

**Saturday 30th October 2010**

**Woking Men's 1s 7 : Winchester 1s 3**

Sometimes a Saturday can be called 'good'. This could, for example be when you have had some friends round for a summer BBQ and the sun has shone all day. You will all have your own ideas about what is a good Saturday for you. Last Saturday was, as Tony the Tiger once said, Grrrrreat! A good performance in front of a partisan and rowdy crowd, three points and then bar duty, what could be better....!

We'll come back to the hockey later but let's for a moment talk about bar duty. Some teams find this a real bind but I just don't see it, the chance to sit down for a few beers with your mates (and Pikey) is a great thing and I genuinely look forward to it. And if you add into the mix a game of "foot Jenga" and "throw Graeme's shoe out of the window", it can turn into a great night. For the uninitiated amongst you, our Jenga is exactly the same as normal Jenga except the blocks are a lot larger and if the tower fell on you it would probably bruise. Unless that is, you are Garth. He's so hard that he would bruise the Jenga blocks. Usually this game is played using your hands but, as with most great ideas the foot thing was devised during a drunken night at the club and after a few pints it's hilarious. "Throw Graeme's shoe out of the window" is also exactly what you would expect (we really must devise some more original names for our games) and unfortunately for the Welshman, it was not his idea so he was not exactly a willing participant. To be fair to him he took it all in great spirit, I'm not sure I would have been quite so happy to have people take turns throwing my shoe out of a window into the pouring rain. Thankfully for Graeme, it was late o'clock before we started playing and by this point our aim was not exactly dead eye dick so his shoe didn't get too wet. Or at least that's how I remember it. There are two morals to this story: 1. it can be great fun having a beer with your mates playing silly games that don't sound funny when you're sober and 2. I'm rambling

And now on to the hockey: Winchester came to Fortress Goldsworth on the back of an impressive string of results, their only blip was a recent loss to unbeaten league leaders Havant and even that was a pretty respectable 4-2. We therefore knew that we would be in for a tough game especially as they were a bit unlucky to be relegated from Premier B last season. For the second week running our warm up was a bit low key and our standards were not good but as we did last week, we started well. To be fair to our visitors, the first 10-15 minutes were fairly even, a bit like two boxers sizing each other up. Then we started to impose ourselves on the game and nicked a lead when Andy lashed home a loose ball that had hit the post. Giles then made it 2-0 when he cheekily touched a goal bound shot from Denzil just before it went over the line, tough luck on the coach but good skills from Gilo! Then the heavens opened and we were blessed with what can only be described as a monsoon. It was during this period that Winchester grabbed an unlikely goal to make it 2-1. Winchester broke down our left and Billy was just about to intercept a harmless looking cross into our D when he slipped and inadvertently teed the ball up nicely for their centre forward to volley the ball home. It was squeaky bum time for a bit but then we grabbed a welcome third goal to settle the nerves. Winchester

broke up a Woking attack and their Centre midfield saw a dodderly old codger (Robbo) standing in front of him at the top of the D so he decided to run round the old timer. Unfortunately for the shocked Winchester player, Robbo is not as old as his brother looks and he nicked the ball away in what is probably the cleanest tackle he's ever made. He then slipped the ball calmly to Andy who had the simple job of almost missing the goal, the cheeky chappy, mop haired striker was a bit relieved to see the ball hit the backboard. Despite this, Winchester were still in the game and their ex International centre forward was causing us a few problems up front, thankfully Will was having a debut to remember and pretty much marked him out of the game. Winchester pressed for the last few minutes of the half and nearly pulled a goal back after we played the role of generous hosts to a tee and kept giving them the ball back. One great save from Sam and a back post near miss later and we had limped to half time

I've never heard Denzil swear and nor do I expect to but if he had been so inclined I imagine the air would have been blue during the half time team talk. There were lots of comments about not doing what we have practiced and that we needed to sort it out in the second half. In truth, this was nothing that we didn't already know but we needed to hear it and we all agreed that we needed to up our game. Thankfully we did just that in the second half and Winchester simply couldn't cope. We pressed them hard, we showed more energy and we took our chances well. We increased our lead from a short corner early in the half, Tim was off the pitch for running repairs so Will stepped up to open his account for the season with a beautifully placed low short corner flick that gave the keeper no chance. Denzil then scored our fifth when Andy crossed to him at the far post, his first touch controlled the ball and he smashed it back across the keeper into the far corner. Winchester then pulled a goal back in unfortunate circumstances, Junior played the ball directly onto the foot of the LB and we all politely stopped to allow one of the umpires to blow his whistle. Unfortunately it would seem that neither of them was actually watching the game at that point so they played on. We were frozen to the spot with shock at the lack of whistle action and one of their players drifted through the huge gap in our defence before beating Sam at his far post, 5-2. It was a nicely taken goal but should never have been allowed. Thankfully we just got back on with the game and soon scored the best looking goal of the day from Junior, and no I am not referring to him as being best looking, it was definitely only the goal. Chris picked up the ball wide on the left and almost without looking he smashed it into the D, most of us were about to moan at him for playing a hopeless long ball when Junior dived, seemingly from nowhere to deflect the ball like a rocket into the bottom corner. Their keeper didn't see it and didn't even have a chance to move. A delighted Junior celebrated by lying on the floor looking up at Andy in a pose similar to the famous Gazza dentist chair at Euro 96. There was still time for us to add a seventh and for Andy to bag himself another hat trick as he swept home a cross from Dino. Winchester were then slightly fortunate to be awarded two penalty strokes late in the game and I believe that neither of them were correct decisions. Firstly Tim deflected a corner flick over the bar with his hand still attached to his stick (the blood on his fingers proves this). My interpretation of the rule is that this is legal but the umpire did not agree, does anyone know who's right? Sam dived the wrong way at the flick but thankfully, he had already psyched out their player (all keepers say that)

and the ball rolled harmlessly wide. It would seem that the umpire was so upset about this that he awarded another dubious stroke a few minutes later when one of their players rolled the ball onto Mike's static foot. I was not close to the incident but the surprised reaction of the players, Winchester included, was a bit of a clue that the penalty award was somewhat 'generous'. Sadly, Sam's powers of psyche had been exhausted at the previous flick and although he guessed the right way he was unable to prevent a goal. Dive the wrong way and they miss, dive the right way and they score....hmmm, maybe there's moral there somewhere?

Thankfully that was the end of the excitement for the day, well as far as the hockey went anyway! MOM was a tight affair but Will snuck it by one vote from Andy and Mike. WOW was far less close as Andy romped it for missing more goals than he scored, it's a bit tough to get the duffers award after you have scored a hat trick but thankfully Andy took it in his stride like a seasoned pro and headed off to the Committee room with a jug in hand

Trojans next week, never an easy place to go but confidence is high and we'll be going there looking for another 3 points..!

### **Woking Men's 1s 3 : EUHC Gamblers 2**

On Sunday a bunch of hardy (and hungover?) souls made the trip to Barnes to face an Edinburgh Uni Old Boys side in the Surrey Cup. EUHC are romping their league and should be playing at least two leagues higher so this was always likely to be a tough game and we were not disappointed. Sadly I couldn't play so all I know is that we didn't play that well but we still managed another win with a golden goal from Tim after Andy and Mr. Trendall had scored in normal time. Ho hum, you can't always play well and we still won the game, I love winning and it's a great habit to get into so let's not worry about one below par performance. Bring on Trojans!