper to the ground who then on recovery launches a Tiverton counter attack. Fifteen minutes in and Tiverton have a shot at goal which sails over the top bar.

Taunton’s passing play is excellent. The ball threads easily from Tai Bewes to Ryan Davis back across to Adam Willis in ample space for another attempt on goal. A foul on a Taunton player at the edge of the Tiverton box with the ball just crossing the line almost saw Taunton open the scoring, only for the referee to bring the ball back for the free kick. Eventually the pressure is too much for Tiverton and 20 minutes in a Ryan Davis shot from the right wing deflects off Tiverton’s Drew Sloan beating the Tiverton keeper. Taunton celebrate, 1 – 0.

Setting an example for his teammates, Tiverton’s Albert Hacker is like a terrier making a real nuisance of himself threatening to create the opportunity to equalise. Taunton resist and counter, however a shirt pull on Thomas Stone in the box gave Adam Willis the opportunity to double the score when he steps up to take the penalty. Confident, the ball finds the back of the net, 2 – 0.

Once again Albert leads the fight back and Tiverton get right back in the game. The pressure is on Taunton, but composure is the name of the game with controlled clinical passing. Patience is a virtue, one which Adam Willis has plenty of, receiving an expertly threaded ball, some great foot work and a shot on target. Half time and Taunton lead 3- 0.

Second half and within three minutes more of the same. Adam Willis scores again bringing the score to 4 – 0. At this point most opposition would dishearten, however Tiverton continued to battle and were unlucky not to score with a great cross into the Taunton box being headed just to the right of goal. Charlie Hawkins, with a clean sheet is replaced by Oliver Saunders in the Taunton goal. From this point I can only say that Taunton dominated with a fantastic run of passing play. Probably the only Taunton defensive error of the game saw Ollie Saunders faced with a one on one and a certain Tiverton goal only for him to perform the best reaction save I have seen in a long while blocking the shot. Taunton counter and once again expertly passed balls found Evan Howse - on as a replacement for Thomas Stone - who then makes the score 5 – 0. From that point play ebbed and flowed with no real action in either box until late in the match when up for a corner, Charlie White slots the ball back to Adam Willis who seals the deal scoring Taunton’s sixth.

Full time, Taunton Youth U18 **6** Tiverton Town U18 **0**.

**Taunton Line Up:** Charlie Hawkins (GK) Ollie Wright, Jake Poole, Charlie White, Will Cooper, Ethan Jones, Tai Bewes (C), Lewis Wright, Ryan Davis, Adam Willis, Thomas Stone. **Subs:** Evan Howse, Jake Demiranda, Oliver Saunders, Taylor Powell.

Match Report: **Neil White**

The purpose of Taunton Youth FC Community Trust is to advance amateur sport and promote community participation in healthy recreation through the provision of sports coaching and access to facilities for football players in school years 4-18 year olds who live in the Taunton and surrounding area. Enquires are welcome from parents who would like their children to develop their ability and from qualified coaches who would like to enhance their coaching skills.

Please go to the club web site: **youth.tauntown.com** for more information.