



Thornleigh Sports & Recreation Club Inc.

SOCCKER DIVISION

Blue & Gold Newsletter

1-2 August 2009



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RESULTS

GHFA Competition – 1 August 2009

Grade/Div	Opposition	For	Against
U9/3	Pennant Hills	6	2
U9/7	North Epping Rangers	1	3
U9/8	West Ryde Rovers	0	1
U10/3	Holy Cross College	0	1
U11/2	Carlingford United	2	3
U11/6	West Pennant Hills	0	4
U12/3	All Saints Hunters Hill	1	3
U13/2	North Epping Rangers	4	0
U14/4	West Pennant Hills	1	3
U15/4	Eastwood St Andrews	0	2
U17/1	Hills Hawks	0	5
U17/3	Carlingford Redbacks	4	0
AA/4	Hills Hawks	1	1
AA/7	Pacific Hill Dural	1	0
AA/10	Putney Rangers	2	1
AA/12	North Ryde	3	2
AA/16			
AA/18	West Ryde Eagles	4	0
AA/20	Epping YMCA	1	6
O35/2			
O35/5	North Ryde	0	6
PL/Res	Pacific Hills Dural	1	1
PL/1 st	Pacific Hills Dural	3	0

NWSWS Competition – 2 August 2009

Grade/Div	Opposition	For	Against
U14/1			
U14/2			
U15/2	Beecroft	0	6
U17/1			
U18/1			
AA/4			
AA/10	West Pennant Hills	1	0

UNDER 6 ORANGE

THORNLEIGH vs PACIFIC HILLS DURAL

As we near the end of the season our team is really beginning to bring this game called soccer together.

Today we made the trek to Kenthurst to play a team than annihilated us in Round 3.

After a fantastic kick off by FLETCHER the boys charged after the ball, which was quickly taken by the Pacific Hills team.

JAAAN was again in amongst all the action and was quick to take the ball back and turn it around our way.

With a sideline kick in under his belt JAMES then performed some fancy footwork with a back kick.

BEN was in there always defending the goal and made several tries at the goal then finally after his midfield somersault JAMIE broke through the pack and scored our 1st GOAL with huge cheers from all the spectators on the side line.

The second half began with JOSHUA kicking brilliantly down the sideline, which was followed by some great ball handling skills from ETHAN as he dribbled the ball beautifully from foot to foot.

As the boys were tiring the game once again turned in our favour with FLETCHER up the front of the pack he charged down the field leaving all the players in his dust to score our 2nd GOAL.

Congratulations go to JAMES who was awarded the Player of the Week for his consistent effort in defending and stopping the persistent goal attacks.

The improvement in our boys was fantastic to watch today as our team learns how to play together and thanks to Scott for all his hard work coaching this enthusiastic team of boys.

UNDER 6 GREEN

THORNLEIGH vs WEST PENNANT HILLS B

Once again we were up against the might of WPH today as we head into the final weeks of the season. ROHAN, MITCHELL, MICHAEL and LOGAN started the game off with some fierce defence. RYAN and NATHAN displayed their usual speed and skill around the park when it was their turn, while COOPER and ANDREW put their bodies on the line. Despite having the run of the play, WPH had one player who was intent on playing for Italy one day – he had a lie down on numerous occasions. On the first occasion he thought maybe he was unconscious, but we were soon put straight by the WPH parents, who had obviously seen it all before.

UNDER 6 RED

THORNLEIGH 3 vs NORMANHURST 5

This week's match saw our boys (and girl) come up against the Normanhurst (NMH) side for the second time this season. We had not forgotten about their white-cap wearing, self-believing world's best U6 soccer star who turned his side into a one-man team. A pre-match team talk had Thornleigh closely huddle around Coach Dunlop for a last minute game plan. An exciting and enthralling game was to follow. It was level pegging for both sides early on as the play would continuously shift from one end of the park to the other. Some nice twisting and turning by AXIE TADZIK lead to him positioning himself to have a crack at goal on a few occasions. Unfortunately these ended up going wide but you could definitely see the idea in

