

ROSS 1 – 3 LANSDOWN C 4/3/2006

Ross stroll to defeat

Ahead of last Saturday's away game to Lansdown 'C', Ross Men's 1st XI Captain Andy Ridgway decided to make some bold changes in both tactics and personnel by installing himself as sweeper in the middle of a four-man defence. Playing behind James Adamson, Brian Clare, and Tim Jones and Edward Peck - who shared the role of right-back - Ridgway clearly hoped that this formation would be the firm foundation for an improvement on his team's recent performances away from home. Bold, yes; successful, no, with Ross going down 3-1.

Whether it was these changes themselves, the unexpected warmth of a sunny winter's afternoon or just the continuation of Ross' loss of momentum over previous weeks – or some combination of all three – the hosts outplayed a strangely sleepy Ross line-up from the start. Only Adamson seemed completely present in both mind and spirit, making some timely tackles and balletic turns at left back; he was a worthy winner of the Brabo Man of the Match award.

Despite the return from injury of the usually influential Tom Walton, the midfield of Andy Cross, Phil Evans, Sam Warner and Walton – augmented on occasions by Lawrence Raasch and Christian Franklin - seemed unable to impose their authority on the game. Up front, Adrian Williams and Richard Harbottle received too little of the ball to be really influential, a fate shared by Willem Haagen when he joined proceedings in the second half.

Nonetheless, even a below-par Ross team take time to break-down and it was not until after twenty minutes that Lansdown took the lead from a short-corner. Indeed, Lansdown failed to breach Ross' defence in open play, in no small measure due to the determined goalkeeping of Steve Evans, and their two second half goals also came through short-corners. Ross did create some chances and, at the death, Cross showed considerable courage and persistence to force the ball home for a consolation goal.

Results elsewhere mean that Ross may now need just one point from their last two Gerrard Hereford and Gloucester League Division Two games to hold onto third position. This will not be easy. Next week they take on Winchcombe, the team against which their early season form first started to unravel. The final game is away to Lydney 'A', who inflicted a heavy defeat on Ross just before Christmas on their way to second place. Watch this space!

Hereford & Glos 2			
Cheltenham D	-	Cirencester C	-
Hereford C	0	Cheltenham C	1
Lansdown C	3	Ross on Wye	1
Lydney A	-	Winchcombe	-
Newent A	11	Glos City D	0
Wotton-u-Edge B	1	Newent B	1

Hereford & Glos 2	Pl	W	D	L	For	Agn	Diff	Pts
Newent A	20	19	0	1	105	18	87	57
Lydney A	18	15	2	1	87	19	68	47
Ross on Wye	20	14	1	5	66	33	33	43
Cheltenham C	20	12	4	4	70	36	34	40
Lansdown C	20	12	1	7	55	43	12	37
Winchcombe	19	11	2	6	59	39	20	35
Cheltenham D	19	6	3	10	36	53	-17	21
Wotton-u-Edge B	19	5	2	12	27	51	-24	17
Newent B	20	3	4	13	31	77	-46	13
Hereford C	19	4	0	15	21	66	-45	12
Glos City D	20	1	4	15	15	75	-60	7
Cirencester C	18	1	3	14	21	83	-62	6