



Thornleigh Sports & Recreation Club Inc.

SOCCKER DIVISION

Blue & Gold Newsletter

4-5 July 2009



Deadline for Blue & Gold: MONDAY 12pm Email to: ThunderMatchReports@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



We are into the home stretch as far as the regular season goes. Teams will need to note where they are required to make up games for those that were rained out. At least on the horizon, it looks like favourable weather for the foreseeable future.

The Junior and Senior Presentation events are still in the planning stages, but we anticipate holding them early September. We will keep you informed as we move along. Coaches and Managers will need to start thinking about trophies. Details will need to be forwarded to Graeme Tingle soon, so as to enable sufficient time for our order to be processed. I believe early August is the deadline.

Congratulations to all our teams on the weekend, it was another week of good results. It was pleasing to see the Premier League take the double header at Oakleigh against Eastwood - St Andrews. The table standings are getting tighter and we need to keep a hold on one of the top four placings.

Enjoy the coming week of soccer and of course the school holidays. May the sun shine all around you and all through your school holidays.

Yours in Commitment

Rob Roberts

RESULTS

GHFA Competition – 4 July 2009			
Grade/Div	Opposition	For	Against
U9/3	Saints United	1	1
U9/7	Beecroft	0	4
U9/8	All Saints Hunters Hill	0	2
U10/3	Saints United	0	1
U11/2	West Ryde Rovers	0	2
U11/6	Saints United	0	5
U12/3	Ryde District	0	3
U13/2	Glenhaven	4	0
U14/4	North Epping Rangers	6	0
U15/4	Roselea	1	1
U17/1	Carlingford Redbacks	6	3
U17/3	Putney	1	4
AA/4	Eastwood St Andrews	7	0
AA/7	Saints United	2	1
AA/10	Pennant Hills	0	3
AA/12	West Pennant Hills	0	2
AA/16	Carlingford Redbacks	1	0
AA/18	North Epping Rangers	2	3
AA/20	North Epping Rangers	3	3
O35/2	Gladesville Ravens	0	2
O35/5	Pacific Hills Dural	5	0
PL/Res	Eastwood St Andrews	1	0
PL/1 st	Eastwood St Andrews	3	1

NWSWS Competition – 5 July 2009			
Grade/Div	Opposition	For	Against
U14/1	Mount St Benedict	7	0
U14/2	Kenthurst	2	0
U15/2	North Epping Rangers	3	0
U17/1	West Ryde Rovers	8	1
U18/1	Epping YMCA	15	2
AA/4	Normanhurst	1	1
AA/10	Ryde Panthers	1	2
O/35	Gladesville Ravens	0	4



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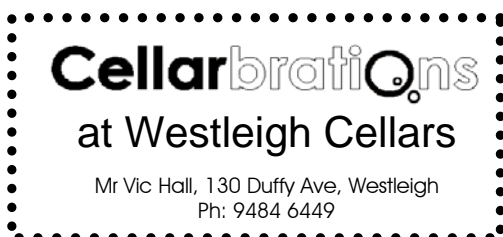
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UNDER 6 GREEN

THORNLEIGH vs NORMANHURST B

After the last few weeks of indifferent weather it was a pleasant change this morning to have a clear and sunny day, although the seasonal and non-porcine related illness kept LOGAN away this week. A slightly later start meant we could definitely enjoy the sunshine, listen to the birds, and catch up on a chat.... hang on a minute there was that the game starting? Despite the warm weather the boys took a little bit of warming up today, but still managed to produce some of their best play in patches. COOPER was player of the week this week. He got very involved in the middle of the ruck, as well as playing some solid defence. ANDREW decided to try his hand at offence this week with a couple of solid drives up the sideline that unfortunately did not quite manage to eventuate in goals. RYAN, despite playing injured, was still able to score our first goal and also played some solid defence. MITCHELL also scored another goal this week and was showing of some great skills with his control of the ball. NATHAN played his usual fast and furious game in the thick of the action, MICHAEL chased down the ball all over the park and ROHAN jumped in and practiced his tackling on the Normanhurst team. A very enjoyable game. No report from me next week good luck boys!!

UNDER 6 ORANGE

THORNLEIGH vs HILLS HAWKS B

Under glorious skies, and with the fresh memory of scoring from the previous match, Thornleigh were keen to repeat the performance against Hills Hawks B. However, dogged defence was the order of the day certainly in the first few minutes as Thornleigh's goal was peppered with a constant barrage of shots from a team trying to take ascendancy early on.

With both JAMES and FLETCHER leading the way with great clearing kicks from the goal line, the opposition was made to work hard for their goals from this point on.

Along with JOSHUA playing a solid role in the middle of the field, the platform was often laid for both ETHAN and JAMIE to combine to produce great footwork and ball control through the middle of the pack forcing the opposition to come up with last second saves.

Congratulations must go to BENNY who secured the prestigious Thornleigh player of the week award. This was due to his dogged and determined defence close to the goal particularly when he put his body on the line thus preventing the opposition from scoring on numerous occasions.

