

Match Report – Sunday 20th March
Girls Under 12s Surrey Minis – 3RD PLACE

Woking U12 girls had 3 teams in the Surrey County Finals today - The Angels, Belles and Demons and it is a credit to the strength in depth that we have that all 3 teams can hold their heads high. The Demons made it through to the Plate semi-finals and the Angels and Belles both made it to the Cup "quarter final" super groups the Belles finally finishing 3rd after a losing in controversial fashion from the last hit of the semi final BUT STILL QUALIFYING FOR THE REGIONAL FINALS!. (See Shaun's report below)

Detailed Reports for the 3 teams below:--

Summary

Demons	Played 6	Won 1	Drew 2	Lost 3	For 2	Against 5
Angels	Played 5	Won 2	Drew 2	Lost 1	For 7	Against 2
Belles	Played 7	Won 4	Drew 1	Lost 2	For 7	Against 4

Demons Stoke Fires to Reach Plate Semi's (Report from Rupert)

The team was pulled together late on Thursday night, three days before the big day. No time therefore to train or drill the kids. Nevertheless, eight girls (all U11) took on the mighty and tall U12s (at least they looked it) from across Surrey.

The results were:

League round

Epsom 1 – Woking 0 (frankly we were robbed)

Spencer 0 – Woking 0 (close game, could have gone either way)

Reigate A 2 – Woking 0 (beaten by a better team, but not until the end)

Plate Competition

Woking 2 – Oxted B 0 (well deserved win by Woking)

Woking 0 – Richmond 0 (gritty game, we nearly scored several times including hitting the inside edge of the post, but just couldn't convert)

Plate Semi-Final

Woking 0 – Oxted A 2 (had our chances, but Oxted camped in our D for couple of key mini battles which we were unable to clear; end result two goals)

The Team

Bethan Mellor in goal, standing in with two hours notice due to morning injury to Amy Cribb (not even on a hockey pitch!!). Bethan had a great day, having learned to kick hard to clear the ball and making some crucial saves during the day to keep us in the competition. Whilst disappointed with the last games result (never easy being in goal when we lose), she should hold her head high with today's performance.

Lara Hughes and Ella Fowden in defence. Early morning coaching for Ella paid off with, at last, some clearances from 16s being hit through the legs of a Woking player (usually Eleanor who was breaking up the ring) through to a waiting Woking attacker. Amazing. Lara Hughes (complete with dodgy knee) played fantastic hockey, calmly tackling players with a stick on the ground (one day they will learn to lift it over Lara's stick!), dribbling at pace to the right side and hitting up the line for our midfield to chase.

Midfield and attack was a mix of the remaining 5 players, (including one sub) being Eleanor Graves, Lucy Gould, Kitty Raphael, Macy McClutcheon and Tara de Klerk. Eleanor was initially the player for Ella to hit through on 16s and grasped early the need to lift her foot if she didn't want instant pain. Lucy battled on both left and right sides of the pitch, was occasionally a little hurried early on, but progressed to demonstrate coolness on the ball and scored one of our two goals. Kitty's legs just go on and on even after they have been wacked defending a short corner; she must have three Duracell batteries in them!! Linked excellently with Lara on the right particularly as the afternoon went on, creating a powerful duo and giving us a launch pad for our attack. Macy played a mixture of centre forward and left half. Held her position well and linked onto our new 16s causing shock amongst the opposition defence. Macy was also our other goal scorer. Finally onto Tara, who later on played centre half and helped us to command that position. Like Lara, Tara also learnt that dribbling the ball to the right hand side is easy, giving us chance to attack down our strong side.

Highlights of the day: Bethan for turning up looking like she'd had no sleep the night before (well she had some...); Lucy failing to give Coach a single jelly baby; Kitty for the bravest short corner defence of the day (and dodgiest hair band, Inge please note, needs a new hair band that doesn't fall off in matches and looks less sparkly); Ella with her slow motion dribbling in front of the D; Lara for achieving three free hits in a row without moving more than 5 yards, Macy (and Lucy) for the goals (I was beginning to think we might not get any), Tara for talking all the time, amazingly even when Coach is talking!!; Eleanor for annoying the opposition parents for wearing a slightly different shade of blue!!

Finally, thanks to the parents who helped. Makes my life a lot easier to have willing helpers around, especially when they also bring fresh supplies of tea.

Angels Fall in Quarter Final Heartache (Report from Chris)

The Woking Angels got their tournament off to a fantastic start against Oxted. With no goals in the first 6 minutes it looked as if Oxted might hold out for an unlikely stalemate in the face of a Woking onslaught but when Tabitha Bowden was introduced to add fresh legs Woking finally made their supremacy pay with a fantastic 4 goal burst from Laila Richards that showed her skill and eye for goal. Next up were Richmond A who were more of an attacking force - Harriet Sharp has been left with little to do in many of the league games this season but she showed her mettle in this game with a string of diving saves as Richmond were unable to find a way through. The Angels were playing some neat play themselves however with Katie More and Nicole Chapman Hatchett offering good width and Megan Mackay showing her usual tenacity in the centre of the park. Sustained Woking pressure forced two short corners not something anyone wants to do when they playing against Katie MacDonald and the young captain duly drilled both corners into the goal to secure a second comfortable win. Things were looking good for the Angels - we had a superior goal difference to Surbiton B so a draw would be enough to see us progress as group winners. I'm not quite sure what happened however, the team played their worst game of the tournament and it was to prove very costly as they allowed Surbiton to score an early goal. Hannah Birchall never looked like letting them in again and Woking pushed forward themselves but (with such short matches) found themselves unable to make the breakthrough against a resilient Surbiton side.

