



Thornleigh Sports & Recreation Club Inc.

# SOCCKER DIVISION

## Blue & Gold Newsletter

25-26 July 2009



Deadline for Blue & Gold: MONDAY 12pm

Email to: [ThunderMatchReports@gmail.com](mailto:ThunderMatchReports@gmail.com)

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Well the end of the regular season is just about upon us. There is still the mad scramble for some clubs to make up missed games, but apart from that, everything is proceeding to an orderly conclusion. Congratulations to our all age women's fours for taking out the premiership under Kyri Georgiou. Quite a number of our teams have managed to gain a spot in the top four rankings within their respective divisions.

Our Premier League is putting up a strong battle to remain in the top four. They secured a double win on Saturday against North Epping Rangers. They now have two home games left, so do try to get up to Oakleigh to show them your support.

The management committee met last week and decided to move our AGM to early next year. The idea is to run our club positions from March to March each year. This we hope will make it easier for new people to come onto the committee while being supported by the outgoing person in the position. I cannot stress enough the importance of having new faces on the committee and ensuring that all positions within the club have an active member in each position. Please keep in mind that all positions come with training, support and lots of encouragement. So don't put off nominating and get involved, the long term vitality of the club is at stake.

*Yours in Commitment*

**Rob Roberts**

## PRESENTATION DAY 2009

As the end of the season approaches, we are preparing to celebrate the season of 2009.

Remember the joy of all the goals, the thrill of the win and the heartbreak of the ones that got away.

The Presentation Day for 2009 will be held at **Oakleigh Oval on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September.**

The festivities will kick off with the Mini Presentation (U6, U7 & U8) from 10.30am till 11.30am.

A BBQ lunch will be served at the completion of the Mini Presentation for the mini and junior teams and their families.

The Junior Presentation (U9 – U16 Girls & Boys) will commence at 12.30pm.

We look forward to seeing you all there.

## RESULTS

GHFA Competition – 25 July 2009			
Grade/Div	Opposition	For	Against
U9/3	Carlingford Redbacks	0	0
U9/7	Hornsby FC	0	5
U9/8	West Pennant Hills	2	0
U10/3	Carlingford Redbacks	0	0
U11/2	Carlingford Redbacks	0	3
U11/5	Hills Hawks	0	2
U12/3	West Pennant Hills	0	2
U13/2	North Epping Rangers	2	1
U14/4	Hills Hawks	5	1
U15/4	BYE (Sat) WPH (Sun)	0	3
U17/1	West Pennant Hills	3	2
U17/3	West Pennant Hills	0	4
AA/4	Holy Cross College	1	2
AA/7	Hills Hawks	1	1
AA/10	Normanhurst	0	0
AA/12	Roselea (Sat) Epping Eastwood (Sun)	5 2	1 1
AA/16	Carlingford Redbacks (Sat) West Ryde Rovers (Sun)	0 0	6 7
AA/18	Pacific Hills Dural Blue (Sat) West Pennant Hills (Sun)	5 12	1 0
AA/20	Gladesville Ravens	1	2
O35/2	Forfeit by WPH Red	3	0
O35/5	Glenhaven Red (Sat) All Saints Hunters Hill (Sun)	4 1	2 2
PL/Res	North Epping Rangers	2	0
PL/1 <sup>st</sup>	North Epping Rangers	4	1

NWSWS Competition – 26 July 2009			
Grade/Div	Opposition	For	Against
U14/1	Mercy College	0	0
U14/2	All Saints Hunters hill	1	2
U15/2	West Ryde Rovers	2	0
U18/1	West Pennant Hills	1	1
AA/4	Gladesville Ravens	1	2
AA/10	West Pennant Hills	1	0



# THUNDER FC SPONSORS - 2009 SEASON

Thunder FC relies on the financial support of its sponsors to provide the necessary gear and equipment and supplement the various running costs of the club. Therefore, we gratefully acknowledge the support of the following sponsors for the 2009 season and encourage everyone associated with Thunder FC to support these local businesses.

## PLATINUM SPONSOR



## MAJOR SPONSOR

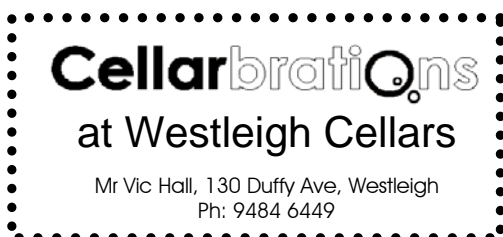
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## SILVER SPONSORS



## BRONZE SPONSORS



## UNDER 6 GREEN

### THORNLEIGH vs WEST PENNANT HILLS D

Another beautiful winter's day today and playing late for a change meant we could all enjoy the sunshine. With school holidays still on WPH could only manage to field 3 players, but ROHAN and LOGAN good naturedly volunteered to swap sides for the day. This left us with the famous (?) five of NATHAN, MICHAEL, COOPER, ANDREW and MITCHELL to carry the Thunder flag this week. Of course this meant more time on the field for everyone, which is after all what the boys want the most. The game was fast and furious, with all the boys continuing to show week on week improvement in their skills and in their sportsmanship and temperament. MICHAEL scored his first goal of the season, which led to much jubilation all round and a deserved player of the week award.

