

26th July 2008

FINN MacCUHAL'S TAUPO – SOLID WIN PUTS TAUPO BACK IN TOUCH

The score was only one – nil but it was still a very welcome one for the Finn MacCuhals Taupo football team in their game at home to Claudelands Rovers in the Waikato Bay of Plenty Federation League last Saturday.

The narrow scoreline does not reflect the dominance that Taupo exerted over the game with desperate defence some mystifying decisions by the officials and a fair bit of luck keeping the visitors in the game.

The home side were glad to be back at Crown Park after a month away and had slipped off the pace at the top of the table with three draws on their travels and one game postponed the previous weekend.

The conditions were trying to say the least with a bitter easterly blowing across the park and squally showers throughout the game.

The first half saw Taupo dominating the game with several top drawer saves by the visiting keeper denying them the lead. The adventurous formation with only three at the back did see the opposition getting a couple of chances of their own but big keeper Ryan Paumier was in great form and kept a second clean sheet in a row with two important saves in the first spell.

There was really only one side in it in the second half as Taupo poured forward at every opportunity while anything Claudelands had to offer was dealt with by a solid line of defence in Sam Brown, Robbie Williams and Cam McGrath.

Mark Jones and Ben Westerman drove the team forward time after time and it was only a matter of time for the beleaguered visitors to crack.

The always dangerous Alan Lamb hit the post early in the half before great work by two of the youngsters finally got its reward on the hour mark. The lively Gaetano Dedual chased a through ball to the edge of the box forcing the keeper to clear with his feet. The ball fell to Jesse Smith some twenty five metres out and he took a couple of paces before coolly lobbing the retreating custodian.

There were plenty of other chances to make the game safe with the desperate defenders conceding a number of free-kicks around the edge of the box. There were also two clear penalties denied by the officials and when anything else was on target there was always a defender's body or the goalkeeper in the way.

Regardless the win was well deserved and most welcome particularly as it was the only game in the top eight round to be completed due to the inclement weather and gets the team within one point of the lead in the competition.

The Finn MacCuhals man of the match was the goalscorer Jesse Smith.

Team: Ryan Paumier, Sam Brown, Robbie Williams, Cam McGrath, Rex Mincher (Bevan Woltersdorf 81mins), Jesse Smith, Mark Jones, Ben Westerman, Steve Painter (Chris Roberts 81mins), Gaetano Dedual, Alan Lamb.

Other Federation League results:

Bottom 6: Otorohanga 1 Te Awamutu 2, Ngongataha 1 Melville 1. All other games postponed.

Next weekend Taupo travel to Neil Hunt Park to take on Rotorua United in another tough "must-win" encounter in what is proving to be a very competitive league.

Top Eight Table :

WAIKATO/BOP FEDERATION	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Matamata	13	11	0	2	35	12	33
Finn MacCuhals TAUPO	14	9	5	0	41	16	32
Whakatane Town	14	9	2	3	37	22	29
Rotorua United	13	9	0	4	43	21	27
Tauranga City United	13	7	1	5	36	25	22
Hamilton Wanderers	14	6	4	4	27	19	22
Claudelands Rovers	15	5	5	5	22	22	20
Otumoetai	14	5	4	5	22	22	19

Gordon Williams
0274 733 763
williamsg@landcorp.co.nz