

Match Report – Sunday 12th December

Girls Under 12 League

London Wayfarers 0 Woking Whirlwinds 3

Christmas came early for Whirlwinds 'Wonders' as they resolutely closed out a 3-0 victory over London Wayfayers (all confirmed 12 year olds by their coach, never mind the size chart!). Despite losses to last minute injury, family events and the odd panto (oh yes we did!) a strong Whirlwinds team reinforced by a hell raising Hurricane took the field in deepest Streatham having overcome the varied challenges of London traffic.

Playing the unusual format of 3 thirds of 20mins, the Whirlwinds led by stand-in captain Amy C showed their determination from the off, with dominant possession in Wayfayers half forcing their way time and time again into the D, through great work by Hannah, Helena and Ella pushing up and delivering chances to Issy A, Issy C and Laila. Only problems were halves getting ahead of inners and forwards, and closing out a goal from the short corners, not even a 'Macy special' got through! This constant pressure, evidenced by at least 10 runs up the wing by Issy A, was like King Canute holding back the tide, and eventually we got our breakthrough with a great dribble through and well taken goal from Laila Richards.

Pausing for breath, after the restart we were caught a little cold overall, with a great passage of passing and possession leading to a dangerous turnover, but such was the determination of the back line that failings further up the field were more than competently handled by Amy C, Emily and Amy F (goalie) as the need arose. Paige as always was everywhere helping out too making the tackles other legs couldn't get to! Soaking up this pressure we started to use runs through Issy C and Lola on the left more often, both of whom ensured that the pass onwards went to a Whirlwinds stick. During one of her many forages forward building on the great support play further back or through the inners/wings, Laila managed to grab her brace with a right to left strike.

The final third continued to be a match well and truly at both ends, but whilst Wayfayers looked tired our girls were always up for a sprint, a tackle and a strong hit clear, with Amy F standing up firmly to any challenge on her goal. Ella was coming into her own in this period particularly clearing the lines well, but also getting excellent passes away to Lola, who herself was rising in confidence and shelled one straight across the Wayfayers D hungry for more success. Nearing the close, the game was opening up now with our girls continued to pass very well between them, leading to Helena (who assures me she ran through deliberately and was not goal hanging from midfield!) capturing a ball through near the top of the D. Driving on past the 2 defenders she shelled one straight at the keeper who deflected it out, in the subsequent mêlée with 2 Woking to 1 Wayfayer players in the D, Helena

Thompson with a back stick push squeezed one through the legs of the keeper, and our success was assured.

At the final whistle we enjoyed the Wayfayers hospitality but slightly spoilt their Christmas party me thinks.....!

All of them worked very hard today, did their own jobs really well and played as a team never giving up. Sure Laila and Helena should be proud of their goals (and the way they both played today), but games are also lost in defence so well done to Amy F for a clean sheet and the guts of Amy C and Emily to hold the line by tackling and hitting too. Ella, Hannah, Paige and Issy C did great work covering the middle of the pitch providing the balls through, that Lola and Issy A did great work with.

Special thanks to Bill for the 'fresh' oranges and helping out transporting our super sub Ella. As always thanks to Rachael for coaching assistance and Jenny today for her help with the warm up routine.

One last Friday training (probably more fun matches than training!) and then we start back on the 7th Jan, with only 2 weeks to prepare to turnover Teddington at home, so hopefully you can get them out in the cold again!

Lastly my records show Emily R has a birthday on the 23rd just before mine on Christmas Eve, so very best wishes to her from Hannah, me and I'm sure of all the Whirlwinds. It's not easy having a birthday at this time of year, nor does it get easier, trust me!

Have a peaceful Christmas and a healthy New Year, if we don't cross paths before then.

PS I forgot to say earlier that Santa might like to think about full gauntlet gloves (like cricket ones) for the girls on both hands but particularly the left. Probably 50% plus of our injuries so far have been hand related, either ball or more likely stick to hand hits. I myself wear them (after a broken thumb following a slow ball to hand) and they have the side benefit of keeping the hands warm!