## UNDER 6 RED

### THORNLEIGH 5 vs PENNANT HILLS 2

We were not sure if we were going to have an opposition to play against this week as ten minutes after the scheduled start Pennant Hills (PH) had only three players on hand. An obliging ANDREW HILL answered the call to become, if only for a short time, PH fourth player so the game could get started. Playing for the opposition I thought ANDREW would ease up on his commitment but that it obviously not his style as he set about making life difficult for his 'other' team-mates to score. It was good to get him back 'on side'. After developing a taste for goals after his last outing ALISTAIR WESTON showed that he wanted more by scoring the game's first. A great run forward saw him put away the ball into an open PH goal. This paved the way for a dominant first half performance by Thornleigh. It's evident now that an increase in age is leading to an increase in kicking power and player's bodies are now in the firing line. A kick-in from near the half-way by AXIE TADZIK resulted in Thornleigh's second goal when it clipped a player's shoulder (fortunately not his head) and went on to rest in the back of the PH goal. This was soon followed by JESSICA DARGAN who scored the team's third and fourth. It just wouldn't seem right if she didn't score each week. Four to nil at the break and it seemed the team couldn't wait to start the second half and were back on the field expending energy well before it got underway. From the whistle HARRISON HOWARD dribbled the ball down field and kept going and going. This would be a remarkable goal if he could finish it off but the move ended in a goal mouth scramble which eventually saw the ball forced over the PH goal line. It came to be known as the 'push-over' goal. From there PH started creating more attacks. When he wasn't standing his ground in the PH goal mouth ZACHARY DUNLOP was doing some fine work in keeping PH scoreless. This was backed-up by JACK BIDWELL with forceful tackling and runs forward which should have seen him rewarded with a goal. A couple of consolation goals for PH came too late and they were duly reminded of this when Thornleigh would give them frequent score updates. Another great win for The Thunder! This week's Best and Fairest award was presented to ANDREW HILL. Well done ANDREW!

## UNDER 6 WHITE A

### THORNLEIGH 10 Vs NORMANHURST 1

The Night balances the Day as Winter balances Summer, and so the time had come, for the Thunders to restored 'their' balance. Evidence of any memories of the recent 12 to 6 defeat to a Normanhurst team was nowhere to be seen amongst the stoic Thunders.

The game erupted from the first breath, with HUGH firing through the Normanhurst defence, with a very close miss – a rebound off the post! But Normanhurst formed into a formidable foe, tightly closing ranks at every opportunity. "Clash of the Titans!" seemed like an understatement with DAVID putting in a killer midfield defence effort, with LIAM supplying support up and down the wing.

Time and time again the Thunders charged for goal, and time and time again Normanhurst formed into what looked and felt like an impenetrable wall in front of their goal. The Thunders response – "knock it down!" EUAN was the first to break the wall, with a deft tap to JACK who spontaneously flicked the ball into the net. And so the avalanche began with JAMES and JACK attacking the Normanhurst defence "wall" like a pair of jackhammers. Not to be left out DAVID decided to become a bulldozer and literally shoved the ball into the net.

But Normanhurst were far from finished, and launched some impressive counter attacks, only to encounter JASMINE the "twirling tornado" who fronted Normanhurst over and over in a tangled clash of boots. The Thunders defended like demons, with Hugh racing back to defend every time a threat loomed; and DAVID, LIAM and EUAN produced their own rather effective "wall" of defence.

Always believing more is better, JAMES seemed to be trying to beat his time record for entered the field and scoring a goal, and only fierce Normanhurst defence slowed his progress as he sank a left footed marvel. But it was JACK's turn to dazzle Normanhurst one last time, as he rocketed through and beyond the Normanhurst players to sink a long distance power shot.

Thornleigh Thunders are absolute wonders!

## UNDER 6 WHITE B

### THORNLEIGH B vs Opposition

The first minutes of the game set the tempo for the rest of the game, we were going on the defensive against a tough team. CONNOR and NOAH showed great momentum by kicking the ball strongly out of the scrum. TOM followed up by chasing the ball down the field with the opposition trying to take over the ball. Jay revealed consistent strong play by stopping the ball from entering the Pacific Hills goal, and worked with TOM to take it back down the field. A half-time cheer of enthusiasm revealed that morale was still high. OSCAR showed great form by clearing the ball from the fray. JAY narrowly missed a goal. Then ROBBIE turned the ball around setting JAY up to finally score. OSCAR showed his technical prowess by sidestepping across the Opposition's goal to protect the ball from entering!!! In the last moments of the match, TOM and CONNOR screamed up the field, with CONNOR knocking the ball away from their goal. A great defensive match that showed off the skills that have been developing this season.