UNDER 6 RED

THORNLEIGH 1 vs PACIFIC HILLS DURAL 2

Sunshine and a blue sky finally arrived for this week's match which saw us two players short. PHD got proceedings underway and it didn't take long before the boys were re-acquainting themselves with a dirty, although drier, playing field. There was some strong, gutsy tackling by all players. ANDREW HILL adopted his normal 'take no prisoners' attitude and, like the week before, was not afraid to take a fall if it prevented an opposition's attack. Also providing great covering defence along with a willingness to take the ball forward was ZACHARY DUNLOP. However, this hard work went unrewarded as it was PHD who scored first. Our boys were not

out of this game by any means as evidenced by HARRISON HOWARD's constant ability to 'have a go' and forever looking to pass to his team-mates. Good mid-field work saw JACK BIDWELL stride away from the pack which put him on a collision course with the opposition's goal. Needless to say, he made no mistake in scoring and we went to the break with the scores level. The same gutsy attitude prevailed in the second half. It was great to see ALISTAIR WESTON getting more and more involved in Thornleigh's attacks and he was unlucky not to put his side ahead. Our hopes were sunk by a kick forward by PHD from general play in their own half which saw the ball roll and roll and finally land in the back of the Thornleigh net. It's not a good way to end a game but if dirty knees is a sign of attitude and effort then our boys are probably still having them washed. This week's Best and Fairest award was presented to ZACHARY DUNLOP. Well done ZACHARY!

UNDER 6 WHITE A

THORNLEIGH 'A' 10 vs WEST PENNANT HILLS 2

With a clash of boots and shin pads the game erupted with both teams putting in all their effort. Then suddenly JACK found the ball between his feet, launched down the wing, and sent the ball air-born into the goal! Play resumed, and a blink later JACK sinks another goal.

With nothing to lose, WPH turned up the heat, but they found JASMINE and EUAN in the thick of it determined to thwart their attacks, and succeeding. With HUGH darting from attack to defence when the need arose. Just when WPH seemed to be getting a break, LIAM and DAVID put in a cracker defence to stop some near misses. But the Thunders had more up their sleeves, as JAMES entered the fray, delivering a hat trick with the last shot coming off his left boot from a quarter length of the field. Clearly wanting the Thunder's vibe to climb higher and higher, DAVID and EUAN then absolutely pummelled the opposition on their way to a dual goal.

In a last moment act of defiance WPH sliced open our defences and scored their 1st goal. Then like a whip crack the air was pierced by the sound of the whistle – a little early?

Second half saw wild action from the first breath, with each kick in one direction being met with an equal force kick from the other. Opportunity suddenly knocked for LIAM as he made a legendary run through most of the WPH defence – very near miss indeed.

But JACK had definitely eaten his Nutri-grain for breakfast as he rocketed into the opportunity presented by a gaping opening in the field before him – fired from just past the midline – and sunk one awesome goal. But goals mean nothing if there is no defence and DAVID ensured he used every avenue of opportunity (and body part) to stop WPH; with EUAN and JASMINE right by his side forming a rock solid wall.

But hang on, the Thunders blitz was not over yet. To their peril WPH underestimated HUGH'S reaction speed when on their last throw-in HUGH redirected the ball deftly into the net. Obviously not a fan of odd numbers, JAMES gently but



effectively carved up anyone who thought the Thunders didn't deserve one last goal, delivering a final laser sighted shot.

In a nutshell – EVERY Thunder played magnificently.

U7 GREEN

THORNLEIGH 9 vs HILLS HAWKS B 0

It was another cold and chilly morning, but what a great game for all our players! Everyone demonstrated terrific improvement in their soccer skills, as well as taking responsibility for their positions. It was a scoring frenzy with BEN securing our first goal. This was followed by three spectacular goals from JACOB as well as two excellent goals from EDWARD. CALLUM and MASON proved very consistent and co-operative in play by scoring a goal a piece. Special mention goes to LACHLAN who showed some impressive skills this week and also scored a goal. Well done boys on a fantastic game. It was a fabulous team effort, and an exciting game to watch.

Player of the week - EDWARD

UNDER 7 RED A

THORNLEIGH A vs NORMANHURST

Every Saturday seems to bring something new to cheer about and a new challenge to work through. The challenge this week was starting shorthanded, and thanks to CIAN and ROB from Normanhurst (not that I expect they'll be reading this) who helped us not only fill up the numbers, but were not shy about scoring freely against their own team. The good work by all players in thinking more about the game was something to cheer about, with everyone seeming to look for passing chances from time to time. The standout moment of the morning was undoubtedly Hatrick HARRY who looks to be getting ever closer to his form from last year. It was great to see ELLY getting stuck in, and the sort of tackling she showed us this game was tremendous, and she created at least one scoring chance in the second half. It was exhausting just watching ASHLEY going up and down and up and down and..., and his battering ram style of taking on the defence netted him a goal in the first half. When I talk about players reading the game better, no-one shows that more than MARK who, whether he likes it or not, has become as reliable as it gets at the back. It was also interesting to see that although CIAN was menacing against his own team, against our tight defence in the second half he was no where near as threatening. A good win, well done everyone.