his play. A corner kick found JACK BIDWELL whose first-time shot at goal rebounded to him when it hit the post and he made no mistake on his second attempt by burying it into the back of the NMH net. What a great start! However, NMH's response was swift scoring twice within the following minutes of the game. Not giving up and always one for wanting to be part of the action ZACHARY DUNLOP was making his presence felt with some hard tackling and pushes forward with the ball. The first-half though would see no more goals and our guys, by this time, only had their minds and eyes set on the lady carrying the oranges...talk about feeding time at the zoo! NMH jumped to a 3-1 lead early into the second half but Thornleigh were about to come back. A goal kick forward rolled its way to an eager HARRISON HOWARD who turned and headed for the NMH goal. On he went and the result was a second goal for his team. All the while JESSICA DARGAN was stamping her mark on this game with her relentless pursuit of winning the ball and doing what she does best and that is going forward. Waiting up field paid dividends for ALISTAIR WESTON when he latched onto a free ball, took it forward and then positioned himself accordingly to slot Thornleigh's third goal from his right boot. Placing his trust and belief in Coach Dunlop's plans he then saw out the game letting it be known to one family member that all other instructions would fall on deaf ears. A late rally by NMH saw them score twice more but not before ANDREW HILL would again and again be there to make life difficult for any white-cap wearing, self-believing world's best U6 soccer star. The Thornleigh vs NMH rivalry was clearly evident today but our guys did themselves proud and I know revenge will soon be theirs. This week's Best and Fairest award was presented to HARRISON HOWARD. Well done HARRISON!

U6 WHITE B

THORNLEIGH B vs West Pennant Hills Cherrybrook C

The match was an evenly contested affair between two teams of enthusiastic and energetic boys and girls. In the first half the opposition converted more of their chances but THORNLEIGH impressed with their on-the-ball skills. There has been a noticeable improvement in this area and it showed in their ability to control the ball in the tackle zone. Positional play is also beginning to develop with better awareness of running lines both in attack and defence. All members of the team made good, strong runs on goal. CONNOR DOWNEY and TOM RICHMOND came ever so close to scoring following some great counterattack play, while JAYARTH GUNAWARDENA and OLIVER JENNINGS both added to their tallies for the season after making some lovely runs through the opposition's defences. ROBBIE FERGUSON menaced every time his boot made contact with the ball; once he has added swerve to his repertoire this lad has potential to be a free-kick legend. NOAH TIKOFT continued to excel at foxing the opposition with his off-the-ball running patterns, opening up running channels for his team-mates to exploit. Defensively the team tracked back well in response to opposition attacks. OSCAR BIASON in particular made good use of his pace to get back in time to make a great goal-line save. Overall, it was a fine performance by all. Well done boys.



UNDER 6 WHITE C

THORNLEIGH c vs GLENHAVEN

The match started with a bang as SEAN MCALLISTER scored 3 early goals, while ADELE WILLIAMS did some big kicking. This was closely followed by a terrific goal attempt by ANNALISE KAIN, who then went on to score several goals as well as several more good attempts at goal – what a scoring machine! MITCHELL BLACK provided his usual solid defence as well as some fantastic attacking manoeuvres and fancy footwork. LUC FENTON had speedy legs this week and after nearly scoring a goal twice, Luc went on to score 2 goals! SEAN MCALLISTER changed tactics to passing the ball and set up several goals for other team members as well setting up an own goal for the other team! This display of teamwork was reason enough to get up early on a chilly morning! Great work U6 ccc's!

UNDER 7 RED B

THORNLEIGH B vs GLENHAVEN

A Perfect day greeted us at Oakleigh Oval, so good to play at home. Lots of big kicks highlighted the game. Most notable ones from MYLES, who managed a huge one over everybody's heads and another one which unfortunately hit a Glenhaven head, right in the face. After that a lot of hands were protecting faces when they saw MYLES coming. MICHAEL was all over the field pushing the ball down, managing a spectacular kick into goal. MAX looked like he would score, chasing the ball down the field, coming up against some tough defence, with a huge kick, only just missing, great effort. As usual the rest of the team showed some excellent defence. THOMAS diverted the ball away from Glenhaven with some excellent big kicks. CHRISTOPHER was right in the thick of the action with some great attacking. CHARBEL and WILL were also doing a fantastic job stopping the Glenhaven charge.