## U7 GREEN

### THORNLEIGH 3 vs HILLS HAWKS 2

This glorious day saw two, player-diminished teams meet. In the true spirit of the game the Hills Hawks played 4 a side to match our 4 giving us no subs and them one. Both teams were eager to score and many attempts were made only to be thwarted at the last minute. TOM was attacking early and very unlucky not to score in the first few minutes of the game. EDDY produced some spectacularly fancy footwork and was also unlucky not to score. It was LACHLAN who, after a fabulous save, went on to score the first goal of the game. The second half saw TOM setting up JACOB for not one but two amazing goals, it was great to see the team really working together. The Hawks put up a good defence and were hard to keep to two goals. It was a great match between two hard working teams – soccer at its best.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK: EVERYONE – for keeping up the speed for the entire game!

## UNDER 7 RED B

### THORNLEIGH RED B's v's HILLS HAWKS B

The boys got off to a terrific start, scoring the first the goal of the game. WILL booted an awesome kick down the field and CHARBEL then kicked it down into the goal, excellent team work boys! The boys were so inspired by the goal; there were numerous close attempts at goal, with some great attacking this week. THOMAS was booting some huge kicks all over the field, and one came within inches of the goal. MYLES also came close with two attempts just missing; the bump on the field diverted the ball away from goal. MICHAEL was all over the field pushing the ball down towards goal, unfortunately coming up against some tough Hawks players to stop him scoring. CHRISTOPHER was attacking well on the ball, consistently in there pushing it away from the HAWKS. MAX was also showing off the amazing power in those legs to get the ball down the field. As usual, the boys played well in defence, with CHARBEL placing his body on the line several times, notably taking a hard one in the stomach to stop a goal by the HAWKS, this boy is tough. There were lots of blocking of the goals by MYLES and THOMAS; both are very determined to stop the ball getting through the goals.

Player of the Week: CHRISTOPHER SOMANI



## UNDER 7 WHITE A

### THORNLEIGH A vs NORMANHURST A

This week was a big test for the team with our star TRAVIS HILTON unavailable this week and JASMINE WILLIAMS out with a broken arm. Fortunately the team rallied and put together a dominating performance. ISABELLE NATOLI back for her first game since badly spraining her ankle saw her continue from where she left off with some brilliant dribbling through the midfield scoring a goal and narrowly missing other scoring opportunities. The doctor prescribed a goal as medicine for LAURA DIBLASIO who soldiered on despite suffering a cold and after slotting a couple of goals in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, was feeling a lot better at the end of the game. LUKE WILLIAMS was tenacious as ever in defence with sliding tackles (on the ball!) and in general great pressure which led to an own goal by Normanhurst. LUKE was rewarded for his tenacity with a goal of his own. HUGH GORDON continues to improve each week and we got to see what HUGH's capable of with 2 great runs right through the entire Normanhurst defence. Well done HUGH! Unfortunately for KURT TIKOFT he didn't see much game time with mum driving him to the wrong ground (sorry Cathy) and then requiring the coach to make unscheduled substitution for a toilet break, however whatever time he spends on the field he continues to entertain with his antics. Lastly a big thankyou to LUCAS and LIAM who backed up after an earlier game to ensure we had a full team. Both boys had fantastic games with Lucas scoring 2 goals and LIAM being great in defence.

## UNDER 7 WHITE B

### THORNLEIGH vs PACIFIC HILLS DURAL

Home game this week, with help from TAJ filling in for RILEY. LUCAS scores first with a shot across goal into the corner. PHD retaliates with a good run, stopped in its tracks by TAJ then again by LUCAS. Good defensive play by MATTHEW forcing the opposition to miss a goal. JAQUILINE gets the ball and passes to LUCAS who shoots and scores. MATTHEW again and MIKA hold the back line and prevent two goal attempts. LUCAS scores his third just before half time. In the second half, MATTHEW and MIKA again strong in defence, MATTHEW gets the ball and has a big run up the field followed by TAJ with another good run dribbling and controlling the ball. TAJ goes for another tackle and is knocked down, but is up again straight away. A melee in front of the oppositions goal results in a goal by LIAM, his first for the season. LUCAS saves a goal, with more defensive play by MIKA and JAQUILINE. PHD however scores a few quick goals to get the win on full time. Player of the week to LUCAS for great attack play, and merit award to MIKA for staying back in defence and good kicking.



## UNDER 8 RED

### THORNLEIGH vs. CARLINGFORD REDBACKS B

The Red Rhinos were very eager to play another match after a two week break. Team work was definitely the highlight of the game. DYLAN WELGEMOED did a superb job in defending in goals for the first half. There was awesome team work between MATTHEW PINES, CONNOR CLARKE and LUKE BIRREL throughout the game and especially during the second half as they passed the ball well away from the opposing team who dominated our goal area. BLAKE RYAN had little time to rest as goalie for the second half and did a great job. EMMA CARRIGAN, EMMA SANCATALDO and THEA SCHMERTMANN could have been mistaken for the three musketeers as they worked together in tackling and defence. OLLIE DUNCAN displayed impressive tackling skills and RUBEN MOUTON kept up the pace throughout the game with his sprints from one end of the field to the other to score two fantastic goals.

