Green Lane 0 – 4 North Ridge

A youthful Green Lane side produced a battling performance despite losing to an older and more experienced North Ridge side. Having been denied any Key Stage 4 representation, and fielding 6 debutants in the squad, the lads stuck to their task manfully and worked their socks off.

A last minute withdrawal left Green Lane without a goalkeeper and Ambukar was forced to step in at the 11th hour. Green Lane were glad of him in the opening exchanges however as North Ridge poured forward in search of the opening goal. Stand in skipper Sloan was a colossus at the back, stopping wave after wave of attacks. He showed great leadership in guiding Ashley and Ashton through the difficult opening quarter.

Green Lane held on through most of the half, with L.Groarke and Smythe being forced into more defensive duties than usual. The two midfielders battled hard but North Ridge eventually took the lead with a firmly placed shot. This was followed by two strikes in quick succession from North Ridge’s silky striker. Faced with an uphill task going into half time – Sloan rolled up his sleeves and, assisted well by substitute Brown, drove Green Lane up the pitch with some determined defence. North Ridge stood firm though, as their commanding centre half left Cartledge and Hewitt frustrated at the lack of shooting opportunities.

After re-grouping at half time, Green Lane came out with renewed optimism and energy. Substitutes Heaton and Southworth made brief cameos and worked hard to get the ball forward to their strikers. Cartledge, Hewitt and Smythe persisted and created a couple of decent chances but North Ridge stayed strong to keep them at bay. Sloan continued to battle hard and led his team forward on a number of breaks but Green Lane could not find the goal their efforts deserved. North Ridge struck again late on with a breakaway goal after the stubborn resistance of Ashley and Ambekar finally succumbed to the pressure. Walters made a late appearance and showed some potential for the future.

Though disappointed to be defeated, Green Lane took it on the chin and remained positive. All the players can be pleased with their efforts against a bigger, stronger team and the lads will surely learn a great deal from the experience.

Team:

S.Ambekar – D.Ashton, R.Sloan(c), J.Ashley – L. Groarke, D.Smythe – C.Cartledge, N. Hewitt

Subs: T.Southworth, J.Heaton, J.Brown, O.Walters

Green Lane Man of the Match – Ryan Sloan – exemplary Captain’s performance.