Player of the Week: MAX KING-PERRY



UNDER 7 GREEN

THORNLEIGH 3 vs KENTHURST 5

What a beautiful day for a soccer game! The team was almost back to full-force this week and have definitely improved since their last encounter with Kenthurst. Early on the teams were very evenly matched. JACOB made a great goal-saving tackle and EDDIE showed off more of his fancy footwork throughout the entire game. Kenthurst scored three goals in quick succession followed by an own goal forced on them by CALLUM and MASON. The second half saw the team working much better together; a near miss by JACOB that was backed up beautifully by LACHLAN to score the second goal. There were a few more near misses by CALLUM as well as a combined effort by JACOB and MASON. TOM scored the third goal and went on to make a great save up the other end, followed closely by a great save by MASON. Special mention goes to JACOB; although his knees got a bashing from all his trip ups, he produced one of the best 'surprise' headers ever seen!!!

UNDER 7 WHITE B

WHITE B vs NORMANHURST

The game started off with a kick from LIAM to RILEY around the opposition players but shot at goal misses. MIKA and RILEY try again. RILEY and a Normanhurst player trip over the ball but we miss again. JACQUILINE passes to RILEY who finally scores a goal. MATTHEW shines again in defence, then JACQUILINE again, kicks from the side over everyone's head to RILEY, back to JACQUILINE who kicks at goal, but the ball stops 30cm short of scoring. LIAM lost his second tooth for the day at half time eating oranges. In the second half LUCAS scores, MIKA dribbles through the Normanhurst defence. LIAM shoots at goal, but the ball goes high over the bar. LUCAS scores again from a combination play of RILEY to LUCAS, to JACQUILINE, back to RILEY then to LUCAS who scored. Player of the week to JACQUILINE (Girl Power) for her efforts in attacking play. Merit award to MATTHEW.

UNDER 8 GREEN

THORNLEIGH 5 vs. WEST PENNANT HILLS 3

With the recent results being so strong for U8 Green, there had to be one that would test the team again – this was it! JAMIE PAYNE took goalie duty in the first half and felt the pressure the whole time, as the opposition kept kicking for goal and managed to get three through. This being said, the team did get one on the board in the first half, with JAYDEN TAOUK almost getting a goal and the opposition goalie converting it for us! The second half was another story, with the Coach prompting more teamwork and ownership of the ball. OLIVIA FLACK took goal duty and saw little action as the team lifted to a new level, with CASSANDRA HILL and ADELAIDE GIFFNEY both relentless in attack, and VERONICA JOHNS and IRIS YUAN defending well. MASON OATES was all over the field and managed a great goal, as did JAYDEN TAOUK. JAMIE PAYNE also managed a goal and (again) the opposition goalie assisted in another. With another match under the belt, MASON OATES took the trophy for player of the week, for his fantastic legwork (we reckon he must have run all up around 5 kilometres throughout the game).

U8 RED

THORNLEIGH vs. EST PENNANT HILLS B

The Red Rhinos charged onto the field and immediately took possession of the ball. As if in a spell binding trance the team worked together in skilfully passing the ball and keeping it away from the opposition throughout the entire game. CONNOR CLARKE, LUKE BIRREL and MATTHEW PINES were in sync as they tackled and passed the ball away from the opposition. OLLIE DUNCAN would wiz his way through and masterfully take control of the ball without the opposition even noticing. EMMA CARRIGAN showed no fear as she charged in to help take possession of the ball. DYLAN WELGEMOED charged after the ball and impressed the crowd with his speed, tackling and kicking skills. EMMA SANCATALDO was such a superb goalie that she frustrated the opposition to the extent that they started pushing and shoving. Help from THEA SCHMERTMANN at goals made the opposition see red. But, no amount of pushing and shoving was going to stop RUBEN MOUTON from taking control of the ball and scoring some very impressive goals. This was the best game the team have played this season, one which left the spectators speechless. Well done team, you were AWESOME!

