Asn Writer, Davion Ross

 

 Soccer Page 

 The history of this matchup is not pretty for Grace Brethren. In the most prominent Tiger days, Grace Brethren was a stomping mat for players like Dave Miongo and Henderson Rodriguez. You can remember the victories back at the old WAU turf field, that used to be the home field for Takoma for a couple of years. But, these two teams are different now. Every school has somewhat of a golden age for each sport. At least, theoretically.

  **First Half**

Takoma was trying to keep the good times going and establish MISAL league supremacy, eyeing a 3-1 start. The game was underway and Grace Brethren was attacking with confidence early on. Takoma was trying to find an offensive equation to work with for the game, while Grace Brethren was finding passing lanes and working with their best winger, Marcelo. It was until that point that I saw an offense that put together, other than Calverton. They were gaining more and more possession time inside the box of Takoma. Sooner or later they were destined to break through. Sure enough, off of a misplay by Nathan Castro, Grace Brethren broke through with the first goal to make it 1-0. The Grace Brethren defense was shining with its ability to stand up the Tigers’ best players in Darwin Rodriguez and Donovan Ross. The defenders were not intimidated by their presence on the field, which many are. They were simply closing the space for Takoma to operate on offense. This was the story for all of the first half. Takoma was going to need a spark in the second half to get things going.

  **Second Half**

 How would Takoma find its spark? It didn’t take much time. It was only a matter of time before there would be a hole left in the Grace Brethren defense. Darwin Rodriguez found a gaping hole to set up Kalen Johnson for an easy tap-in goal to tie it up at 1-1. What a player Kalen has become for this team, as he flashed on the scene his freshman year and basically became an option for scoring. The key to this game was how Grace Brethren would respond. They responded with no changes in their style of play, but with the same gutsy, scrapy pursuit, Grace Brethren mirrored its play in the first half, but only on the opposite side of the field. They continued to attack the Takoma defenders, with drives and wing passing. They were soon able to take advantage of a terrible mistake on the ball and converted on a giveaway goal to make it 2-1. Takoma found themselves right back down again, and it seemed like it was harder and harder to find ways to score. Takoma was simply unable to find a true weakness in the Grace Brethren defense. They still stood tall in the midst of high level attackers like Donovan and Darwin. Grace Brethren played without fear. The Grace Brethren attackers were able to push across another goal to make it a 3-1 lead. From the vantage point of the scoring difficulties for the Tigers, this lead almost seemed insurmountable. The clock was now a Takoma enemy. The Tigers caught a break at last with a penalty opportunity at last, for Darwin Rodriguez- the exact person you would want to take a PK. To every Tigers’ fan demise, Darwin missed the PK off the post. That was the story of the game in a nutshell. Time soon ran out and the Tigers tasted defeat for the first time since the opener. They would need to bounce back with a Riverdale game the next day.