

M.A. HART ROBBINS CUP FINAL
Thursday 11th April 2024 at Hurn Bridge
FC HAJDUK 1 EAST CHRISTCHURCH SSC 1
FC Hajduk won 3-2 on penalties.



Goalkeeper Matt Cleere was FC Hajduk's hero, saving three spot kicks to give them the verdict 3-2 in the penalty shoot out after they finished all square 1-1 with arch rivals East Christchurch SSC in the M.A. HART ROBBINS CUP final.

The Hajduk stopper has a habit of being their trump card in penalty shoot outs on the big occasions. He had also been SSC's nemesis in last season's Mark Hart Sunday Senior Cup final, saving two spot kicks as Hajduk won that one 4-3 on penalties and, in the previous season's Hampshire FA Sunday Trophy semi final, Matt's two penalty saves enabled Hajduk to get the better of The Meon 3-1 in that penalty shoot out. Hajduk were missing some of their Wessex League players in Tuesday night's Mark Hart Sunday Senior Cup final defeat against East Christchurch SSC but they were back for this one.

Kyle Leach won possession in midfield in the 12th minute and charged through the middle but, with the 'keeper to beat and under pressure from the chasing defenders, he was unbalanced and blazed the ball over the bar.

Alex Hancox was played in at the other end five minutes later and his shot flew past the diving Matt Cleere, struck the inside of the post, and rebounded straight into the arms of the grateful Hajduk 'keeper. Alex Hancox tried a speculative shot from outside the penalty area three minutes later but Matt Cleere was well placed to save comfortably.

FC Hajduk took the lead midway through the first half when LEWIS SAINVAL climbed above the East Christchurch defence to meet a corner from the right and head it past 'keeper Peter Old. Jack Kinge-Phillips raced down the left in the 37th minute to get in a cross which flew past SSC 'keeper Pete Old but defender Andrei Munteanu came to the rescue, heading it behind for a corner.

Awwal Abubakar went down the left in the 40th minute to get in a cross which found Lewis Miles twelve yards out but the FC Hajduk midfielder fired wide.

Jack Kinge-Phillips was again prominent out of the left wing for Hajduk five minutes into the second half, getting in a low cross which Peter Old dived to save. Play then switched to the other end with Levi Ridealgh's crossfield ball from the left arriving at the feet of skipper ALEX WHITEHOUSE who put East Christchurch SSC on terms, swivelling to slot the ball under Matt Cleere and into the back of the net. While FC Hajduk had the better of the first half, SSC were boosted by their equaliser and the last 40 minutes were evenly contested. Neither side were able to break the deadlock and the game went to penalties

Sam Darlow and Levi Ridealgh both converted their penalties for SSC with Rafa Santos and Awwal Abubakar following suit for Hajduk. Matt Cleere once again demonstrated his prowess at stopping penalties by saving the next three SSC spot kicks while Hajduk put one against the post, had another saved by Pete Old, and, although the SSC 'keeper managed to get a hand to it, Hajduk's final penalty by Tyrone Carkeet proved decisive.

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



FC Hajduk: Matt Cleere, Eddie Myers, Howard Nhemachena, Lewis Sainval, Tyrone Carkeet, Jack Kinge-Phillips, Kyle Leach (Andy Partridge 82 mins), Awwal Abubakar, Rafa Santos, Lewis Miles, Henry Hodge (Claudio Carvalho 72 mins).

Unused substitutes: Will Hodge, Levi Middlewick, and Mac Rasney.



East Christchurch SSC: Peter Old, Dan Hancock (Callum Horton 90+4 mins), Gavin Haynes, Callum Dickenson, Andrei Munteanu, Darren Orchard (Sam Darlow 70 mins), Jack Smith (Keelan Fudge 90 mins), Sol Bower, Alex Whitehouse (Dan Brown 85 mins), Alex Hancox, Levi Ridealgh.
Unused substitute: Liam Griffin.