UNDER 8 WHITE

BIG "LITTLE" THUNDER 4 (75th) - NORTH EPPING 1

A GREAT GAME to watch from two teams with talented little soccer players. The Thunder parents were again impressed with the way our boys are playing. Our boys are mastering positional play, passing the ball to our player in a better position and talking to each other about what to do next. The RANGERS' coach also announced they had suffered their first defeat against our very good THUNDERS.

Our striker DANIEL PATTERSON scored 2 goals, OLIVER DEWEY scored from right midfield with a booming kick and BRADLEY HOWARD rocketed in a goal from 20 metres playing from fullback. The power of the shoot was huge. The ball did not leave the ground. Quite an effort.

ISAAC LANE was all go, playing as our centre mid field. Creating attacks and passing to his team mates to score. MORGAN HUGHES was energetic also controlling the middle of the field and always dangerous in running the ball in attack. Isaac and Morgan were powerful together in the middle.

JONATHAN CHAN was fast!! This fellow burns turf in attack and cannot be caught. He is playing great soccer. OLIVER DEWEY had a hard game attacking and defending on the right side. Sometimes against the whole opposition. On one occasion all the Rangers were trying to take the ball from him. This tends to happen when we play and hold our positions and other teams pack hunt. Think of all the space for our boys. And you did beat the pack – all alone.

DANIEL PATTERSON did a great job trapping some very hot and hard hit crosses as the striker to then shoot with first time hits at goal. One goal came from his "trap and hit". A huge corner cross from MORGAN and the other from a pass from Isaac and then a 30 metre dribble with the ball and chased by Rangers to score in the corner of the goal.

Special praise for our two little dynamos. Two extreme defensive pests. JORDON LEE BACON and JARET WILSON. Both are what we call in older age soccer "hard nuts" to bust

and never easy to rid. We know them as the soft, gentle and friendly beautiful petals off the field. Not so on the soccer field.

BRADLEY HOWARD is performing greater feats every week and has a soccer brain. He knows more about soccer than just kicking the ball around. TARA WILSON had a superb game and caught 2 mid air thunderbolts as goal keeper. We certainly may have found a keeper of the future.

Finally, 75 goals scored by the boys and 12 by our opposition and 1 loss. Our only loss was the result of our first attempt to play and hold position. (At times like cement blocks) It took one game and 1 training session to sort. Since that cement day, 51goals in 5 games. Well done JARET, BRADLEY, JORDON-LEE, ISAAC, MORGAN, DANIEL, OLIVER, JONATHAN, OLIVER and TARA.

We are looking very good for the bigger field in 2010 – bring it on!

UNDER 11/2

THORNLEIGH 2 vs CARLINGFORD 3

The day didn't start too well with one of our goalkeepers, BYRON, being injured off in the warm up and unable to play! The start of the game didn't go much better with two soft goals against us within the first 4 minutes of the starting whistle.

Despite this, the team played well and strung some good passes together putting into practice what they had learned at this week's training. Things continued to conspire against the team with the pace of BEN HAYWARD breaking through to convert a great goal being subsequently disallowed. The referee considering him to have been off side when he was nowhere near off side when the ball had been played.

The team still didn't give up though and had several attempts at goal keeping the majority of play in the attacking half for once. They were eventually rewarded with their own two goals; a 'second' one from BEN and another created by some good passing through the field culminating in a cross into the area being slotted away by ADAM. The teams going into the break on level terms at half-time.

Unusually, the team seemed less motivated at the start of the second half and allowed Carlingford to have most of the possession, having slipped back into the routine of panicking on the ball or ball-watching. A subsequent scramble on the goal line resulting in an own goal halfway through the second half. Thornleigh never really looked like coming back after that but continued to play well defensively with some good saves from HAYDEN throughout (after the first 4 minutes), playing in goal for the whole game this week and some strong clearances from ALEX and JORDAN in defence. Another notable performance this week from JAYDEN.