UNDER 7 RED B

THORNLEIGH B vs PACIFIC HILLS DURAL

A close exciting game this week against Pacific Hills Dural(PHD). Thornleigh protected the goals well, stopping many attempts by PHD. THOMAS even placed his whole body on the line to block the ball successfully, unfortunately so did a PHD player(mainly his head) when Thomas attempted a goal. The game was full of lots and lots of big kicks by the team toward Thornleigh's goal, most notable were by MYLES, THOMAS and MAX. MICHAEL was able to speed around and outrun PHD and pushed the ball down the field with a huge kick to score, not once but twice. MYLES came close to scoring, with some excellent manoeuvring of the ball and he was consistently positioning well to get the ball back down the field. CHARBEL was charging through the other team, demonstrating some tricky turns to keep control of the ball. MAX and WILL were in there stopping the PHD charge, with some great attacking on the ball. CHRISTOPHER showed some gutsy defence with some awesome blocks.

Player of the Week: THOMAS REILLY



UNDER 7 WHITE A

THORNLEIGH A vs THORNLEIGH C

Like last week we were struggling for numbers as injury and skiing holidays left us without reserves and with a player running late, we only had 4 players at the start of the game. Thankyou to Thornleigh C for offering to start with 4 players! Special mention to TRAVIS HILTON who soldiered on after being struck down with illness earlier in the week and produced his normally high standard game with 4 goals. JASMINE WILLIAMS and LUKE WILLIAMS also battled on during the game after taking some heavy knocks from some big kicks. JASMINE scored 1 goal and narrowly missed many more scoring opportunities. LAURA DIBLASIO continues to impress and now seems to chip with a goal or two every game. Well done LAURA! HUGH GORDON was back this week and had some great kicks in defence.

UNDER 7 WHITE B

THORNLEIGH vs WEST PENNANT HILLS CHERRYBROOK

First match of the day this week, thanks to the parents that helped set up. The team was raring to go in the cold weather, but West Pennant Hills Cherrybrook got off to an early start scoring the first goal, but it was mostly one way traffic after that, RILEY gets his first goal for the day, followed by another goal off a pass from MIKA showing great team work. LUCAS has a shot at goal, but loses a show, so the ball goes wide. Good defence from LIAM, and more teamwork from MIKA passing to RILEY who breaks down the field for another goal. Second half saw MATTHEW blocking the opposition twice in a row, saving a certain goal. JACQUILINE takes up the defensive role and boots the ball half way up the field, then to RILEY who scores from the side. MIKA gets a shot at goal, blocked by WPH/C but passes to RILEY who scores again! Too many to count, LUCAS finally connects and scores just before full time off a pass from RILEY. Player of the Week to RILEY for scoring six goals and Merit Award to MIKA.



Thunder Spirit in Action – Helping a Team Mate

UNDER 8 GREEN

THORNLEIGH 3 vs RYDE DISTRICT 2

Yet again a strong result from the team with another win under the belt. This week's game saw CASANDRA HILL get her first goal of the season, with more to follow we are sure. JAYDEN TAOUK kept up his form by scoring the other two goals, with some great support by ADELAIDE GIFFNEY, MASON OATES and JAMIE PAYNE, all who had close shots at goal themselves. ADELAIDE GIFFNEY played first half goalie with OLIVIA FLACK working effectively as a back – both saw little action in that half. It was in the second half when the Ryde District play maker arrived making OLIVIA FLACK's job in goal very difficult, however she defended with her normal vigour. IRIS YUAN continues to improve with some great defensive kicks and passes to the team, however at the end of the match it was CASANDRA HILL taking the player of the week trophy – congratulations! VERONICA JOHNS, your team and fans noted you were away sick and we look forward to seeing you back for this week's game.

U8 RED

THORNLEIGH vs MACQUARIE DRAGONS C

The Red Rhinos played well today with an assertive show of skills and great follow-up of the ball. THEA SCHMERTMANN played her best game ever and deservedly was awarded Player of the Match, being especially tenacious keeping the pressure on the ball as she skilfully dribbled up the field past 3 or more players showing great control of the ball. BLAKE RYAN applied early pressure on goal, which he sustained throughout the match. Everywhere the ball was, BLAKE RYAN was, playing a top game. MATTHEW PINES started in goal, his first this season. Unfortunately the other team were too strong for his defences but MATTHEW PINES' kicks out of goal were strong, gaining better direction as the game progressed. RUBEN MOUTON was in his usual tremendous form, scoring 2 goals off his right foot at incredible angles after some fancy footwork moving the ball down the field. EMMA CARRIGAN defended well and EMMA SANCATALDO put herself on the line to stop the opposition with a committed slide tackle. CONNOR CLARKE was always in the play displaying his speed and skills throughout the match, a little unlucky at times with backup from his team. OLLIE DUNCAN had an awesome turn in goal in the second half, showing confidence and an intuitive skill at stopping the opposition's attack. Great job OLLIE DUNCAN. DYLAN WELGEMOED ran well, keeping up with the play as it moved around the field, getting his feet in and tackling.

