

RTYFC COLTS 0 – 3 ASHWELL

As the Division one fixtures come along thick and fast now for the Colts, there are bound to be some huge challenges for the boys as they face some of the better sides in the league and this morning was no exception. Ashwell were our guests at Roysia this morning, a team who sit second in the table and a side who before today, were averaging over 7 goals per league game this season.

True to form of late, the Colts worked hard from the first whistle and had a decent share of the play in the first half. It took thirty minutes before Ashwell finally made the breakthrough when a quick passing move saw the away team's danger man up front latch onto a through ball that he placed perfectly to put us one nil down but you could argue that we were unlucky not to go into the break on level terms. There was no doubt the Colts were giving Ashwell a tougher game than they are probably used to as we went into the second half. Marcel was on good form and was called upon to make a very good save just one minute into the second period as he continued to control his penalty area well and the three big lads that make up the spine of the Ashwell team were definitely not having everything their own way. Jack had the unenviable task of trying to keep the big centre forward quiet and he made some crucial tackles to keep the score line close and ten minutes into the half we nearly drew level when some good work from Jem allowed him to unleash a decent shot that was blocked. Harry pounced on the rebound but his shot was saved too and a rare chance for the Colts to score had gone. Midway through the first half you got the feeling that whenever Ashwell's big centre forward got the ball in our half he could be the one who'd make all the difference today and so it proved with twenty minutes remaining when he was able to turn on the edge of our 18 yard box to create space for himself and unleash a shot that beat Marcel who had no chance of stopping this one. 2 nil Ashwell.

Ten minutes later the away sides wonder striker was on the ball again a few yards outside our penalty box and Adam knew exactly what was required to prevent him scoring and I'm not talking about breaking both his legs although that might have slowed him down a little bit. "Don't let him turn" came the shout from our coach as he turned once. "DON'T LET HIM TUUUUURN" he bellowed again but he turned again and just as Adams head was about to explode, a shot exploded from the Ashwell lads boot and we were 3-0 down. In all fairness to our boys and our coaches I think even the most optimistic of us knew that trying to keep this particular player quiet for 70 minutes was like telling Barcelona's opponents to not let Lionel Messi run with the ball, or Mo Farah's race rivals to not let him take the lead on the last lap. Some things are just beyond your control and you have just to doff your cap, admire the class and take it on the chin. All that said though, the Colts boys still didn't give up and when Ollie played Jem in with five minutes remaining we looked like getting a well earned consolation goal but the keeper made a decent save from Jem's close range strike. In the final moments the spirit and determination within our squad to not get rolled over by anyone was clear to see as Ashwell went on one last attack and they looked certain to go four nil up but we were having none of it. Fred put his body in the way and took one for the team as the ball struck him in the body which on a bitterly cold morning, must have smarted a bit. The ball was fired goal wards again but Ollie stopped it with his face and then Ashwell must have finally thought they'd broken through our lines and beaten everyone including Marcel in goal to pop in another goal but George Johnson appeared from nowhere and made a great goal line clearance to keep the score line at 0-3.

So with that being the final score, Andy summed up the morning's proceedings by telling the boys he was pleased with the effort and work rate they had put in all over the pitch and

he reminded them that this Ashwell side had thrashed many league one sides and will no doubt continue to do so. Jack was nominated today's man of the match for doing a great job marking one of the best players in this league. Yes this was a defeat but a big pat on the back to our boys yet again. Our opponents had two or three exceptionally good players that made all the difference today but they had to work harder for the win than they do most weeks I'm sure. Without such an admirable, positive attitude from the Colts, this result could have been a whole lot worse!