The Angels had still done enough to go through but were now up against it having to take a loss with them into the quarter final pool. First up were Epsom, a team we had recently found difficult to score against in the league and it was to prove our downfall again. Despite countless pressure we just couldn't make the breakthrough required. That left us with a final match against eventual winners Reigate A knowing that a win would take us into the semi's. It was an even affair with Woking conceding only their second goal early on when Reigate hit one into the roof of the net (note for self - put Harriet on a stretching rack each night as she needs to grow to be able to reach the top of the goal!). It was a close match, although I suspect we were giving away well over a foot in average height. Laila buzzed in out between the legs of the Reigate girls, Hannah and Katie Mac defended strongly, Harriet made a couple more good diving saves, Megan and Tabitha worked hard in midfield but we struggled to get back into the match until Katie More and Nicole combined well to force an equaliser with only a couple of minutes to go. I'm sure that a few more minutes would have yielded a winner but it just wasn't going to be our day. Thus the girls were knocked out despite only having lost a single match and having conceded only 2 goals in 5 games. If we had won that very winnable match

against Surbiton B, both Woking sides would have been through to the semi finals which would have been a fantastic achievement.

Belles battle bravely to Bronze (Report from Shaun)

Newly formed Woking Belles, comprised of a Hurricane, 4 Whirlwinds and 3 Tornadoes (what a breath of fresh air!), who first came together at a rather disjointed Friday night training (especially the flick practise period), blossomed in the spring Woking sunshine this Sunday afternoon.

In the pool stage we started with Oxted A, which despite a long and diligent warm up, the newness of playing together, plus perhaps the odd suboptimal positioning by the coaches showed. In an evenly balanced game, dominated by controlled Woking defence by sicknote Hannah (Macdonald) but with chances at both ends, ended 0-0. Second up were Richmond B, but by now the brilliant Belles were well into their stride, and Floortje (Hosman) led the way sweeping in a scuffed short corner strike from Millie (Rathbone). Eager to restore the pride of the forwards (make that forward) Millie proceeded to convert a prolonged hacking match in the D into a goal and later follow up with big hit to get her brace. Meanwhile Ellie (Moore) not to be left out, and having been the scourge of Richmond throughout, cleaned up a ping pong period with a clean strike to the backboard. So 4-0 in 10 minutes....these Belles were getting mean. In an outstanding performance that kept Guildford consistently at bay the braveheart Belles led by superb skipper Maddie (Marsden) forced themselves time and again into the danger zone. First up was Ellie to hit home whilst positive and powerful Paige (Misteli) followed on with a Macy Special move from the short corner. So 2-0 and we went forward as pool B winners to the super groups.

First up were an above average height Surbiton A, who we had watched smash their way through their pool games, and alas despite our best efforts and in particular creative Catie (Williamson) the pivotal player throughout the tournament, we were well beaten 3-0. Last up were the Wombles of Wimbledon with a big win needed to proceed. The Belles dominated the game but Wimbledon robustly held out against attacks from all angles, until Floortje swept in a cross D ball into the right corner. After consulting the tournament rules, again and again, our win against Guildford made the difference and the Belles were in the semis.

Facing Reigate who had swept all before them and looked worth a birth certificate check in places, it would have been easy to be intimidated. To a girl the Belles were focused and determined, tackling like demons and passing like angels, working harder and harder to keep the ball safe from trouble. Whilst our attacks were limited Millie and Ellie made the most of them whilst Catie and Floortje opened up the options, with Paige and Maddie bravely holding back the flood of attacks whilst fearless Phoebe (Wright) fought ferociously keeping Woking in the game. Time was ticking on, and on, indeed over the allotted 12 minutes of play. Cruelly at 14.5mins, and after the final play whistle,

Reigate rallied to force a short corner, which they mercilessly hammered into our goal winning 1-0. Reigate went on to win the final with Surbiton A, whilst Belles patched up their captain courageous Maddie and prepared for the playoff.

Ready for revenge on anyone with a Surbiton shirt on, the Belles faced their B team. In an evenly matched game, and despite extra time, the score was level and flicks were on. Surbiton won the toss and went first, pushing their effort wide left. Courageous Catie stepped forward and despite a good effort placed the ball into the goalie torso. Up stepped Surbiton's second player but fabulous Phoebe, stood tall to see her off our line. Tensions were rising as fearless Floortje took the long lonely walk to the penalty spot and then fired the ball mid height right into the goal. HOORAH! So, 1 up and 1 each left as Surbiton came forward for their last effort. Phenomenal Phoebe worked her magic to save a second time, saving Millie from a pressurised final flick. BRAVE BRONZED BELLES!

Well done to all the girls (and especial thanks to those substituted without fuss). Thanks to the many Belles supporters, also to those who stayed from other teams to urge us on, and to Lyall for her good counsel, motivation and umpiring duties. Lastly special thanks to Chris for co-ordinating the U12 section so well, and to the other coaches that have all helped the girls to success today (Rupert, Rachael, Ali, Ally, Emma, Alex, Lucy and anyone I've missed!).