UNDER 8 WHITE

THORNLEIGH 12 vs PENNANT HILLS 1

In another great game this weekend, the players played one of their best games of the year. All players played very well and are not just understanding the game but starting to learn how to communicate on the field. MORGAN HUGHES took charge of the goals in the first half and made some great saves. He then played in the midfield in the second half and was just awesome and scored a hatrick of goals. BRADLEY HOWARD is becoming the general of defence and directing play from the back and also scored a great goal when he had a chance to play up front. JARET WILSON is also loving playing defence and made some great tackles and some awesome clearances. TARA WILSON is also playing very well, making some great tackles and coming close to scoring a goal as well. JONATHAN CHAN is growing each week and playing very well, his goal was well deserved. ISAAC LANE again dominated up front and scored 2 great goals, but also helped out in goals in the second half and showed his willingness to help the team. DANIEL PATTERSON and OLIVER DEWEY also played very well up front and made some great passes between them and also managed to score goals on the day with DANIEL getting a hatrick and OLIVER scoring 2 great goals.

All in all it was a great game as the players are playing as a team and really enjoying their soccer. Well done we are all very proud of you.

UNDER 9/3

THORNLEIGH 1 vs RYDE SAINTS UNITED 1

The team travelled to Holy Cross College for an important away game against Ryde Saints United who are sitting in third place on the premiership ladder. After a solid training session on Wednesday night, Coach Chapman opened his bag of tricks and developed some great new moves for the team to unleash on the Saints.

The Thunder ran into a stiff breeze in the first half of the match and the players were combining magnificently much to the delight of the Thornleigh crowd. Some accurate passing from LACHLAN HARRIS, ROWAN WOOD and CYRRENA BOURIS eventually led to a great strike from JOSHUA WATKINS to open the scoring for the Thunder. From the re-start the opposition used the wind to their advantage and went on the attack, applying sustained pressure on our backline. TOM SELLIN, ZANE GEORGE and 1st half goalkeeper DANIEL SUNNUCKS did well keeping the opposition to one goal as they were throwing everything at us (except the kitchen sink).

After a highly motivational half time pep talk by Coach Chapman, the Thunder was ready for a big half of soccer. TIMOTHY REYNOLDS, DYLAN DONOVAN, LEWIS HABKOUK and CODY JERVIS injected themselves in the second half and all made valuable contributions to the match.

We spent the majority of the second half in our opponent's territory and many great shots at goals were saved by the Saints United goalkeeper.

The match was very close and ended up as a 1all draw which was a good result for us as it keeps us in touch with the top 4. The team played as a team and with four games to go before the finals our Premiership aspirations are looking promising. Player of the match was awarded to DANIEL SUNNUCKS, the Teamwork award went to TOM SELLIN and JOSHUA WATKINS scored the Goal of the Week.

UNDER 9/7

THORNLEIGH 0 vs BEECROFT 4

This week the team faced a formidable battle up against the Competition Leaders, Beecroft, with many suffering from a cold and no reserves the team put in a gallant fight to go down 4-0 to Beecroft. The defensive line kept up well under the constant onslaught of Beecroft Attackers, even though being able to successfully keep Beecroft from having a clear shot they were able to sneak 4 in from the sides. An excellent game was had by ROBBIE, nearly pinning a goal several times in the first half of the game; his efforts earned him man of the match, well done ROBBIE! RAYMOND FERRIS and ZACH MCLEOD did a excellent JON in goals in their respective halves with the defensive back line of DANIEL DRAPER, NICK HO and TRISTAN DOWNEY did their best to keep the Beecroft team at bay. NICK WENSLEY, CHRIS BLOOM and BRAIDEN WOLHOFF all had a great game in the mid field and forwards and were unlucky not to land a goal, especially in the first half when we were able to keep a fair bit of possession.

UNDER 13/2

THORNLEIGH 4 vs GLENHAVEN 0

A perfect Winter's morning saw our team face up against a depleted Glenhaven side. To their credit, our opponents decided to proceed with 8 team members so it was to be expected that our side would dominate. And dominate we did.

An early strike by WILL was followed quickly by a combination play from CAMERON, TOM L and BLAKE resulting in a near miss off the cross-bar. All team hearts leapt when TOM L scored but we were pinged for off-side. Never mind, strong defence by JULIAN, MAX, CAMPBELL and the every-running TOMMY D combined with a couple of great saves by MITCH kept our opponents at bay. ADRIAN and TOM L combined with a couple of good plays. BLAKE seemed to be everywhere from forward line to heading the ball clear. WILL and JOSH teamed up with a near miss and TOMMY D continued with the heavy-lifting to keep the ball clear of our back quarter.

Phew, and that was the first half. No goals. Plenty of backwards and forwards play but we weren't yet capitalising on our player advantage! There was murmur in the crowd that Bob was going to have some strong words at half time and to his enduring credit those words were clear, no-nonsense and encouraging. They did the trick. The second half was a blinder.

MITCH came out of goals to join our frontline with JAY stepping in to protect our net and protect it he did with several solid saves. CAMERON stepped off but was to come on in the second-half to spell WILL who had been running like Phar Lap. 15 minutes into the half, after CAMPBELL, MAX, JULIAN and JOSH thwarted all attempts to breach our defence and ADRIAN's tenacity had pushed deep into Glenhaven's territory, WILL's push followed by the true boot of TOM L led to a blistering goal. This action was followed only a minute later by a one-two combination from WILL and TOM L for another goal and not 5 minutes later, another goal with WILL dribbling around 3 Glenhaven defenders to slam one into the left side of the net.

