

Leinster Champions League

Semi Final

Chanel College 3 – 0 Kilkenny CBS

12th April 2013

The Chanel side that took to the field on Friday, laid down a marker as the side to be reckoned with in this year's Leinster Champions League final.

With Keith McCracken back from a long term injury spearheading the Chanel attack, it didn't take long for the Kilkenny lads to realise they were really up against it. Kilkenny were big and strong through the middle and the Chanel game plan was to keep it wide. Get it into McCracken and Crowe's feet early, push it to the flanks and work the triangles, was the pre game talk. And it didn't take long before Whelan and Leavey were running riot on the flanks.

Chanel created all of the early chances. First Crowe linked up well with Leavey, who squared to Whelan, only to have the ball robbed off his toe by the keeper. Next Whelan turned provider, but O'Reilly's header passed just over the crossbar. Leavey again found Crowe in the box but the once more the Kilkenny keeper got down well to save.

The breakthrough finally came from Crowe on the half hour mark. Eden Burke, who by this stage, was bossing the midfield, intercepted a Kilkenny through ball on the half. He found Crowe with a delicate pass, and with some quick feet and a little jink to the left, tucked the ball into the top right of the goal from twenty yards.

Chanel went in 1-0 at half time. They had been the best team by far. The back four had been immense, giving nothing up to a lively Kilkenny strike force and O'Reilly, in goal, had been superb when called into action.

The second half started much like the first ended and after ten minutes Chanel were two to the good. McCracken and Whelan were involved in a short corner, and a cross-come-shot by McCracken was missed by everyone and found its way into the far corner of the goal. Two nil Chanel, and they were cruising.

McCormack replaced O'Reilly and O'Hanlon came on for Leavey, and it wasn't long before Butch was making Ardiff question starting him from the bench, as he was instrumental in the build up to Chanel's third goal.

The third goal was arguably the best team goal Chanel have scored all season. Quick link up play and passing involving Crowe, O'Hanlon, McCormack and Kinsella, culminated in a chip from Whelan, a cushion header from McCormack and the coolest of finishes from Burke. Catching it above his hip on the half volley, Burke smashed home from the edge of the box. Three nil to Chanel and they were cruising.

With twenty to play, Dixon came in for Goodson and McHugh replaced McCracken. Kilkenny weren't done yet though and O'Reilly was quickly called into action from the kick off. A through ball saw the Kilkenny striker in a one on one, but O'Reilly, determined to keep a clean sheet, got down sharp to his right and saved the shot.

Kilkenny were pushing hard in the last fifteen but Chanel kept their shape well and Kinsella played the captain's role perfectly. Keeping the shape across the back and the lads in check all the time.

Man of the match has to go to Eden Burke though. His tireless work off the ball in winning tackles, breaking down plays and picking the right pass at the right time, saw him get his just rewards with the third goal.

Overall a fantastic performance by the lads from Coolock but it won't mean anything if silverware doesn't follow. Two big finals await Chanel in the Dublin Cup and Leinster League and if they can produce performances similar to this they should have little to worry about. It's all about the right attitude now. The destination of both these trophies is firmly in Chanel's hands!

Chanel: J. O'Reilly, B. Goodson, J. Kelly, E. Kinsella, A. Reid, E. Burke, B. O'Reilly, K. A. Whelan, C. Crowe, K. McCracken, S. Leavey, **Subs:** K. McHugh for McCracken, C. Dixon for Goodson, O'Hanlon for Leavey, McCormack for O'Reilly