

Match Report - Sunday 1st November

Boys Under 16

Staines 1 Woking 2 (Friendly) Woking 4 Purley Walcountians 1 (Friendly)

Staines 1 Woking 2

On the wettest morning of the season, Woking played a Staines team equally shocked by the conditions, but up for a competitive friendly over three 20 minute 'halfs'.

Our first battle aside from the driving rain, was the standing water. Staines had a permanent team of sweepers who admitted defeat after only 10 minutes. They were on hand for Staines' short corners. Note that it was Staines' only short corners... in 60 minutes of open play, we were not awarded one! And perhaps that was the tale of the day. A lot of the play was either in our half, or on a series of breaks that would briefly visit the Staines D, but achieve minimal penetration. That said, we won! With goals from Dominic Hessey and Matt Powell, and both of them following Woking being one goal down, the match was all about commitment from every player and fighting incredibly hard against some good individual skills that often broke through our defence. In those breaks, mention should be made to Alex Orme. Through the rain, Orme made many key saves that kept Woking very much in the match. A few other mentions. Welcome back to Fraser Hope. Touching down at Heathrow at 530am, just four hours from the start of the match, he played a solid game following a knee injury. Thanks for your efforts Fraser. Well done to Karl Notrodt. Karl is one of the quickest players on the pitch and ran his socks off. As a new team member, Karl's positioning found himself available for simple horizontal passes. Sadly, he didn't receive as much ball as he deserved, but that will come Karl and praise should be made to his enthusiasm to the team's overall performance. Thanks also to Al Brierley. Younger brother to Ed, Al played good positional hockey on the right wing and linked up well with Matt P who played an essential up front role.

Goals from Dominic and Matt sealed an exciting and wet morning. Well done to all of the other team members, who played vital supporting roles.

What did we learn? As always, simple lessons: quick and incisive passing will always undo the opposition. When we did it, we carved through Staines' midfield. Strong measured tackling, and a commitment that if the player gets away from you, don't give up. And team morale is important. The boys listened to the guidance on the touchline, and responded positively. The Staines coaching team praised the way we played and conducted ourselves.

Thanks to the parents who supported and to Whit who umpired through the rains of Staines. He too had got off the same plane as Fraser at 530am!

Thanks to Simon Lipyeat for managing the boys and providing the write up

Woking 4 - Purley Walcountians 1

The weather was much better in the afternoon for another convincing win, made possible by a very strong defensive line (great to get Sam Parker back from injury), some good play in midfield, Chris Way was again very strong, scoring 3 goals from short corners and one in open play and some good positional play by the forwards (good to see Harry Thomas back too) which led to a few good opportunities, both John Humphries and Dan Wernberg hit the post. However I again felt we should have scored a few more goals. I think I should mention that their keeper was not their usual keeper but in fact one of their field players who just happened to be the right size for the keeper kit, so well done to him.

Some of the observations from the sideline would be; we need to make more shorter passes and not rely so much on the long ball, more movement off the ball (the new self pass rules means the game doesn't stop so everyone needs to keep moving for 70 minutes), release the ball earlier and less diagonal passing as these are the easiest to intercept. All in all a good job done and a good warm up for the league and cup matches that follow in the next few weeks.

Thank you to Andy Woolley for Umpiring the match today

Also to Patrick for once again playing up from U14 and doing a great job in goal.

And to Matt, Alistair and Eddie from the U14s for making up the numbers when we suddenly found ourselves short.