## UNDER 8 WHITE

### THORNLEIGH 11 vs ROSELEA 3

Week 13 found us playing against Roselea out at Kenthurst and what a game it was. The team is playing very well together. JARRET WILSON and BRADLEY HOWARD were our goal keepers for the day and both made some great saves, as well as contributing in the outfield with both making some awesome tackles and clearance kicks. BRAD also managed to score a goal which is becoming a bit of a habit for him. TARA WILSON made a great contribution across the field with some great runs, tackles and passes. JONATHAN CHAN played a great game in the midfield, making some good midfield runs and scored a great goal as well. OLIVER DEWEY is turning out to be a boom striker with his big boot and scored a great goal. MORGAN HUGHES was as busy as ever on the field and missed out on a few long range shots on goal, but still scored 2 great goals. JORDAN-LEE BACON, who's been out injured for the past few weeks, loved being back on the field and was like a little jack Russell chasing down everything. He managed to score a goal as well which pleased him immensely. ISAAC LANE and DANIEL PATTERSON are our main strikers and both managed to score hatricks, and both boys simply love putting the ball in the back of the net.

All-in-all it was a great team effort once again and it's great to see how much the players, as well as the parents are enjoying the game.

## UNDER 9/3

### THORNLEIGH 0 vs CARLINGFORD REDBACKS 0

A bumper crowd was in attendance for Saturdays game against the second placed Redbacks. The match was played on a very chilly morning at Ruddock Park - Coach Chapman was the only person to brave the shaded side of the oval.

This match was an entertaining one that had the crowd on the edge of their seats for its entirety, with both teams displaying great ball skills and teamwork.

The first half saw Thornleigh control the ball superbly in both defence and attack and much to the Coaches delight everyone played to the game plan and stuck to their positions.

In the forward line, TIM REYNOLDS, ROWAN WOOD and JOSHUA WATKINS were extremely unlucky not to find the back of the oppositions goal and applied plenty of pressure on the Redbacks defence.

At the other end on the field our backline consisting of CODY JERVIS, TOM SELLIN and ZANE GEORGE combined perfectly to ensure the Redbacks were kept scoreless.

In the second half, both LACHLAN HARRIS and LEWIS HABKOUK made valuable contributions and controlled the midfield with distinction.

Zac McLeod (on debut) performed brilliantly in goals and made our team plenty of ground with his booming kicks ensured that Thornleigh enjoyed good ground advantage.

After the game, many of the crowd that were interviewed by the local media say it was the most exciting nil all draw they ever witnessed at Ruddock park – I tend to agree with them.

Player of the Match was won by LEWIS HABKOUK and the Teamwork Awards went to LACHLAN HARRIS and ZAC MCLEOD.

## UNDER 12/3

### THORNLEIGH 0 vs WEST PENNANT HILLS 2

This was another much improved effort by the Thunder against the competition leaders, which led to a big improvement on our result against them the first time round (a 5-0 drubbing).

Every player did well today, and we were unlucky not to be rewarded with a goal or two of our own. WPH always looked quite dangerous in attack, with a number of quick and skilful players, but our defensive players ANDREW HADDAD, BEN MANCE, MAX KENNEDY, BEN SEPAROVICH and MARK RICHARDS were very determined and were able to break up many attacks and clear the danger. MARK in particular had an inspired game in defence, adhering to the defenders' creed, borrowed from the Black Knight of Monty Python fame, that 'none shall pass'. NATHAN BIRRELL had a solid first half in goals, making some good saves, almost saving the first goal and having no chance at all with the second.

In midfield, RYAN MALLETT, CALLUM TOOHEY, JASON CLARKE and SAM DRUMM were linking up well and stringing some nice passes together between themselves and with our forwards BEN JONES and SLADE BLANCH who were running hard and making some nice breaks forward. This resulted in quite a few good attacks and a number of corners, but we found it hard to penetrate the last line of WPH's defence and to get shots on target. Nonetheless, we were spending quite long periods in WPH's half and just needed a goal to get back into the game.

The second half saw more of the same – plenty of Thornleigh pressure, more corners and good scrapping for the ball by all players, but no reward of a goal. WPH were always dangerous on the break but strong defence from all players largely kept them at bay. Second half goalie EAMON MOSES made a couple of good stops and did well to keep a clean sheet for the half.

Our players left the field knowing they had put in a really strong effort for the entire game, which is all one can ask. While we have not won our last couple of games against some of the leading teams in the division, we have definitely seen a continuation of improved form in the second half of the season and some much closer contests. Well done team!

## UNDER 13/2

### THORNLEIGH 2 vs NORTH EPPING 1

Saturday's game was preceded by one minute of silence and then the boys went head long into the game without the usual 'wake-up' period, although there was a small delay to the start with the game ball when someone (to be left unnamed) asked Malcolm D if he liked playing with wet balls. A question which was sensibly left unanswered.

The first half was punctuated by valiant attempts from the mid-field in breaking through the strong defences of North Epping. This pattern continued throughout the game and did eventually produce results with a cracking goal by NICK mid-way through the second half. NICK'S goal, which gave new meaning to the "surprised" look, was a superb placement and we thank NICK for providing a goal which gave maximum spectator satisfaction - that is, we all saw it clearly and it wasn't too far away from those who mattered! The first half saw MITCH continually thwarting NE attacks and quickly turned defence into offence, although we didn't always capitalise on his hard work and JAY very skilfully kept the goals empty from accurate NE strikes.