TOMMY D continued to be first to the ball in defence and ADRIAN's constant attacking play continued. An indirect penalty in the goal square from MITCH to BLAKE and back to ADRIAN led to a near miss over the cross-bar. Not to be daunted, MITCH dribbled skillfully setting up BLAKE for one more goal to seal it for the Thunder.

Bob's closing remarks to the team after the game provided strong advice – an early ball from the midfield over the top to the frontline will do it for us everytime! Keep it up Thunder. We'd like more of the same next week, please.



UNDER 14/2 GIRLS

THORNLEIGH (2) 2 vs KENTHURST 0

The return of our coach saw the girls play their best game of the season against a team ranked higher on the ladder.

The first half saw plenty of highlights with the ball going from end to end.

Both teams had a number of scoring opportunities and only through some great defence the score remained nil all until the 15 minute mark when Claudia found the back of the net after some superb team work.

The second half proved to be as exciting as the first with end to end action and once again no score until HANNA T rifled a ball past their keeper to take a 2 goal lead.

ELLEN and HANNA C as keepers defended our goal all day with both girls pulling off some memorable saves. ABEY & TEAGAN on the right and left defence ran the ball down all day and made life difficult for the opposition forwards while in the middle KIRA & KATHERINE continually cleared the ball from dangerous situations.

In the middle JOEY, JAS, BEC & HANNA T continually put us into attacking situations with some great passing while up front LARISSA, EMMA & CLAUDIA peppered the opposition goal.

This result was achieved by a group of girls who believed they could win and proved with their team skills that semi final football is still within reach this season.

UNDER 14/4

THORNLEIGH 6 vs NORTH EPPING RANGERS 0

Thornleigh certainly started off the match with the upper hand today, being on the offensive from the word 'go'. The midfield worked hard in getting the ball up to the forwards with some great determined play by THOMAS HIGGINS, JIN LIM and ALEX PUN. The first goal came from a pass by SAMUEL LANE to JACK ANGEL who had an open goal to boot the ball home. The second goal resulted from a great pass by JACOB KOWLASKI to JACK ANGEL who once again was in the right position right in front of the goal. A wonderful pass by JACK to JIN LIM and back to JACK up the middle of the field saw JACK score the third and final goal in the 1st half. Cementing a 3 nil lead in the first half saw the team take on the 2nd half with some new confidence and determination. Some excellent defence work by the backs ensured the opposition did not have many opportunities at goal. CALLUM MOSES showed some serious persistence and focus in keeping the opposition at bay while the big boot of DANIEL CHRISTIE saw us out of trouble quite a few times. JOSHUA COOPER was as solid as every in the goals, with one courageous save which saw him dive in the path of a ball in full flight. A short stint at forward by DARREN JOOSTEN saw him score the 4th goal off a nicely times pass from JACK ANGEL. The 5th goal came off a cheeky backward kick from MATTHEW FORD to THOMAS HIGGINS who then passed to JACOB KOWALSKI who scored the goal. ALEX PUN made a brilliant charge from way outside the box to score a good and solid final goal. Well deserved man of the match went to THOMAS HIGGINS.

UNDER 15/2 GIRLS

THORNLEIGH 1 vs NORTH EPPING RANGERS 3

The game is too painful to recount, so I won't even start. Not in our wildest dreams did we expect to lose by 3 nil against the 4th placed team in the comp. However with half the team not feeling well it was a good show of team spirit and courage. Our main problems were too much ball watching and Rangers wanted the ball more. The girls vote each week for the Player's Player award and I will use this to describe some of the good parts of today's game. Firstly, our two goal keepers were honoured with the most points. SAM TRENAMAN is our main keeper who plays at least one half each week. She consistently has good games with out complaint or fuss. Today's 2nd half keeper was ALISSIA ODDI. At half time there was an awkward moment: no one wanted to be keeper and the girls placed a lot of pressure on ALISSIA. Whilst she is good at it, she'd rather play on the field. Eventually she volunteered to do the job which was a great show of team spirit and leadership that has earned her the Player's Player this week. Well done ALISSIA. The next highest in points came LISA PHILLIPS as fullback. She turned players, walked the ball around several players and showed how she just keeps progressing in skills. Finally a special mention about our coaches – TERRY and PETER. A thankless task that requires dedication, perseverance and courage to coach a team of 15 year old girls. Well done lads and keep up the good work.

UNDER 15/4

THORNLEIGH 1 vs ROSELEA 1

In a reversal of starting odds from last week, on paper we should have gone down this week, but the boys were out to avenge the 5-1 loss to Roselea earlier in the season and they put on an epic display of courage to keep the final scoreline to a one-all draw. I must say – this was achieved with only one sub and at least two field players less than 100% fit. Roselea had a full card and were subbing all over the place.

