

CFA's unbeaten run drenched by Aylestone Park in League Cup defeat

by Rukanah Mogra



Storm Bert surged as CFA faced Aylestone Park Reserves. [Credit: Rukanah Mogra]

Aylestone Park Res 3 - 2 CFA

37' - Bayem Onelum

42' - Hayden Stephens

45' - Mohamed Mahir (Jack Wormleighton)

49' - Bayem Onelum

50' - Curtis Radbourne (Liam Taylor)

Despite a valiant effort, CFA fell short in the League Cup after a dramatic battle, as Aylestone Park Reserves advanced to the quarter-finals with a 3-2 win.

The lads started well and had an early chance through Mohamed Mahir, who fired a dipping shot, which forced the keeper to tip it over the bar.

The home side's first threat came in the 10th minute from a freekick, but skipper Aamir Bham commanded the box and caught it comfortably.

Midfield talisman Liam Taylor found himself on the edge of the CFA penalty area before pinging a crossfield ball over to Zak Yusuf.

The winger took it down exquisitely, cut inside and tried his luck, but the effort deflected for a corner.

Minutes later, the home side's winger attempted to curl one into the far corner, but Bham stood to attention and kept it out.



Liam Taylor in action in the first half. [Credit: Rukanah Mogra]

On the counter, Mahir slipped in a nutmeg pass to Zak. He drove into the box, but in his attempt to cut it back, it was intercepted and cleared.

After much to and fro, it was Aylestone who found the opener.

A dangerous ball forward found striker Bayem Onelum. He controlled it inside the box before finishing the chance coolly with his left foot.

Five minutes later, they doubled the lead. Following a defensive header from a corner, a shot rifled goalwards, which Bham saved. However, Hayden Stephens was alert and crashed in the follow-up.

Onelum almost scored his second but was denied by a goal-line block and tackle by Shaffiq Bobat and Jamal Randeria before Curtis Radbourne slid to clear it away.

On the stroke of halftime, the deficit was halved after Liam and full-back Jack Wormleighton combined from a corner.

The latter swung in a precise cross into the near post, which Mahir headed in.

At halftime, belief filled the changing room in the hope of a turnaround, but with the wind against them in the second half, it would not be easy.

Controversy struck the opening five minutes.

Driving into the box Aylestone's tricky winger was met with a clean tackle by Curtis, but the referee pointed to the spot. Onelum stepped up and converted despite Bham getting a hand to it.



Bayem Onelum's second goal came from the penalty spot. [Credit: Rukanah Mogra]

The reply, however, was instant.

Liam's freekick from the left-hand side took two deflections before being fired in by Curtis - it was now all to play for.

The match remained stagnant for the most part, with the home side hitting the crossbar twice. But, the biggest chance came deep into stoppage time.

Liam tried one last 'hail Mary', and it found Curtis inside the box. After letting it bounce, the centre-back instinctively let fly but was met by an outstanding save from Joshua Brodella.

Aylestone broke on the counter from the following corner, which Jamal dealt with, only for the referee's whistle to signal the end of the game.

The result ends an unbeaten run of 15 matches, the longest of any CFA team. It also means there will be no third consecutive League Cup final - the chance to banish past demons postponed.

However, the team can take pride in proving to be a tough test for a higher opposition.

Our sponsored Fluffy Fluffy Man of the Match award goes to young Jamal Randerer for an outstanding performance that showed great composure and class.

Attention is still turned to cup action next week, with the lads taking a trip down to Barlestone St. Giles, who sit unbeaten at the top of County League Division Two, in the third round of the County Cup.



Man of the Match: Jamal Randerer