NE having scored early in the second half continued with strong attacking play supported by their basketball team size of backs in defence. Being a goal down ADRIAN continued to set up opportunities resulting in a fine 'NICKO' goal. Good support play from WILL, BLAKE & TOM L saw ADRIAN dribble another goal into the net, sealing the game 2-1.

MAX & TOM D held up their wide ranging defence for the entire game and were well supported by JOSH, HOLLY & JULIAN and this kept NE to their single goal, and not forgetting some great goal keeping from MITCH in the second half. A good 'worked' team effort with the result not truly reflecting what we can achieve – well done boys!

## UNDER 14/4

### THORNLEIGH 5 vs HILLS HAWKS 1

Another strong performance from the team as they continue to maintain good form at the business end of the season. With only ten players there were some initial concerns that they may struggle against the full strength opposition, but the concerns were quickly allayed when mid-fielders ALEX PUN, OLIVER JUDSON and SAM LANE took control with help from the ever present and fast strikers JACK ANGEL and JACOB KOWALSKI. JACK opened the scoring account and two goals then followed to SAM LANE (one from a deft OLIVER JUDSON pass). JACOB KOWALSKI then broke from the pack and scored, leaving the team up four to one at half time. CALLUM MOSES, SAM CLARKE, ALASDAIR BELLING and DANIEL CHRISTIE were again strong in defence, managing to contain some very good attacking opposition players. JOSH COOPER was outstanding in goal. The team tired in the second half (as might be expected, being down in numbers with no substitutes), although SAM LANE managed to head a goal from a superb corner kick from JACK. ALEX, who dropped back to a defender position to allow ALASDAIR to play in mid-field, nearly scored with a wonderful shot from thirty metres out. SAM LANE was the man of the match, having a strong game all over the park. JACOB and ALEX also scored man of the match points. Stand in coach WAYNE CLARKE and stand-in manager BARRY HIGGINS were faultless – showing that the team has a very deep talent pool when it comes to coaches and managers. It is a great credit to our team that parents from HILLS HAWKS commended our team's skills and sportsmanship.

## UNDER 15/2 GIRLS

### THORNLEIGH 2 vs WEST RYDE ROVERS 0

The girls have had a wonderful season in 2009 year and ended with a win, against the team we played in the first round. It was an interesting first 15 minutes as they played well and got the ball up front to SAM TREES who scored two great goals. After this initial burst of energy the girls seemed content to play the game out with some good passing. We saw some good work by EMILIE LOWE today and OLIVIA MCKEOWN passing to each other in front of the goal. The supporters were impressed by the skills displayed today with great defence as usual from LISA PHILLIPS and ALYCE TOMKINS. SHELBY COLLEY showed great speed chasing down players and clearing balls up the middle. AZIZA RAZIUDDIN was effective in the midfield with support from JESSICA HARRIS and TERESA SANT. Thanks to SAMMIE TRENAMEN and BRITTANY KNIGHT who were cool and confident in goal and both were useful, as usual, on the field. We all look forward to success in the Round Robin. Well done to BRITTANY KNIGHT who one this week's Player's Player.

### PLAYER PROFILE

Player: Lisa Philips

Position: Right back

Years Played: Playing her 3rd year competitive soccer

Favourite Food: Macaroni cheese

School: Pennant Hills High

Pets: None at present, but we had pet chickens in NZ

Other interests: Likes fantasy adventure novels



## UNDER 17/1 BOYS

### THORNLEIGH 3 vs WEST PENNANT HILLS RED 2

This game was a pleasure to watch and the win itself was an added bonus. The coach and spectators were treated to a surprise performance today. The boys were keeping in the game and looked the better side. Everyone was happy when JESSE DEACON stepped in as stand in goalie. The flow of play did lead to two goals early in the first half. After great attacking play, with DAVID ARMSTRONG AND LACHLAN BEENIE prominent, MATT LOWE scored the first half goal.

The boys played even better soccer in the second half and with great team work up the right side MATT LOWE scored the equaliser. The second half was tough, with good team work in defence from the unstoppable DARRYL KELSHAW and MICHAEL YOUNGMAN as sweeper. Everyone played up a notch and we must not forget the great form of CONNOR SAMSON, the second half goalie. Just as we were congratulating ourselves on a draw, JORDAN SANT came onto the field to replace an injured DAVE. JORDAN managed to score a magic goal from a chip over the defender and straight shot in goal with 3 minutes to go. The Thornleigh crowd went wild and the win capped a great game.

We have a lot to be proud of THE TEAM AS A WHOLE in our first year up in Division 1 with this group of players, good luck in the final run home.

## UNDER 17/1 GIRLS

### THORNLEIGH 7 vs RYDE SAINTS UNITED 3

The Thunders are just getting better and better. The score line today was a pretty true reflection of the game and, despite a 4-2 half time lead, they powered through the second half dominating the Saints opposition with a 3-1 victory. This was truly a team effort because the game certainly wasn't just played in the Saints half. Saints had three danger players in the mids and forwards and they took a deal of effort to shut down. Occasionally they got through but our defensive lapses were more than compensated for by the Thunders' brilliant attacking play.