From the start Roselea attempted valiantly to get past the amazing defence of TIM LOVE, NATHAN QIN and ALEX ANTOGNELLI. These boys are the kings of shutdowns though, thwarting every attempt in grand style. Cracker game by MICHAEL BRADLEY in the mids saw a number of potentially lost balls make their way to our forwards. He and HUW FISHER took to heart Coach Craig's call to "Find your man and love him" almost literally (Except the love part). Once again JOHNNNO HALL'S massive throw-in's seemed to stay in the air forever. Huge effort mate. Though as you are at home as this is being typed on Monday morning – playing on-line Halo with Xavier – I take it you didn't pull up so well after the game? Look after yourself. We want you back for this weekend! Speaking of unwell players, you wouldn't have known it looking at ANDREW CARDWELL or HUW FISHER on the field. Determined to the last to say the least! ANDY, you did an amazing job filling in on the corner kicks for MICHAEL GAMBLE (who was running a temperature of 41 on Friday night and didn't think he should play on Saturday. – Yeah, OK Michael – You're forgiven.) This makes XAVIER BOUCHER'S (*another absent player) temp of 38.7 sound woosy. I'll tell my son to suck it up next time.

But wait – I digress. Back to the game. CHARLIE GILLINGS! Faced with a number of hard saves, this man did not let the Thunders down. Clever run outs, safe hands and sharp

reflexes kept the score a draw. And he loves to talk up the play. Nice job Charlie! Perhaps the most exciting point in the game came with a header by TIM in the wrong direction, straight down our defensive end. ALEX A made a huge attempt to shut it down, but in the end this job was left to CHARLIE who saved in magnificent style. Then in to play soon after, a nice corner kick, more play, in our box, a shot from ANDREW CARDWELL finds the net! This just before half time. We're 1 up and Roselea can't believe it!

True to form, Coach Craig doesn't let this go to their heads and the 2nd half starts hard and fast. Not long in and a Roselea forward skillfully draws CHARLIE out of the box for a nice shot on target. 1 all.

But that's where it stays. JEREMEY TOOHEY gave some lovely kicks through for chances by our forwards and some nice runs by ALEX CHARARA but by now fatigue is taking a hold and we are unable to capitalize further. RHYS BRIOT was one man who stayed with his man for most of the game, nice pressure RHYS. At one point, TIM LOVE kicked the ball off to the side and into the trees beyond the Oakleigh fence, but his attempt to stop play for a rest was thwarted by the spectator who threw in another ball straightaway. "Darn" he says. Never mind, the pressure continued, with shut-downs by WILL SOWDEN continuing to the last to keep Roselea from getting one up.

Brilliant game boys – You definitely shook them up! Nathan – a good try on the cheer Nathan, but you didn't get much support. Lollies next week IF YOU DO IT RIGHT! (Huw Fisher – You're it next game.)

UNDER 17/1 GIRLS

THORNLEIGH 8 vs WEST RYDE ROVERS 1

With only 10 players due to illness and family commitments, the Thunders still gave their opponents a lesson. To be fair, the Rovers were also depleted with only 11 players some of whom looked quite young. One of our 10 was JESS HARRIS from the 15/2s who played great defence, and another was DANI CHARARA back from retirement for a cameo role and coming ever so close to scoring on two occasions. Thanks for making the effort girls, it was very much appreciated by your team mates.

Today's goals were as follows...

5 mins: ANNALESE SMITH on an acute angle from the left
7 mins: MEL D'ARCHY from a keeper fumble following a big through ball from ANNALESE off a MADDY BROWN throw-in
12 mins: MEL off a through ball following a CLARE BUSHROD centre
27 mins: STEPH THOMSON with a gorgeous left-footer after latching onto a FIONA SPARKES punt kick at the half-way line and taking it all the way
62 mins: MEL positioned beautifully to accept an ANNALESE cross in front of the goals
65 mins: ANNALESE after running a full circle with the ball to get it onto her right foot for the shot
66 mins: MEL with a good low shot from the goal-front pack
69 mins: MEL chipping the keeper off a MADDY throw
79 mins, 50 secs: Rovers consolation goal off a corner virtually on full time!

How did our attackers have the opportunity for all these goals? From the tight Thunder defence and mid-field winning one-on-ones and deft passing. DAN's passes from mids hit the spot.

COURTNEY BLANCH's cutting off the attack in the sweeper and driving the ball up the line. A couple of great saves from croaky FIONA. MADDY stealing the ball in defence and sending it up the line. EMMA's and MADDY's awesome throw-ins. CLARE "the playmaker" in mids winning all her one-on-ones, turning on her mark to put in the pass. DAN hitting the cross bar and the goal post with powerful shots. EMMA turning defence into attack. JESS defending well and with increasing confidence as the match progressed. STEPH on fire in the mids.

This was truly a team effort, and all the more significant given the absence of some of our star players which demonstrates the depth of our team. But next week against Kenthurst won't be so easy – another big game needed to stay in the top four. You can do it, Thunders!

UNDER 17/3

THORNLEIGH 1 vs PUTNEY 4

The match started with Putney on the attack, with some suave moves, landed a goal.

Thornleigh continued to show outstanding defence with AARON, WILLOW and DION always pushing forward. Despite the ball being concentrated down our end of the field, a few attempts at goal, we were unable to convert.

The first half of the game continued with both teams evenly matched. LUKE's save at goal kept the score at 1-0 until LEROY passed to HARRY to score an amazing goal to equalize the scores. It was now 1-1 with one man down (WILL).

The game soon changed with Putney scoring their second goal. The score was now 2-1 with DION and BRENDAN impenetrable in defensive play. Although the game was exciting CRAIG expressed his anticipation of half time.

