

ST JOSEPH'S HIGH SCHOOL, CROSSMAGLEN NARROWLY LOOSE OUT IN HISTORIC ENCOUNTER

U-16 NI Schools cup – first round (9-10-07)

St Joseph's, Crossmaglen 3 St Gabriel's, Belfast 5

St Gabriel's U16 soccer squad were involved in a historic occasion, as they travelled to Crossmaglen to take on St Joseph's High School, Crossmaglen at Lismore park, this match being St Joseph's first ever competitive soccer game. The opening 20 minutes were tight with St Joseph's creating the only clear opportunity when Gormley saved well from a James Coyle effort. With 28 minutes gone St. Joseph's were awarded a free kick 25 yards from goal, their captain and most influential player Ryan Conlon, stepped up to fire an unstoppable shot beyond the despairing hands of Gormley in the St. Gabriel's goal. As the half entered its final minutes the St Gabriel's attack became increasingly involved with Kelly and Hyland both applying pressure to the St. Joseph's rear guard. But stout defending from Seamus Duncan, Ronan Finnegan & Cathal Mc Glade assured St Joseph's ended the first half 1-0 up.

The second period was only minutes old when St Joseph's doubled their lead, a super long ball forward from Ryan Conlon found Aaron Mostyn who skilfully avoided the defenders challenge & slotted the ball home with great aplomb. St. Joseph's 2-0 in front.

St Gabriel's never let their heads drop and they began to mount a succession of attacks & should have pulled one back only for the goal keeping heroics of Conor Moley.

15 minutes into the second half St. Gabriel's got one back with some good work down the left, O'Hare picking out McDonald a few feet from goal and he gently placed his header into the empty net. Within seconds St Gabriel's drew level, Kelly down the left crossed for Patterson to head home at the back post – game on.

The next 10 minutes was all St. Joseph's with Conlon & Mostyn dictating the game in mid-field & with Moley, Duncan, Mcglade, Finnegan & Mc Verry in control at the back. Within minutes St Joseph's were awarded a penalty after McGuire upended Hearty. Conlon stepped up and blasted his shot towards the top corner; Gormley dived high and made the most spectacular save as he turned the ball round the post. St Joseph's did however go 3-2 in front with their next attack. Michael Lenaghan who, at this stage, was causing the away team defence all sorts of problems, slipped a great ball through to the hardworking Hearty, who's first effort was well saved by Gormley, the ball squirmed clear and Hearty fired home from 8 yards.

St. Gabriel's response was emphatic & 5 minutes later they were level again 3-3. As St Joseph's went in search of a fourth it was St Gabriel's that looked the more controlled as they began to create chances. With 10 minutes remaining St. Gabriels scored what proved to be the final blow, the game was put beyond St Joseph's in the 75th Min when Kelly broke down the right and crossed for McDonald to head home at the back post. The game ended with St Gabriel's holding onto their two-goal advantage Final result St. Joseph's, Crossmaglen 3, St. Gabriel's, Belfast 5.

This was a truly memorable sporting occasion with both teams giving there all in search of victory. A very special thank you from Mr McKenna (St. Gabriels) and the St Gabriel's boys to Mr McMahan and School Principal Mr Scally and of course the St Joseph's players not only for the manner in which they represented their School and community but also for their refreshing attitude and generous hospitality before and after the game.

Mr. Mc Mahon (PE Teacher) at St. Joseph's, Crossmaglen was delighted with the performance & effort from all his players, & hopes the experience gained will take them a step further next year. The school & community should be proud of their achievement as they created history, competing in the schools first ever competitive soccer fixture.

Mr. Mc Mahon also would like to thank St. Joseph's School principal Mr. Kevin Scally for his support in this sporting venture & also Mr. Colin Mckee, Malcolm Roberts (Youth Development Coach) for their time & effort in helping to prepare the boys for this match.

St. Joseph's High School, Crossmaglen
U-16 Team Sheet

Team No's	Names
1	Conor Moley
2	Cathal Mc Glade
3	Ronan Finnegan
4	Aidan Mcverry
5	Seamus Duncan
6	Aaron Mostyn
7	James Coyle
8	Ryan Conlon
9	Jason Kierans
10	Brian Hearty
11	Micheal Lennaghan
12	Paul Mc Entee
13	Cathal Hatzler
14	Paul Hughes
15	Paudi Mckinnley
16	Stephen Mc Kinley