Our saviours today were no doubt our three 14/1s girls, who not only gave our 11 regulars a break but contributed fully to the result by simply playing quality football. BELINDA PUGH, EMILY DESMOND and RACHEL TOMPKINS thank you for your valuable contribution, and for EMILY the second week in a row. You girls are awesome and a credit to your team and coach.

And now to the match itself. After 3 minutes LUCY ballerina JONES opened the books with a shot from in front of goals off a pirouette with the ball. Three minutes later our find-of-the-century CLAIRE BUSHROD fired a through ball from mid-field to LUCY who passed on to MEL D'ARCHY to finish off for a 2-nil lead. These two early goals were just what the Doctor Denyer ordered at the pre-match briefing and so important to the outcome of the match. Saints is a strong team - they were always going to come back and that's what they did. At the 27-minute mark Saints had clawed back to 2-all and it was anyone's game. But the Thunders dug deep. After a break subbed off, COURTNEY BLANCH slayed 'em for the rest of the match at centre-mid, bounding with limitless enthusiasm but controlling her play. Nice work, CJ. JO LATHAM had a great game with some neat passes from full back to the mids, one of which gave LUCY a shot on goal which just went wide. And STEPH THOMSON in the mids was onto everything and definitely the playmaker of the match, rewarded also with the crucial next goal off a lovely pass-back from striker LUCY in the 33<sup>rd</sup> minute to put us back on the front foot. Around this time MEL came off in quite a lot of pain with aching leg/hip/back/everything, but was eager to get back on despite her agony. RACHEL made some top through balls from the mids and in the 38<sup>th</sup> minute – just before half time – a LUCY corner kick rebounded back for her to hit a cracker into the net high and strong. This was the shot that put the nail in the Saints coffin and the girls were pumping as they came off for the break.

Another nail? – why not! From the Saints kick-off MADDY BROWN pumped a through-ball to ANNALESE SMITH to

pummel into the net after only 26 seconds (approximately...) of play, for a 5-2 lead. The next 28 minutes were scoreless, culminating in a Saints goal from a quality strike. But our Thunders would have none of this and the back line of DANI CHARARA, MADDY BROWN, BELINDA PUGH and ARI O'NEILL marked up the Saints like they loved them, with FIONA SPARKES directing play with her mouse-like whispers (...NOT) from the box. The awesome defence allowed the match to be finished off with two more ANNALESE shots finding their mark for an emphatic win!

Thunder is still on top of the 6-team championship ladder after two huge wins, but the next two matches will be against far-and-away the top teams in the comp. However, the way our girls are playing at the moment, anything is possible.... Keep training hard, Thunders!

## UNDER 17/3

### THORNLEIGH 0 vs WEST PENNANT HILLS 4

To a beautiful winter's day Thornleigh and West Pennant Hills were very evenly matched. Great attacking saw us in our half for most of the first half with several attempts at goal. West Penno used big kicks to work our defence, so our mids of MICHAEL, ERIC, BRENDAN, KEL, LEROY, ALEX worked very hard. Due to an unfortunate hand ball at the goal circle, a penalty allowed West Penno the first score of the match. Second half saw us playing aggressively but unfortunately many ref calls against us made it hard to get on top. Thornleigh played well and the 4-0 defeat did not reflect our ongoing commitment throughout the game and excellent team play. Well done boys.

## UNDER 18/1 LADIES

### THORNLEIGH (1) vs WEST PENNANT HILLS (1)

Gloomy day, muddy field but a very determined "Thunder" team went out to upset the potential minor premiers!

The first half saw great defence by ALYCE, HAYLEY, DANICA, LARISSA and ASHLEY with several fantastic attempts at goal by HAYLEY and FRAN which were unfortunately blocked each time by the determined West Pennant Hills goal keeper.

The game was full of action with headers galore by the girls which will mean some sore heads I'm sure!!

STEPHANIE and MARIE were doing great work in the backs but at half time we were 1-nil down!!

Second half was much the same as first half with more great defence work by LAUREN and KELLY and CLAIRE showing her fabulous skill in goal saving. The Forwards were well supported by strong kicking by MEL and LAURA.

HAYLEY was so unlucky not to score when her attempt at goal hit high on the upright.

The equalizing goal came courtesy of our opposition which made the final score 1-1!!

Bring on the Finals – our girls are ready!!!

