

Match Report: Guernsey vs. Isle of Man 28th June 2011

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(Student journalists covering the NatWest Island Games as part of their degree course)

Guernsey managed to see off the Isle of Man in a feisty game that saw both teams reduced to ten men in Tuesday's group C match at East Cowes Vics FC.

The game started in a fast and furious fashion with Guernsey taking the game to the Isle of Man. An early cross from Glyn Dyer was cleared away from danger before Dyer managed to break the Isle of Man offside trap after ten minutes, netting after his initial shot was blocked.

Guernsey then doubled their lead in the 27th minute, when Dominic Heaume headed a near post cross from full back Oliver McKenzie in after he evaded the Isle of Man defence.

The Isle of Man lacked a cutting edge with little creativity before a swift passing move was finished by Conor Doyle in the 34th minute, against the run of play. The Yellows then pushed for an equaliser with Doyle at the centre of everything.

The atmosphere in the ground was frantic as both teams surged forward for another goal.

However, soon after the goal an off the ball incident saw the Isle of Man winger Chris Bass sent off by Premier League referee Keith Stroud for violent conduct.



An unhappy Christopher Bass leaving the field after a sending-off

Straight from the kick off Guernsey also were reduced to ten men after Adam Le Prevost's rash challenge on Neil Brogan. Guernsey started like they had in the first half. After good work on the left side by McKenzie and Ross Allen, dangerman Dyer fired wide.

But it was that man Doyle who once again caused all sorts of trouble for Guernsey, after he split the defence before shooting wide. This started a spell of dominance for the Isle of Man and they continued to pepper the Guernsey box with crosses. Chris Tardif made an excellent save from Nick Hunt before a disallowed goal by Calum Morrissey for a push.

Guernsey had a late chance to extend their lead when a flick-on header by sub Scott Bougourd to Allen who shot straight at Thomas at the near post.

Tony Vance, the Guernsey manager, believed that although he was happy to be into the semi-finals of the competition, he felt his side could have wrapped the up in the first half. "We dominated the first 25 minutes, but really needed to finish off the 3 or 4 opportunities we had to score" he said. Vance went on to congratulate the Isle of Man team: "Full credit to them they made us work for the win after we had it easy in the first half." Mr Stroud might have sent off 2 payers, but Vance believes it was good to see a referee with a 'smile on his face'.

Having said that the manager was not so complementary on the sending off of Bass; " I believe it was a fair tackle and the decision was slightly harsh" he said. Looking ahead to the semi-finals, Vance hoped that there would not be a repeat of the semi-final defeat against Aland two years ago. "We are looking to come here and go as far as possible in the competition"

The win secured Guernsey's place in the next round, and confirmed them as winners of group C meaning they will play Aland on Thursday.

Man of the Match: Glyn Dyer (Guernsey)