Man of the match this week went to ADAM, with HAYDEN a close second.



Ben Haywood



Gabriel Fraser

UNDER 11/5



Harrison Flack



Carlie McAllister

UNDER 13/2

THORNLEIGH 4 vs NORTH EPPING RANGERS 0

In one of their major wins so far this season the U13/2s showed what they are capable of on the field. All the effort they have put into their training over the past few months was well rewarded in a decisive and exciting win against the North Epping Rangers this week. Playing their second makeup game in two weeks against the Rangers, Thornleigh improved on last week's winning score of 2-1. Skilful footwork and ball control, great passes and long kicks up the field, smart teamwork, sheer determination by individual players, solid defence, penetrating attack and high energy all contributed to their **4-0** win. The first half saw an early goal in the first few minutes by Thornleigh's BLAKE to which the Rangers were unable to reply. And then again in the first few minutes of the second half a second goal was scored by Thornleigh's WILL in a brilliant individual effort from 30 metres out sidestepping the ball past the opposition and then smashing it into the goal. This brought the score to 2-0. But from here on it was all Thornleigh with two further goals by IZAACK and NICK by the end of the game resulting in the 4-0 win.

It was a notably diverse game as each of the goals was scored by different players BLAKE, WILL, IZAACK and NICK sometimes resulting from great individual efforts and sometimes resulting from great teamwork by all the players. And the score might even have been higher but for the terrific catches of the Rangers' goalie who on at least two occasions was able to hold out determined Thornleigh attacks.

The Rangers attacks were effectively held out by rock like defence from fullbacks JULIAN, NICK, JOSH, THOMAS and CAMPBELL and fine catching from goalies JAY and MITCHELL. Defence was quickly turned around into attack during most of the game as the action was speedily moved upfield into Rangers' territory by Thornleigh's midfielders ANDRE, ADRIAN, WILL, IZAACK and TOM LOWE. ANDRE in particular often sent the ball soaring skywards far upfield to the delight and applause of the crowd. From there centre forwards CAMPBELL, NICK and BLAKE sprinted into position to shoot for goal whenever possible. Several of these strikes fired off by ANDRE and WILL came mightily close to home either flying over the top of the goal or bouncing off the side of the net. The score could easily have been higher.

With a win like this now the team should go on to greater things in the coming weeks as they rise up the ladder.

UNDER 14/4

THORNLEIGH 1 vs WEST PENNANT HILLS 3

A buzz was in the air as the team took to the field on this all important occasion of the last game of the season. With only enough players to make a team last time we met West Pennant Hills, it was good to see that we had two reserves for this game. Straight from the kick off we could see this was going to be a humdinger of a game. The forwards and midfielders leapt straight into the attack with the support of the midfielders with some good passing and commitment, but it was an early break by the opposition that saw the first goal go to them early in the game. The team rose to the challenge though and not too long after equalised the score with a fantastic setup by JACK ANGEL to JACOB KOWLAKSI who scored. It was here – about 10 minutes before the end of the first half that we saw a spark ignite in the Thunder players – and you could literally hear the thunder too. They were all over the opposition with attack after attack. The backs were magnificent in their defence and today we really saw some serious running by the backs in keeping the ball away from the goals. Great goalkeeping on the part of JOSHUA COOPER saw the half time score at 1 goal a piece. At this stage we really thought we were in with a chance. We saw some serious attempts at goal just before the second half, but unfortunately the oppositions defence was just too good. The intensity in the game remained well into the second half, but the opposition just proved too good and managed to let 2 more goals slip through. This was certainly a great game to watch and the boys can be proud having finished the comp 2nd on the leader board. Although every member of the team deserved man of the match this time, it was another outstanding performance of dedication and commitment by JIN LIM that saw him awarded this honour with 2nd and 3rd place taken respectively by ALASDAIR BELLING for his outstanding defence and THOMAS HIGGINS for his brilliant support in the midfield.