## ALL AGE/7

### THORNLEIGH 1 vs HILLS HAWKS 1

In conditions that more resembled The Somme than a football pitch the Thunder ground out a hard fought draw with premiership rivals Hills Hawks. While not the result we wanted, the result we got was much better for us than for our rivals who still trail heading into the final game. As the match started, almost on cue, the rain came down making for a slippery yet sticky surface that just made everything that much harder for everyone. We were under pressure from the off and gave our opponents more space than we should have. They exploited this and we were soon a goal down after 12 minutes. But the boys dug in as there was plenty of game left to bring us level again. The rain continued to pour and the game continued to go from one end to the other. The conditions making sure-footedness and direct passing much harder than usual which somewhat stunted our usual flowing style of play. However our oppositions goal was nullified in the 37th minute. ROB ZWATRZKA's shot was parried by the advancing keeper straight to DAVID POWER who calmly took a touch onto his preferred right hoof and slotted the ball home. This was surely a highlight in what was a truly inspiring performance from the now 30 year old, proving age shall not weary him. There was much cleaning of boots at half time and while all the talk of getting our normal flowing game going sounded good in theory, to execute such silky skills on such a quagmire (not Quagmire, giggity) was proving difficult. As further rain fell in the second half MICHAEL BYRNE, AARON BOOTH, GREG RUSTON and PAT CHAPMAN, who rose like Lazarus from his sick bed to dominate the match, all had good chances from both open and set plays but the elusive deciding goal remained... er, elusive. As it was for our opponents, their many raids on our goal going unrewarded. Keeper MARK DENNIS having his busiest game all year but being on top form in defending his net. Despite a couple of heart stopping moments for both us and them in the dying minutes the match ended in a stalemate. A muddied, battered and tired Thunder team could walk off the field proud having given their all for their colours, knowing that we're still on top... but also that we must win next week. The once again returning BENTON JOHNSON performed heroics in defence while JAMES RODGER had another inspired performance. Praise be to Jeebus. MARK KENNEDY played his heart out as his work rate was through the roof and ANDY BOUGHTON delivered another exceptional performance. These happening with such regularity I think we should rename him The Mailman. So we may not have won the battle but win one more and we win the whole darn thing. War is hell. Let's send Pacific Hills there on Sunday.

## ALL AGE/10 WOMEN

### THORNLEIGH 1 vs WEST PENANT HILLS 0

This game was the last game of the season and to walk off the field with a win was great. We ended up playing most of the game in our half. There was endless misses in the goal mouth, from hitting the post, to going to wide, and to kicking the ball to the goalie's hands. The last 10 minutes of the first half MADI gave us some relief with scoring a goal over the goalies head, with the help from a player from WEST PENANT HILLS – CHERRYBROOK, who accidently kicked a high ball directly to MADI and then all MADI had to do was tap the ball over the goalies head. Attempts at goalies came from every player who played in the mids, forwards and even the centre backs. It would of been great to score again in the 2nd half but unfortunately this did not happen but we had many attempts. WEST PENANT HILLS – CHERRYBROOK played the game

very defensively but did attack with speed up the front but only to be shut down from our skilful and reliable back line with LISA, FRANCES, ALICIA, ANG, KAREN and ANNA. KATHY our goalie was pretty bored for most of the match, she may have only touched the ball 5 times. I am hoping next season to see the same players back and I am sure we can do better than this year with the bound we have all formed throughout the year.

## ALL AGE/ 18

### THORNLEIGH 5 vs. PACIFIC HILLS DURAL BLUE 1

This was a great way to start our weekend double header with a comprehensive win against Pacific Hills Blue. Pacific Hills have two teams in the competition and after last week's debacle against the Pacific Hills Red team where we were penalised off the pitch and lost out on a forfeit to some underhanded tactics with a doctored team sheet, our team was ready to extract some revenge.

We had a great training session during the week and our game plan was to control the ball from the start and keeping the ball on the ground to pressure the opposition as this team are big and strong and very good in the air. We talked about not giving away any corners as the Blue team are experts at scoring from set piece plays. Our tactics worked well as we were soon running Pacific around the park and mounting pressure on their goal mouth and our first goal came soon after when PAUL put a nice through ball for ROLY to pounce on and push it past the keeper.

We were again on the score board not long after when PAUL passed to ANDY who passed it onto ROLY who then passed it onto PAUL to finish a nice goal. Our passing game which has been missing for most of this year was on show as we started to completely dominate the Pacific Hills team.

Just before half time we concerned our first corner and sure enough as the ball sailed in one of their big guys steamrolled in and headed a scorcher past our diving keeper. We came in disappointed in conceding a goal but confident of going on with the match.

We came out for the second half determined to go on with this game and were soon on the score board when TERRY passed onto PAUL who passed onto MARC to finish a nice goal. We continued to pressure the Blue goal mouth and only some outstanding saves by the keeper kept the score line intact. Our next goal came from a DAVE cross that found the head of MARC who popped it past the keeper and our final goal came from ROLY who weaving in and around his markers hit a rocket from 25 meters out that nearly took out the back of the net.

Our team today was PETE in goals, LIAM, DHESH, TOM and CHRIS in defence and ANDY (Mr Versatile), PAUL, JORDAN, TERRY, NICK and DAVE in the mid field and MARC and ROLY upfront all played really well and we deserved the big win.

We left the ground satisfied and looking forward to the 2nd game of the weekend.

## ALL AGE/ 18

THORNLEIGH 12 vs WEST PENNANT HILLS 0 26 July 09

The 12 nil score line completely reflects the game today. We played a young West Penno side that had been on a roll lately and had beaten several of the top teams but unfortunately they came up against our team full of confidence after the good win the day before and we completely outclassed the opposition.

