



## FOLGORE CAPTURE SAN MARINO TITLE

S.S Folgore/Falciano were able to celebrate this past weekend as they secured their first championship victory in fifteen years following an extremely closely contested league final against Juvenes/Dogana.

Folgore, having struggled through the playoffs heading into this final perhaps feared the worst when Lorenzo Gasperoni opened the scoring for Juvenes after 24 minutes, heading in a Mirko Mantovani cross from the edge of the six yard box somewhat against the run of play.

As the first half progressed, Folgore continued to enjoy the better of the chances with keeper Mattia Manzaroli being called into action from a number of long range efforts, before watching a Fabio Bollini effort hitting the Juvenes crossbar after controlling well from a throw in to the box before unleashing a rasping effort on the turn which deserved better. However after 43 minutes, Folgore were rewarded for their persistence when Francesco Perotta tapped in from close range after a brief goal-line scramble for his 8th goal of the campaign to deservedly leave the sides level entering the half time break.

The second half continued in much a similar fashion to the first with both sides creating many half chances, though with neither side ever taking control of the tie as the 1-1 score looked set to remain at the end of 90 minutes, unless one side was given a guilt edge opportunity to change this.

This opportunity and tipping point of the tie came after 85 minutes when after a cross across the edge of the Juvenes box, Nicola Canini dove into a rash tackle to receive his marching orders for a second bookable offence, leaving Folgore a man up and free kick in prime territory. The resulting free kick was well put away by Manuel Muccini through the Juvenes wall in to the bottom corner to keeper Manzaroli's left, leaving Folgore 2-1 ahead with three minutes remaining.

As Juvenes began to push forward chasing the game, they left ever increasing gaps at the back, which was exploited as the clock ticked to 90 minutes as after a quick interception and break from Folgore, Perotta was let in between the two centre backs, one on one with Manzaroli who he calmly beat with a lofted chip over the stranded keepers head to seal the result and send the Folgore faithful into raptures. (A celebration for which Perotta was booked, but certainly didn't matter in the grander scheme of things!)

In a touching moment during the celebrations, the Folgore players wore shirts dedicating their victory to club Physiotherapist Umberto Allasia who was hospitalised in Cesena prior to the game. All that was left was for the team to lift the clubs 4th nation championship in total to complete the double of league and maiden cup victories this season.

Now Folgore can look forward to a place in next years Champions League qualifying following their great domestic success this season.