

## U8 mini tournament at Yateley – December 4<sup>th</sup> 2011

Woking Wolves Winning Ways Continue!

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> Dec saw the mighty Woking Wolves hop over the M3 to Wellington College to take part in the Yateley U8 tournament, an exhausting 7 match affair with the team playing 2 matches consecutively on 2 occasions. A fantastic result given that the team were rocked by the loss of Luca Williams to illness and Lily Johnson to the U10s which meant playing with no subs other than the odd game Lily was able to join the Wolves.

Overall Result: 4 victories, 2 draws and 1 defeat, 7 Goals Scored (Tamera Cookman (3), Joseph Gould (2), Lily Johnson (1), Sam Wavish (1)) and 1 conceded.

Given that in previous tournaments the Wolves have started slowly an energetic warm-up was in order to prime the team for their first game against **Fleet**, sure enough the hooter sounded the start and the Wolves in feisty mood swarmed all over the opposition and within 30 seconds the Wolves had taken the lead through **Tamera Cookman's** opening goal of the day. Fleet responded valiantly but the sturdy defence and combative midfield ensured that 100% of the game was played in the Fleet half and eventually persistence paid off for **Joseph Gould** to score a trademark goal and make the result safe. Final score was victory to the Wolves 2-0.

Buoyed by the victory the Wolves then took on **Yateley**, a team that had previously beaten a Woking U8 side at previous tournament so passions were running high with thoughts of revenge. The Yateley team were a youthful and energetic side whom the Wolves very much enjoyed giving a lesson in the basics of Hockey although the strike force of **Joseph Gould** and **Tasmin Cookman** only managed to find the gap between the posts on 1 occasion with **Joseph** delivering the killer blow. Either side of the posts the spectators had scattered for fear of being struck by a wide shot. Final score was a victory to the Wolves 1-0.

Next the Wolves played in one of the games of the tournament against a strong **Aldershot A** side. The Aldershot side was based around three key players who were big and skilful and the Wolves quickly realised that key to thwarting the opposition was to contain these players with **Maarten Louwe** in particular bossing the midfield and **Thomas Marson** and **Sam Wavish** putting in the hard graft to support both defence and attack in an end-to-end game that saw neither side breach the goal line although both came close. Final score was a respectable 0-0 draw that drew applause from all onlookers.

As soon as the game finished the Wolves raced onto the adjoining pitch to take on **Basingstoke**, a well drilled outfit with plenty of skill and ability with the ball and a very strong and able defensive backline. This was a huge test for the Wolves and the game was played with incredible passion and it was the desire for victory that spurred the Wolves on to victory. Whilst the Basingstoke backline

marked and negated the Wolves attacking line-up gaps were twice exploited by **Tamera Cookman** sneaking through from midfield to plant the ball solidly between the posts. A frustrated Basingstoke team threw everything at the Wolves including the kitchen sink but with the solid defence of **Thomas Wilson** and **James Manning** they would have found it easier getting into Fort Knox! Particular mention must be given to **James Manning** for his nonchalant style and ability to just wander into just the right spot to foil the attack and send the ball back down the pitch; it drove the opposition coach nuts! Final score was a stunning 2-0 victory to the Wolves.

After a short break the Wolves were up against a strong **Haslemere** side that beaten them in previous tournaments. The Wolves were buoyed by the return of **Lily Johnson** and very much up for the game which started at breakneck speed from one end of the pitch to the other, unfortunately Haslemere managed to get the lucky break and for the first time in many games the Wolves found themselves behind. This seemed to galvanise the team and the midfield team of **Maarten Louwe, Tamera Cookman** and **Thomas Marton** began to take control and dictate the game but it was to no avail, the final score was a heart wrenching 0-1 defeat; a couple of extra minutes and it might have been a different outcome.

The Wolves were extremely frustrated and upset that they had conceded their first goal for a while, let alone been on the end of a defeat, so the Wolves fan club, a.k.a. the parents, swung into action to raise morale helped largely by the arrival of cakes. The team roused themselves and took the opportunity of playing the **Aldershot B** side to experiment with positions and to restore confidence, **Joseph Gould** played on the wing like a pinball flipper and supplied the front of the attack with a constant supply of ball to practise with, however lethargy had begun to creep into the Wolves play and they struggled to convert possession into points. Final score a deserved 0-0 draw.

The final game was against a sprightly **Camberley** side who had brought 13 players to the tournament and played rolling subs throughout the game. The Wolves were keen to end on a high and **Lily Johnson** took full advantage of returning to the side by making a devastating run up the middle and scoring the opening goal. The teams then traded possessions and territory up and down the pitch until a slick move was finished off by **Sam Wavish** scoring his first ever tournament goal for the Wolves. A great way for the Wolves to finish the day as they had begun with another 2-0 victory.

Other notable performances that deserve a mention include:

**Lily Johnson** for stepping up to the U10s; from the sidelines it certainly looked like she was holding her own and is a great inspiration to the U8s. Well done Lily!

**TasminCookman** whose endurance, stamina and determination terrified defences all tournament and created the space and freedom for her team mates to get into goal scoring positions.

Roll on the next tournament!

Hector Wilson