

MARK HART SUNDAY SENIOR CUP FINAL

Thursday 27th April 2023

at Hurn Bridge

FC HAJDUK 2 EAST CHRISTCHURCH SSC 2 aet

FC Hajduk won 4-3 on pens



FC Hajduk collected their third trophy in twelve days when they won a hard fought MARK HART SUNDAY SENIOR CUP final against League champions East Christchurch SSC 4-3 on penalties with the game having finished 2-2 after extra time.

Hadjuk had been comfortable winners in the John Ward Hampshire FA Sunday Senior Cup final and had followed that up four days later with the BDFA Camerons Cup. Meanwhile East Christchurch SSC, with the M.A. Hart Robbins Cup already in their possession, had secured the M.A. Hart Bournemouth Sunday League title.

East Christchurch immediately went on the offensive and Levi Ridealgh had the ball in the Hajduk net in the first minute but the linesman's flag was up for offside. Jamie Trimble then had an effort saved by Hajduk 'keeper Matt Cleere as the League champions continued to press.

Hajduk responded with an excellent ball forward by Ollie Griggs which found Ollie Balmer but the danger was quickly snuffed out by defender Gavin Haynes. East Christchurch goalkeeper Dan Sansom was then tested by a long range effort from Adam Baxter.

FC Hajduk took the lead in the 15th minute when Ollie Balmer skipped past a couple of defenders in the penalty area and, when East Christchurch goalkeeper Dan Sansom came off his line to challenge, the ball broke to **ELLIOTT DAWSON** who slammed it into the roof of the net.

Hajduk were sweeping forward again a minute later getting the ball up to Ollie Balmer and he played it square to Elliott Dawson who got in a shot that brought a good diving save from Dan Sansom.

East Christchurch put Alex Whitehouse away through the middle in the 32nd minute to fire in a 20 yard shot that was saved by the diving Matt Cleere.

Andy Partridge found Ollie Balmer five minutes before the interval and the Hajduk's striker hit a low 20 yard effort which had Dan Sansom diving to his left to make another good save.

On the stroke of half time Alex Whitehouse had an effort from out on the right which went just wide of the far post. Hajduk went straight down the other end and, in the last action of the first half, they were awarded a penalty when Ollie Balmer was impeded by Dan Sansom. The East Christchurch 'keeper redeemed himself though when he got down quickly to save Ollie Balmer's spot kick.

The second half started with Elliott Dawson catching the East Christchurch defence unawares to pounce on the ball just inside the penalty area and drive it just over the bar.

East Christchurch responded with a free kick from inside the centre circle that found Dave Midgley to the right on the edge of the penalty area. Hajduk were taken by surprise as East Christchurch's leading marksman met it first time on the turn to get in a strike which struck the angle of upright and crossbar at the far post.

East Christchurch equalised in the 56th minute when **DAVE MIDGLEY** was brought down in the penalty area and he got up to send Matt Cleere the wrong way with the resultant spot kick.

Alex Whitehouse managed to get to a through ball fractionally before Matt Cleere in the 66th minute to steer the ball goalwards but Hajduk central defender Howard Nhemachena made a timely intervention, sliding in to clear it off the line.

The game went through a scrappy period littered with stoppages due to players requiring attention.

Levi Ridealgh played a one two with Dave Midgley in the 86th minute to get through with just the 'keeper to beat but, with Matt Cleere racing off his line to dive at his feet, he clipped the ball wide.

There was one last opportunity for East Christchurch in stoppage time when Dave Midgley put Alex Whitehouse through but the skipper's effort from the edge of the penalty area went narrowly wide.

EDDIE HODGE was just off target from 25 yards six minutes into extra time and was foiled by Dan Sansom four minutes later when Ollie Balmer played him in but it was third time lucky for the Hajduk substitute when he slotted the ball home from the edge of the box as the first half of extra time drew to a close to restore their lead.

Ollie Balmer cut in from the left to force a good save from Dan Sansom while, at the other end, Matt Cleere made an excellent save to get the ball behind for a corner. Ironically, it was from the corner kick in the 24th minute of extra time that East Christchurch substitute **HARRY DYE** put them on terms with a superb header.

Hajduk responded with an Eddie Hodge effort from the edge of the penalty area that hit the crossbar while, a minute before the end of extra time, substitute Jordi Gentle cleared his lines following a desperate scramble in the East Christchurch goalmouth.

Matt Cleere was Hajduk's hero in the penalty shoot out when he saved the first two East Christchurch spot kicks. Hajduk, who went first, saw their first kick hit the bar and while Ollie Griggs, Eddie Hodge, and Adam Baxter converted three of Hajduk's first five, East Christchurch tied it up at three apiece with successful kicks from Alex Hancox, Harry Dye, and Dan Brown. Elliott Dawson made it 4-3 with Hajduk's sixth penalty while East Christchurch put theirs against the bar.



FC Hajduk goalkeeper **Matt Cleere** was chosen for the **Man of the match** award by BFL President Mike Fowler.



FC Hajduk : Matt Cleere, Rafael Santos, Howard Nhemachena, Ollie Griggs, Elliott Dawson, Andy Partridge (Lewis Miles 80 mins), Adam Baxter, Ollie Balmer, Henry Hodge (Eddie Hodge 65 mins), Jack Fawcett, Niall Bolger-Wood (Eliot Trapnell 105 mins).

Unused substitutes :- Kyle Leach and Mac Raney.



East Christchurch SSC : Dan Sansom, Andrei Munteanu, Alex Catana (Dan Brown 70 mins), Darren Orchard (Liam Griffin 83 mins), Dan Hancock, Alex Whitehouse (Jordi Gentle 97 mins), Levi Ridealgh (Alex Hancock 90 mins), Dave Midgley, Dan Whitehouse, Gavin Haynes, Jamie Trimble (Harry Dye 102 mins).