

DEFIANT GEORGIES HARD EARNED DRAW

Saturday, 11 July 2009

Victorian Premier League

Round 17. Venue: George Andrews Reserve Dandenong

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DANDENONG THUNDER 1 SUNSHINE GEORGE CROSS 1 (0-1)

Scorers: Chris Konstas (SGC) Marcus Stergiopoulos (DT)

Sunshine's long journey to a wet and very windy George Andrews Reserve in Dandenong saw the Georgies extend their unbeaten run to 11 games after this gutsy hard earned 1-1 draw.

Facing run away league leader Dandenong on their own patch is no easy task for any team and to come away with anything from Dandenong is a bonus. Thunder came into this game full of confidence following the 5-1 win at the same venue against Green Gully the previous round, but the home team was rocked back on their heels after 4 minutes when the Georgies took a 1-0 lead. A well flighted Joe Clancy corner to the back post found Chris Konstas unmarked and the big central defender placed his header perfectly into the far corner of the net. The goal spurred the Georgies on and with the strong wind at their backs the visitors dominated the opening 20 minutes of the game. Dandenong came back strongly into the game with some clever inter-passing along the ground that caused the Georgies some anxious moments. Most of the damage came from the left flank where Dandy got behind the Georgies defence repeatedly. The final choice of pass was easily dealt with by Jack Webster and Chris Konstas. Cross keeper Martin John was kept busy plucking balls from crosses and he was alert enough to make a good save from a very clever back heel by Colin Quirk. John came off second best when he was knocked in the face and needed attention. The Georgie keeper could only watch a few moments later as a fierce Colin Quirk free-kick struck the cross-bar. Quirk was again unlucky as for the second time his shot came back into play after hitting the upright. Joey Di Iorio was proving to be a handful for the Georgie defence with his speed and skill and the tiny striker was constant threat. Sunshine lost striker John Sapazovski after 26 minutes with a groin problem and he was replaced by youngster Dimi Hatzmouratis. Sunshine went close to adding to the score when a Neal Hooks free-kick brushed past the upright. Despite the strong wind both teams played a very entertaining brand of football that had the large crowd enthralled. Dandenong fancied their chances in the second half with the strong wind at the backs and came out on the front foot from the kick off. The Georgies appeared to be coping well with Dandy's attacks and looked good moving the ball from defence to attack. The lack of punch up front however rarely caused Thunder any problems. It took Dandenong 68 minutes to get on level terms and the goal surprised both camps at the way it was scored. Marcus Stergiopoulos' corner kick swung viciously past a packed penalty area to beat a bemused Martin John. At the 76 minute mark a long Dandenong Thunder free kick finished up in the back of the net, but referee Ristic disallowed the goal for a blatant foul on Joe Clancy. Martin John pulled off the save of the night when he flung himself across the goal to deny Veton Koncaric's header from entering the net. John once again needed attention after striking his head on making this save. Dandenong fans thought they had secured all 3 points with 6 minutes to go when Joey Di Iorio scored, but to their annoyance the goal was disallowed for offside. The Georgies were able to hold out and it was they who had the last effort on goal following a free kick just outside the penalty area. Neal Hooks shot was well placed, but the packed Thunder wall stood up to the test and blocked the shot to deny what surely would have been a winning goal. A great and exciting match with supporters getting good value for money.

UNDER 21 DANDENONG THUNDER 0 SUNSHINE GEORGE CROSS 2 (0-0)

Sunshine George Cross easily defeated Dandenong Thunder 2-0. Two second half goals from Daniel Sweeney (penalty) and a superb Giuliano Di Marco goal when he beat six players including the goalkeeper after a mazy run was enough to secure all 3 points. Sunshine was wasteful in front of goals that could have been costly against a stronger team than Dandenong.