UNDER 15/2 GIRLS

THORNLEIGH 0 vs BEECROFT 6

The Titanic, Romeo and Juliet, Les Miserable, Macbeth and oh yeah, there was this week's game. What a tragedy. With a full team and a willingness to win, the sadness started after 6 minutes when an off-side was allowed resulting in Beecroft's 1st of 6 goals. However, the other 5 goals were deserved and we were beat by a better team on the day. Our girls played OK, but we were lacking in team work. Many of our passes missed and they seemed to have an answer for all our attacks with a tight defence. So let's talk about our top 3 players as voted by the team. Firstly is today's Player's Player – ALISSIA ODDI, who had a strong defensive game and a central figure in defence with some good clearance kicks. Then we had GEORGIA DAVIS who worked the left side of the park with some good turns and runs that took the ball halfway up the field. And finally we saw SAMMIE TRENAMAN saving several shots as keeper followed by an energetic midfield role making her presence felt in the centre. Well enough said and I'm out for more tissues.

PLAYER PROFILE

Player: Samantha Trees

Position: Forward

Years Played: Playing her 6th year competitive soccer and her 1st year with THUNDER

Favourite Food: Baklava

School: Pennant Hills High

Pets: Two dogs, Candy and Jake and a Bird called Rosie



UNDER 15/4

THORNLEIGH 0 vs EASTWOOD ST ANDREWS 2

Here's the deal. Eastwood St Andrews spend most of the season in 2nd spot looking at Roselea's tail – until the last week when they pull a swifty to take the number 1 position. You reckon they're gonna want to give that up in the last premierships game? No way! Thornleigh – A must win for us to stay in the top 4. We want it BAD!

"It all makes for an exciting game," their coach declares before the opening whistle.

"Ooohhh Yeahhhh," I concur.

And so it starts. We begin very tight in defense and JONATHON HALL immediately stamps "No options for Eastwood" on his forehead, hugging his man, matching his moves and performing crowd pleasing aerial gymnastics in his bid to shut down the blue and whites.

And then it's the blue and white flash weaving its way through the centre. Our blokes stay in their line, but basically give them too much room to move. A scuffle near the goal and Eastwood pop it past our last man, goalie XAVIER BOUCHER. 1-0 their way.

HUW FISHER has a nice run up the left line. He has plenty of time and looks well before passing through to front man, CHARLIE GILLINGS. Back to HUW, then to NATHAN QIN. Nice backing up boys – thinking play – but that's where it ends.

Up the centre again for Eastwood. NATHAN tries some mind-bending leg work, but the wood is too good and it's left to the safe hands of XAVIER to shut down this one. JEREMY TOOHEY takes some nice runs to assist in getting the ball down our attacking end. Another thinking pass – this time from ALEX CHARARA to CHARLIE GILLINGS. The woods shut it down though very quickly and our man up front, after his goal fests of recent games, is becoming quietly frustrated at his all-too-brief touches of the round skin.

Eastwood's attacking end again. A big direct shot, high and strong and XAVIER BOUCHER digs deep for a huge reaching dive to reclaim the ball and deny Eastwood their second goal –for now. And again – soon after – a long high pass through from Eastwood sees XAVIER choose the hard run-out option and he's all over the turf, smothering the ball. Good stuff.

The last 20 minutes of the half sees Thornleigh faster on the ball with quick defense work from TIM LOVE, ALEX ANTOGNELLI and MICHAEL GAMBLE. We keep them out for a while and WILL SOWDEN, RHYS BRIOT and MICHAEL BRADLEY are running the field. But then – Yep, you guessed it – It's Eastwood up the middle again, weaving around like they're fighting against the traffic on a one-way street. A nice strike, high to the left, finds the inside of our net. 2-0. And the job suddenly became that much harder for the Thunders.

