

Match Report - Sunday 22nd November

Boys Under 16 Mercian League

Guildford 1 Woking 5

The weather at the start of the match could only be described as "horrid" and it somewhat hampered our warm up but the boys came out firing on all cylinders. It was to be a tough match and Guildford weren't going to make it easy for us, they marked well and allowed us little space. Although Ollie and Giles made attack after attack through the centre and left wing somehow the goal wouldn't come and it was Chris Way who was to open the scoring when the hard work started to pay off.

Guildford continued their fight, piling on the pressure, often marking physically as well as tightly and taking any opportunity to make a break. The Woking defence stayed strong and cleared the ball to a very strong midfield who fired it up front with phenomenal paced passes, picked up well by the forwards. New recruit Tim looked strong on the right and Giles and Ollie kept on working the left and centre, eventually the goals started to flow as a reward for the fantastic hockey the whole team played in the first half, Jack Thorpe scored one and Chris Way got another two. Guildford continued to break but were kept out of the net by a very solid back four and of course Alex in goal who saved a shot hit so hard the whole crowd flinched. Guildford eventually got on the score sheet with a great run that just seemed to slip silently past all the Woking players and the first half ended 4-1.

At half time we discussed using the defence to switch play more and to control the game from the back which we did very effectively throughout the second half with a stunning performance from Harry Burlinson who used the space and calmly and clinically moved the ball either directly up the line to right mid or square to centre. Ollie scored what was our only goal in the second half, as it appeared Guildford had chosen a much more defensive strategy, presumably accepting they wouldn't win but trying to limit the score. Our forwards often found themselves up against 2 or 3 Guildford defenders, regardless of this we had no problem getting the ball in to their D but disappointed when it came to finding the net, we created many chances but couldn't seem to find a way through a very crowded D, this could have been a problem in a tighter game but as it was, a 5-1 win was very comfortable.

Another great game to watch with some great passing hockey yet we do have to work on our finishing, our lack of goals in the second half has unfortunately cost us first place in the league as league leaders Ashford have a goal difference of 10 and ours is only 9 (the max if 5 per match so our 14-1 against Maidenhead only counts as 5). By the end of the match the sun was shining and it was hard to believe the weather had been so bad at the start.

Ronak, our captain made a great observation, how much more confident he felt everyone is looking on the ball now, compared to last or even early this season, it's great to see such calm control and accurate passing. It's also noticeable how the boys are really gelling as a team and learning how best to play together. The U16s boys great winning run continues!

A big thanks to Whit who took another soaking out on the pitch with the boys while the rest of us watched either from under cover or even from inside the clubhouse !