

Match Report - Sunday 7th February

Girls Under 12 Development League

Woking 0 Richmond 2

Woking's U12 girls put up a fantastic fight in today's match against Richmond and were unlucky to come away without a result. To put the score in context - Richmond were runners-up in the National U11 competition (clubs and schools) last year and had been brushing aside their opposition with margins of at least 5 goals this season (The Home Counties League doesn't publish winning margins above 5 goals). That said Woking matched Richmond throughout this match, defending well against a strong Richmond front line and unlucky not to get at least one goal ourselves - particularly in the last 20 minutes of the match when we put Richmond under a lot of pressure.

This season the U12 league is a friendly competition but this is likely to change next year and if it does - Woking are likely to enter 3 teams and will play to win! A lot of today's girls will still be eligible for U12 hockey next year whilst the older girls were watched today by Andy Yeo, the U14 coach, who (as well as having one eye on winning the competition with his current squad who are well placed to win their league and already qualified for the Regional finals of the England Hockey competition) already has the other eye on next season's squad.

If I hadn't tinkered with the side so much today during the match then perhaps we might have even won but for me the emphasis this season is very much in giving everyone an opportunity to get comfortable playing 11 a-side hockey and also getting to see girls play in different positions unfortunately we can't have 10 centre forwards in the team and it is especially important that I find a strong back four for next season - if you don't concede goals you don't lose!!

We have a huge U12 squad (something like 35 girls) and there are a number of very strong players that I didn't even pick for this week's match so I really think our strength in depth at this age-group is second to none and that Woking ladies are about to enter a golden age. I know the ladies section are keen for the youngsters to come through and get their first team back into the National League. The U18 girls won 5-0 today (it could have been about 15!) - the U16's are pushing for qualification for the final stages of their competition and the U14's (as I have already mentioned) are already a major force but I honestly believe that the current U12 girls will top the lot as they progress over the next few years, so don't worry too much about today's result - we are looking better every game and that's what counts the most.

Well played everyone and a special thanks to Juliette and Lyall for umpiring the match - without the willingness of people giving up their Sundays to come and umpire for us we wouldn't be able to play, so their help is really appreciated.

Thanks everyone - well played - there were a few things that Andy and I spotted that we need to work on in practice over the next few weeks and I'm sure we're going to have some great results before the season ends.