

Match Report – Sunday 16th January

Girls Under 12 League

Woking Whirlwinds 2 Teddington 5

Our first game of the New Year saw all the Whirlwinds continue to demonstrate their progress both individually and as a team, showing great determination, extra effort and 'can do' attitude to test Teddington sternly.

In a windswept Woking, Whirlwinds put Teddington under substantial pressure in the first third of the match, with a number of sustained periods in the opposition D. Alas Teddington caught us early on with an average goal, that exposed our Achilles heel in not clearing our lines firmly and wide enough. However an iron will gripped the team and great supply from Anna and Catie in midfield, who always took the time to find the player in space, saw strong drives from Millie, Paige and Issy put Teddington on the back foot. Occasionally we looked a little lost when we got there and lacked a bit of composure in taking our chances, however this we can work on! The missing neutrals would have given a clear points decision to Woking for the balance of play.

Entering the second period, a combination of Teddington upping the pace, particularly at dead ball situations, and Whirlwinds stepping off the gas and not putting the ball carrier under pressure, led to too many Teddington simple incursions into the D, where a despite aggressive tackling from Helena, Amy and Hannah, Woking was stretched. Bold and brave goalkeeping from 'Tornadoes ringer', Harriet, which saw her on the ground many times, as well as being battered by short range shots, could not stop Woking leaking 3 goals in relatively short succession. In the run up to most of these we had several chances to clear the ball safely, but Whirlwinds had slipped into a 'hit and hope' hockey, which only leads to another wave of attacks. However these girls and this team does not give up, so picking up the scraps from midfield saw several drives from Laila and skipper Tabitha, whose force of will propelled Whirlwinds back into the opposition D, creating some exciting chances that caused the home crowd to up the volume. Just before the break, Laila managed a clean strike on a break through smashing one through to the backboard.

The last third saw an early ball to nose injury to Macy, apparently the third of recent history, however not yielding to pain she set about re-doubling the team's efforts by driving down the left wing with Paige's and Anna's support, whilst Tabitha and Catie took control of possession in the midfield. Hannah and Amy's hits were now at full power from further back, and opening up new angles for Millie and Laila to run onto too. Securing good possession and position, Whirlwinds set about troubling Teddington further with new attacks on their D and keeper. Despite being caught on the hop by a Teddington break that saw a screamer from the top of D to the left hand post, Whirlwinds kept their self belief. Just at the death Woking secured a short corner, which was the launch pad for a

training ground move, so called 'Macy Special'. A strong push from Macy, saw a solid stop from Millie who let the defenders come on to her before a perfectly positioned pass back to Macy for a delightfully timed near post sweep aimed behind the keeper. Alas for Macy it got caught up in the keepers pads, but poacher Laila was on hand, to clean up and grab another brace of goals!

But for 10mins of woe, Whirlwinds punched well above their weight! There is never any disgrace in defeat when played with this discipline, spirit and honest effort, so we celebrated with a hands-free cartwheel from Issy! We go forward with confidence to our next outing away at Spencer on the 30th.

Thanks to Bill/Vanessa for the oranges, Eva for TLC duties and Harriet/Chris for assisting.

Ali - Please can you forward to the umpires with again our sincere thanks for their help.

Lisa/Felix - Hope Leonie is on the mend, she was looking a bit white.....