

## England U18 International Team v Scotland – Inspiresport Centenary Shield 2014/15

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Friday 17 April 2015



The England U18 Schoolboys returned to Centenary Shield action on Friday 10 April when they faced Scotland for the TSB Challenge Cup in the third of their four fixtures at The Bet Butler Stadium, Dumbarton. Conditions were almost perfect for this encounter, Andy Blight's team knew they needed to win if they were to stand any hope of realistically retaining their title for a second successive year.

As has often been the case in these U18 schoolboy encounters over recent seasons, the game's opening exchanges saw both sides creating good opportunities as they jostled to gain the upper hand. The Scottish right winger Conor McKenzie was the first to try his luck after just 3 minutes. Having been released by a perfect through ball from Ross Cameron he entered the penalty area at pace only to fire over the bar as he was closed down. When England responded moments later with a shot of their own from the impressive Mustapha Bundu, which also flew over the bar, the tone for an open and entertaining evening had been well and truly set.

It was England who eventually found the breakthrough on 30 minutes following a period which had seen the skilful Bundu unlock the Scottish defence several times without converting good goal scoring chances. A throw in deep in the Scottish left corner from Armstrong found its way into the box where Rosenwald fired a beautiful left foot half volley into the far bottom corner following a blocked effort from the ever lively Elliot Cutts. The Scottish manager Stewart Taylor would have felt a little disappointed by this as Scotland were beginning to find their feet at this stage with neat and clever midfield combination play led by the impressive Liam Strachan and Mikey Hopkins. They had built sustained pressure and peppered the England penalty area with

set pieces, all of which had been well dealt with by their imposing central defenders, Curry and Skelton and the imposing Monty George in goal.



Undeterred,

Undeterred, Scotland had an immediate opportunity to repost that was agonisingly spurned much to the dismay of the small yet vocal Tartan Army. A deep free kick on the left hand side was taken by Hopkins towards the far post, and having gathered the ball before steadying himself, McKintosh contrived to screw his left foot shot past the post. That miss would prove decisive to the game's proceedings as it was Scotland's best and arguably last good chance of the evening.

The second half was barely four minutes old when England found themselves two goals to the good. It was another throw in from the right hand side, this time a Lewis Fogg long throw which was flicked on by Jordan Storey and eventually turned over the line at the far post by ecstatic Elliot Cutts. That was a real body blow for the Scots who had made two half substitutions that had not had chance to take effect, indeed it seemed to knock the stuffing out of them. As Scotland fought bravely to get back into the game it was the English boys who visibly grew in confidence, and taking the game to Scotland looked increasingly likely to extend their lead. Several chances had gone begging before Robert Black eventually put a seal on what was an almost perfect performance in the 85th minute. Gathering the ball in the centre of midfield he drove forward a short way before unleashing an unstoppable 25 drive past the despairing reaches of Alexander Marshall in the Scotland goal. It was nothing more than England deserved and was a fitting goal on which to see the youngsters lift the TSB cup.

Andy Blight's team will be rightly buoyed for next week's winner takes all encounter against the Republic of Ireland in Sligo.

### **Scotland**

1. Marshall 2. Wilcox 3. Neave 4. Burns 5. Chalmers (c) 6. Strachan 7. MaKintosh (45) 8. Hopkins (70) 9. Cameron 10. Kelly (45) 11. McKenzie (80)

Substitutes: MacKenzie, Manson Buglass, Hilton, Smith, Galloway, Wallace

### **England**

13. George 2. Skelton 4. Storey 5. Curry (c) 3. Fogg 6. Pryce 12. Gunson 16. Rosenwald 7. Cutts 9. Armstrong 11. Bundu

Substitutes: 1. Papastylianou 8. Ndozid 10. Black (for Rosenwald 65) 14. Kabashi (for Gunson 73) 15. Patterson (for Armstrong 76)

**Goal scorers:** (28) 0-1 Rosenwald, (49) 0-2 Cutts, (85) 0-3 Black

*Match report by Andy Williams*