Our game plan was to run hard at them passing around and pressuring the goal mouth as we knew from the first round that if we could score early and often that West Penno would crack, and that is exactly what happened as our speed to the ball and passing game was too much for the opposition to handle, and we scored after 10 minutes of the game when MARC ran wide and passed a perfect ball for ROLY to belt past the keeper. Not too long after we scored again when MARC headed in a nice goal from a corner.

We were completely dominating West Penno with speed around the park and we scored again when a DAVE cross found the head of ROLY who slotted it home.

It was becoming obvious that West Penno were dropping off our players and we stated to have the freedom to run at will and the next goal was a beauty as ROLY weaved in and around players to finish off a nice run and score. Our last goal before half time was a cracker as TERRY received a ball onto his left foot and hit a scorcher past a diving keeper (we didn't know he had a left foot until now). We came into half time really happy with our fist half performance.

Our team talk at half time was obviously about how well we were playing but that we needed to go on with it and not release the pressure and to continue to score as many goals as we could. It did not take too long before the flood gates opened and it was not caused by the rain that was falling.

ROLY crossed a lovely ball for MARC to head past the keeper and then ROLY nearly went all the way again jinking past several players to pass onto MARC to slot home a goal. The two forwards ROLY and MARC were getting such great service from the mid fields and were working off each other so well that West Penno defence had no answer to our attacks.

At the back our defensive team of PETE in goals, LIAM, TOM, ANDY and CHRIS were outstanding as they snuffed out any hint of a West Penno attack which allowed our mid field of NICK, TERRY, PAUL, JORDAN, KIWI and DAVE the freedom to control the park and service the forwards so well.

Our next goal came from a corner as NICK put a lovely curling ball into the goal mouth and ROLY pounced and headed it home. Goal number 9 was all ROLY magic as he ran around players and threaded a nice ball through the defenders and past the keeper. Almost straight away were again on the score board when MARC belted one past the keeper after great lead up work from TERRY.

MARC scored again after he poached a cross from DAVE which was meant for TOM. (This ball was heading for TOM who was pushed up from the backs and would have been his first goal but you know what forwards are like - they don't like to share the goals).

We took off our forwards towards the end of the game as they had done the job and we moved the backs up front so that they could possibly score a goal and to reward them on a fine effort and they were rewarded when our sweeper LIAM had a great shot and scored the final goal of the day.

Well done boys that is the biggest winning margin that our team has ever had and you deserved the result. Let's keep the same mind set for next week when we play the Eagles.

## OVER 35/2

THORNLEIGH 3 vs WEST PENNANT HILLS (Red) 0 (Forfeit)

### COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

The Over 35/2's racked up their second successive win without conceding a goal this week. This week's performance was assisted by our opponents forfeiting the match. WPH claimed that they were forced to forfeit due to the late switch from a 1.15pm to a 11.15am start. However, many people suspect that they were intimidated by the prospect of facing the mighty Thornleigh and opted for the relatively safe option of a 3-0 loss by forfeit. Others believe that the forfeit was prompted by their trepidation of Mr X's rapier pen and the associated weekly match report that has been known to reduce losing teams to tears. In fact, it has often been stated that Mr X's pen is mightier than his sword. Indeed, Mrs X has frequently commented that Mr X's age has certainly made Mr X's sword much less impressive than it once was but did add that the Viagra tablets did help it to restore some of its former glory.

However the week off from football did give us some unexpected spare time. Apart from the usual photo shoots, television interviews and replying to fan mail, our week-end was free and it allowed us time to contemplate what may lie ahead with the play-off's looming. So, after much consideration over copious beers, scotches & ports we are predicting that the Thornleigh Over 35/2's will win the grand final (remember you read it here first!). In fact, we anticipate that we will win the first semi final on forfeit as our opponent's team bus unfortunately encounters 4 flat tyres (plus the spare) and then runs out of petrol resulting in the team arriving at the ground after the allotted kick-off time. We anticipate a comfortable win in the second semi-final which is assisted by a serious stomach upset that affects all of our opponent's players. It is purely coincidental that our opponents have a team dinner the previous night at a restaurant where one of our players works as a chef. And we predict a comfortable win in the Grand Final on the back of 5 goals from penalty kicks. We are also confident that the referee will make a safe escape at the end of the game clutching a mysterious envelope as he speeds off in the car that has been left running for him. GHFA subsequently drops its investigation into the Thornleigh Over 35/2's on the basis of insufficient submittable evidence (note the legal privilege clause above).

We are certainly finding our mailbag full of letters from our hoards of adoring fans. Whilst we appreciate your letters of support, we do request that you respect the facts that most of our players do have wives and girlfriends (hopefully they will not find out about each other so please keep this a secret). Consequently, we feel compelled to mail the naked photograph and the underwear back to Mrs M. Williamson (full name withheld to respect Meagan's privacy). We also request that Miss J Hawkins and Miss D. Goodrem come and collect theirs.

PA to Mr X