The second half commenced as the first did; with Putney scoring in the first ten minutes. The score was now 3-1. (As match reporter, I can't help reflect upon the last time these teams met. The score was 5-0, I think Thornleigh's way).

Thornleigh stepped up the pace with repeated attempts at goal. Putney lost their pizzazz for a while allowing us to keep the ball. It was just bad luck that the score wasn't equal by now.

With 15 minutes to go, Putney scored their fourth goal. With many of our players not feeling the best, they put on a great show. Well done guys!



UNDER 18/1 LADIES

THORNLEIGH 15 vs EPPING YMCA 2

A pumped up coach (MARK), insisting on a win and a relaxed team of girls focused on the previous nights social activities was this weeks warm-up.

What happened in the ensuing eighty minutes was GOAL, GOAL,GOAL and more GOALS!!!!; the warm-up obviously worked. The final score was 15-2 with goals coming frequently after sustained pressure from the whole team and the game mostly being played in the YMCA half of the field, The goal scorers were HAYLEY (5); ALYCE (4); FRAN (4); MEL (1) and CLAIRE (1).

Thunder dominated the game across the park, the girls were faster, more committed, more skilled and more cohesive as a team. Some special moments in the game were when CLAIRE scored after coming out of goals in the second half; the extra strong defence and clearance kicks placing constant pressure on YMCA; a nice save from ASH our replacement goalie and several long range shots resulting in goals.
A great effort by everyone!!!

ALL AGE/4 WOMEN

THORNLEIGH 1 vs NORMANHURST 1

Players: BRIONY, ASH, JACKIE, MEL, ANDY, RHIAN, NERIDA, ADELAIDE, NAV, TAHLIA, JESS, LAURA, MADDIE & MISHA.

A trying effort was made by the girls who seemed a little lethargic on the field. The game involved a number of penalties, intense competition and constant pressure on Normanhurst's goal mouth. LAURA, BRIONY, JACKIE and TAHLIA all had opportunities to score but unfortunately the first goal of the match was scored just before half time for Normanhurst – an unlucky own goal. In the second half LAURA managed to put one away, slightly alleviating the pressure of the scoreboard. JESS was committed on the left and NAV also played solid as left back. Thank you to MEL and MADDIE who both had stint in goals. The girls did better in the second half, so it was a shame not to have seen the score rise and we really deserved a better result. It was obvious the dominating team was the Thorns, particularly as the opposition resorted to sarcasm and bitterness, in an unsuccessful attempt to deter our team. A 1-all tie was the result as the referee called full time. Hopefully our next meeting with Normanhurst will provide a better score. Well done for today girls.

ALL AGE/7

THORNLEIGH 2 vs RYDE SAINTS UNITED 1

The first game of our big double header weekend was a very important one against the 4th placed Saints United. A good result would get our tails up and give us the good start to the weekend everybody was looking for. The game started not with a bang but with a whimper. A very quiet and sleepy looking Thunder side taking the field. But once we warmed up and found our voices again we started to find our rhythm and

use the acres of space down both flanks to put our opposition under pressure. After several missed chances our hard work was rewarded. ANDREW LISCOE providing the perfect free kick into the box and TIM MORISON just managed to poke the ball into the old onion bag with his head after the half hour mark. Our lead was short lived however. A slightly dubious penalty decision, one of a few worrying decisions from our referee, seemingly tethered to the centre circle, this day, saw our lead negated just before half time. Our finish to the half was much better than our start and we continued in this vein in the second half. As in the first game Saints United seemed happy with a draw but we were not going to let them get a way with it this time. DAVE POWER finally broke the deadlock, beating about a thousand players before rounded the keeper to pass the ball into the net. Vintage Power. We continued to press to seal the game but couldn't quite pull another goal off. BRAD RUSTON having probably the best chance but his chip sadly beat the crossbar as well as the keeper. A goal for Brad would have been deserved after an earlier, successful header was denied by the ref. So item 1 on the weekend's list was crossed off. Now all we need to do was cross off item 2. The performance would have to be improved though...

THORNLEIGH 1 vs HILLS HAWKS 0

And improved it was. A thrilling, top of the table encounter saw the Thunder overtake the Hawks on top of the table in front of a huge Oakleigh crowd, obviously only there for the bbq, and a few, select club dignitaries. It was not the best of starts, the Hawks coming at us very fast indeed and catching us on the back foot. ANDY BOUGHTON provided a goal line clearance early on that would prove to be decisive. After that rude awakening we started to get reorganised and play at our pace and slow it down a little so we could use our shape and pass the ball where we wanted instead of passing the ball where we hoped for it go. We started to create all the chances as our opponents did not get another shot on goal for the rest of the half. Unfortunately the radar was a little off today as nothing really troubled the Hawks keeper too much in the first stanza. All we needed to do in the second half was keep playing how we're playing, keep our shape, keep our composure, win the ball and the goals will come. And we did. And it did. DAVE POWER putting a ball through which TIM MORISON just got his foot to poke over the advancing keeper. Timi-Goal not only scored the decisive goal but also spilt a little claret for the cause in a later attack. Despite the best efforts of the official we were able to hold onto our lead for the last 20 minutes to record a famous victory and vanquish our foes, and also perhaps gaining a slight psychological advantage over their young, not so confident anymore minds. It was a good lesson in that old age and treachery will always win over youth and enthusiasm. Something we learnt early on in our careers and we are beginning to put into practice now. Everyone on the pitch deserves a mention as everyone put in effort above and beyond 100% to get the win. MARK DENNIS in goal who made some vital, match winning saves late on. BENTON JOHNSON, JAMES RODGER and GREG RUSTON our solid as a rock back three. MURRAY GRAVES, AARON BOOTH, MARK KENNEDY, BRAD RUSTON and DAVE POWER who dominated the midfield. RICHARD HULOWATYI, ROSS EDWARDS and MICHAEL BYRNE storming the flanks all day. TIM MORISON, PAT CHAPMAN and ROB ZWATRZKA always giving the defence something to worry about up front and last but not least ANDY BOUGHTON, a finer utility player you will not find anywhere else.

