

Sat 18th Feb

Lisnagarvey 4 Kilkeel 0

Lisnagarvey kept their noses in front in the Premier League title with a comfortable 4-0 win over Kilkeel at Comber Road. Following their shock defeat last week by Annadale, Kyle Lunn's men had to get their act together and this they did against a Kilkeel team which defended grimly but had little threat in attack.

Garvey had the vast majority of possession even without captain Jonny Bell, Timmy Cockram, Mark Raphael and Peter MacDonnell and after a period of early pressure, Andy Forrest shot past the post following a good run by Daniel Buser.

Greg Thompson had a good chance at the left hand post in the 12th minute while at the other end Kilkeel had a brief raid into the Garvey circle but the attack was quickly repelled by goalkeeper John Tormey.

The 18th minute saw the opening goal of a one sided game; Garvey forced their first penalty corner and after a well worked switch, Greg Thompson slammed the ball past Kilkeel keeper Sam Morris.

Steven Arbuthnot was guilty of losing the ball on the edge of his own circle in the 19th minute but Annett could not take advantage of the error and the ball was eventually cleared and Garvey resumed their pressure on the Kilkeel goal.

Two more shots from the Garvey forwards were blocked by Morris before Steven Arbuthnot showed his ability as an attacking defender winning Garvey's second penalty corner in the 27th minute. This time Greg Thompson found the net with a very well executed drag flick which beat Morris rising into his net. A third set piece resulted after a good move down the right but on this occasion, the routine broke down and the chance was wasted.

Visiting keeper Morris was continually busy and he made a fine save from Garvey's 4th penalty corner in the 32nd minute but he could do only parry Greg Thompson's flick and Daniel Buser was at the left hand post to poke the ball over the line to give Garvey a convincing 3-0 lead at half time.

James Dowling began the second half with a good deflection which shaved the cross bar but a minute later the game was totally decided when Greg Thompson completed his hat trick with another penalty corner drag flick which beat Morris low to his right.

Garvey, now assured of the crucial league points, introduced schoolboy Matthew Sullivan and he fitted in very well to a Garvey team which was in total control of the match.

John Tormey had to make a save in the 50th minute as Kilkeel had a very rare raid into the Garvey circle to force their first penalty corner of the game. Tormey could only parry the ball but Brian Waring cleared it off the goal line and Garvey resumed their pressure on the County Down side which was weakening as the game entered the last quarter.

Matthew Sullivan supplied a very good pass to lead to Garvey's 6th penalty corner in the 57th minute but Steven Arbuthnot's drag flick was blocked by Morris while in the Garvey circle both



Adam McCann and Brian Waring had to be alert to cover two dangerous raids by the Kilkeel forwards.

Richard Arneill, not known for his attacking ability had a shot hit the post in the 58th minute but John Tormey brought off the save of the game when Kilkeel's second penalty corner looked like going into the top corner of his net in the 65th minute.

Adam Fallis had a great chance to score Garvey's fifth goal when after a fine over head pass from Steven Arbuthnot he had a one to one with Morris but in the end shot straight at the advancing keeper. Stuart McNiece also had a half chance to get on to the score sheet but was too slow in his set up while in the last minute of the game, Kilkeel were reduced to ten players after an incident which saw the Kilkeel forward received a red card.

The 4-0 result was badly needed by Garvey who now have to play closest contenders Cookstown twice in their five match run in. The other games are Mossley at the Glade this Friday at 8-15 p.m,

Instonians at home and Annadale away. A win at Mossley would put Cookstown under severe pressure even before the two teams meet early in March.

Lisnagarvey Seconds 3 Banbridge Thirds 0

Garvey Seconds fielding a far from full strength side were still far too good for a weak Banbridge Thirds at Comber Road. They won by 3 goals to nil and if their shooting had been more decisive, the final goal tally could well have been doubled.

The Seconds with John Gray showing his class until he had to leave the pitch through injury were always in charge of the game and opened the scoring midway through the first half. The impressive Matty Sullivan supplied Stephen Johnston with the pass and the big striker found the net with a well struck reverse stick shot. This goal gave the Seconds a 1-0 half time lead but early in the second period Michael Keery scored the second with a very well placed deflection.