Well done everybody. Only four games left now to lock in our place on top of the table. The top four was our goal at the start of the year. Now though, Thornleigh Thunder, Premiers does have a nice ring to it. Let's make it happen.

ALL AGE/10 WOMEN

THORNLEIGH 1 vs RYDE PANTHERS 2

Starting the game with no subs, Thornleigh knew we were in for a tough fight against the Ryde Panthers. Although we went down 2-1, Thornleigh played a proud and strong game with only 11 players. ANNA worked tirelessly in goal, keeping the opposition on their toes and certainly entertained. HELEN showed her versatility in defence; she and BELINDA had a great game, keeping the ball out of trouble and keeping it moving out of the goal mouth. LISA dove, slid and tackled, leaving the opposition ball-less at every conflict. In midfield, AMANDA and ANGELA D were always in the right place to feed the ball up to the forwards, while ANGELA W and JIN played a strong midfield on the wings. FELICITY played a great game in forwards, copping a few hard knocks in the process. MADDIE, with a brilliant set-up from GRACE, and after 4 close misses, MADDIE sailed a perfect shot past the goalie to ensure Thornleigh didn't go down scoreless and without putting up a strong fight.

ALL AGE/ 18

THORNLEIGH 2 vs NORTH EPPING RANGERS 3

This was not the result that we were expecting when we turned up to play the Rangers. We had beaten them comfortably in round one and we had not lost a game for 6 weeks and maybe a little bit of complacency had crept into our game and we had not noticed it.

We started the game a little slow and our ball control was not as sharp as it should have been and we allowed Rangers to get into the game and start to dominate us and they grew in confidence as they started to run us around the park and attack from the flanks which is how we like to play the game. We tried to stem the Rangers' attack but they were quicker to the ball than we were and looked hungrier for a win. It showed as they were first onto the score board as we lacked numbers in defence and they scored. This stung us into action and we soon evened it up as we were awarded a penalty for a hand ball which CHRIS stepped up and banged home (twice as the ref pulled the first one back and made him take it again).

We came in at half time and talked about what we needed to do to get back into the game but unfortunately we just could not put it together on the park and Rangers were again on the score board after attacking out wide and pushing the ball into the middle to find unmarked players who banged it home.

We were not playing well and we lacked the normal teamwork and passing game that typifies our play as we kicked possession away and then had to chase the opposition around the park to try and get the ball back. We evened up the game towards the end as NICK banged home a beauty but unfortunately with 5 minutes to go Rangers again found us short at the back and slotted home the winner.

We had several opportunities to equalise as ROLY hit a scorcher that nearly took the keeper's head off but he saved it and we hit the posts to end a frustrating game on the losing side.

This was a game that we needed to win to stay on top of the table and we have now made it harder on ourselves to maintain first place and have a shot at the Premiership. Back to training this week and try to recapture the hunger that we need to win games.

OVER 35/2

THORNLEIGH 0 vs GLADESVILLE RAVENS 2

Devoted readers, it is with much regret that I must inform you that your football heroes suffered their second successive loss this week-end. We took the trip to Meadowbank No. 4 and played on a field about the size of a postage stamp, was so bumpy that it makes the mogels at Thredbo look small and endured wind conditions that was akin to playing behind the jet engine of a 747. However, being the true professionals that we are, we will not blame the conditions for our defeat. Instead, we will blame Alex! This is not simply because he did not turn up but also because he recently sold his home for a small fortune and is about to start an idyllic life down by the beach.

To many of you, the news of another defeat to the team known commonly as the "Million Dollar team" may come as a surprise. However, this may be because many of our fans are under the false impression that this title comes from the transfer price of its players. Alas, this title comes from the collective value of our prosthetic implants including, ceramic hips, ceramic knees, false teeth and erectile implants.

In response to demands from our many fans, we have decided to release a range of merchandise that will allow you to show your support for the Thornleigh Over 35/2's. We planned to sell a range of action figure replicas of our midfielders. However we thought that these were unrealistic and we have now decided to sell a range of non-action figures as these more closely resemble our midfielders. The 2009 edition of the always popular "Men of Thunder" nude calendar will also be available. This is always popular with grandmothers and the Oxford Street set. You will also be able to buy toilet paper that features the face of our sweeper Brendan, as he can always be relied upon to clean up at the back.

Hopefully I will be able to bring you better football results with next week's report.

PA to Mr X