The Seconds, at this stage, were camping in the Banbridge circle but could not finish off their domination with telling shots until Ryan Kee completed a good three man move with a 'tap in' at the right hand post and 3-0 remained the final score in one sided game. The three points keeps the Seconds in contention for a very tight Junior 1 title.

The Seconds now turn their attention to the Irish Junior Cup and face a very difficult trip to play Cork Church of Ireland Seconds in Cork but they will be able to field their strongest squad and are hopeful of taking their place in the semi final stage later in March.

The Thirds travelled to Banbridge to take on the Town's Seconds and although they held their own for much of the first half they were blitzed by a four goal barrage just before the half time interval.

Banbridge Seconds, probably favourites to take the Junior 1 title showed no mercy during the goal scoring burst and the Thirds from that moment on were chasing the game. They did reorganise themselves in the second 35 minutes and with a lot of determination did not allow the home side to score again but the damage had been done in space of the disastrous period before the interval.

Lisnagarvey Fourths 1 Bangor Thirds 2

Garvey Fourths, struggling for points in mid table came out the wrong side of a very tight game against Bangor Thirds at Comber Road. The final score was 2-1 in favour of the visitors but the 4ths provided their guests with two very soft goals.

The first came after 20 minutes when a very tame Bangor effort trickled into the Garvey net as the defence looked on without acting with any purpose. Paul Bonar got the Fourths back into the game with an equaliser after a scramble in the Bangor goal mouth to take the match to 1-1 at half time. Both teams had a number of chances to seal the league points but with little time remaining in a close encounter, Garvey, again seemed to 'switch off' and Bangor were able to score with a soft shot past the Garvey keeper Michael Agnew and grab the three points and leave the 4ths rueing their missed chances and their poor concentration.

The Fifths also faced a very strong Bangor Thirds side at Ballykillaire and had the chastening experience of being heavily beaten. Playing with a badly depleted team, the 5ths found themselves eight goals in arrears at the half time stage and they finished up the afternoon shipping no less than twelve goals, their biggest defeat for many seasons. The situation is far from good for the 5th's prospects and this result will not encourage their chances.

Lisnagarvey Sixths 1 Bangor Fourths 1

This was a match the Sixths should have taken all three points but Bangor, having been the lesser of the two teams for most of the 70 minutes, snatched an equaliser in the last minute to ruin the Sixth's evening at Comber Road.

The home side had a lot of possession in the opening 20 minutes and were very good value for their lead just before the interval. Jordan Todd gave the pass for Jordan Fitzpatrick who beat two defenders and scored with a well placed shot.

The Sixths battered at the Bangor defence but with Tommy Crockett having an off night with his penalty corners, they could not take advantage of their superiority and with second left in the match, Peter Davis lost the ball close to his circle and Bangor were on to the mistake in a flash to equalise and gain themselves a far from earned point.

Lisnagarvey Sevens 5 Saintfield Seconds 0

The Sevens all but clinched the Junior 6 title with a fully deserved 5-0 win over Saintfield Seconds at Comber Road. The talented team totally outplayed their more senior opponents with some great passing hockey but with all their dominance they could only boast a single goal at half time. It came from Mark Murray who after a number of scoring chances, at last found the net.

The second half was even more one sided with the 7ths adding another four goals. Jordan Fitzpatrick slotted number two and a few minutes later Jordan scored the goal of the game. He latched onto the ball and beat the goalkeeper with a reverse stick 'sizzler'.

Saintfield had little to offer and Garvey added two more goals before the final whistle. Willy Brown scored with a shot which looked like a pass and Mark Murray found the net for his second goal with a pass that looked like a shot to give the 7ths a more than comfortable 5-0 win.

This very good 7ths team well skippered by Chris Porter have just one game left in their small league and a single point against Instonians Fifths on Friday week should wrap up a very successful season for a side which did not even play in a league last season.