By this stage Coach, Craig Markland, has well and truly left to play his own game, leaving CRAIG DENYER to yell at our lads. The half time word: Play the line. CHARLIE needs to resist the urge to drop back to get some ball action. Craig wants him deep up front and central – hugging the sweeper to get pass throughs. ALEX ANTOGNELLI needs to push up to force the offside. ALEX CHARARA is to look for the quick pass to CHARLIE. MICHAEL GAMBLE in defense is to watch the bloke out wide who is tucking in behind him for dangerous runs. XAVIER is to yell a lot to intimidate the opposition strikers. All are to go in hard and push the play to the wings.

ANDREW CARDWELL is quick to steal Eastwood's kick-off ball, but only briefly. Up the middle again for Eastwood. They take a cracker shot which hits the side posts. Some friendly banter involving Eastwood's goalie and MICHAEL GAMBLE – something about teenage boys and pops – drains some tension, breaking smiles from players and spectators alike. CRAIG DENYER advises, "Put that in your report." Happy to oblige.

Back to the game – just inside to see goalie XAVIER BOUCHER rising above an opposition attack player. Way out – getting close to no-man's land for him – he takes a leap that makes me feel I should sign him up for AFL and claims the ball as the other bloke was lining up a header. Top stuff!!

Bursts of brilliance aside, the majority of the play is down the wood's attacking end, frustrating the Thunders no end. At one point we manage to reverse the trend and JONATHON HALL has a shot off a lovely throw-in and back up from HUW FISHER. But it's straight to the keeper and it's a no brainer for him.

Thornleigh hold Eastwood out for a second half draw, but it's a win to them on the day. Their coach comments on the spirit of Thunder play on the day and our strong lead-up games. It softens the blow as we now start our Pennant campaign. Until next week.

UNDER 17/1 BOYS

THORNLEIGH 6 vs EASTWOOD EPPING 0

While the result was positive, the coach was not happy as it was achieved against a severely depleted Eastwood Epping side. The team had a big advantage on the field but could not convert into a great performance.

An early goal by JAMES PITCHER was followed by a lot of scrappy play. MATT LOWE scored the second goal of the first half after about 4 attempts. The boys did not look convincing in defence and EEW had several great attacking runs, a full strength opposition side would have seen a different score line.

After a blast from a disappointed coach at half time, the boys played better soccer and later in the second half showed the skills and passing needed to play at this standard. The last four goals, two from MATT LOWE and one each from JAMIE LUNDBERG and PITCH were the result of good team work up the field. As we face a tough run now through to the Round Robin, we need to really want to win.

Congratulations to EEW for staying in the game through to the end. Thornleigh, the big crowd who support you, look forward to some great games of soccer over the next month.

UNDER 17/1 GIRLS

THORNLEIGH 1 vs KENTHURST(1) 0

Well Girl THUNDERS, you've really done it this time...

In the premierships, THUNDER finished 3rd behind Roselea and Kenthurst, which is a fantastic result for Div. 1. THUNDER came in to today's match – the 3rd of the 5-match Championship round robin - on top of the Championship table with maximum 6 points and +12 goal difference! Today's match was crucial, as beating Kenthurst would put THUNDER in the box seat for a crack at the grand final. But Kenthurst is a strong team, beating us in both the premierships rounds, so THUNDER was the underdog but came out fighting.

Australia's first MasterCoach, Craig Denyer, has taken these girls on an incredible journey in '09, working hard on fitness at the start of the season so that 80 minutes of football is now well within their stamina-range. Combined with CD's skills and matchcraft training, THUNDER has developed into a lean, mean football machine with "CHAMPIONS" tattooed on their foreheads. Regardless of the outcome of the '09 Championship, these girls are a force to be reckoned with.

Today, with a depleted team of 10 plus one reserve from the 14/1s (thanks RACHEL TOMPKINS), THUNDER ground out a win against the more fancied Kenthurst. And this was no fluke - THUNDER simply played better football.

The plan was to try to get ahead and then lock up the game. From the whistle, Kenthurst didn't look the threat we were expecting. Our girls were taking the game up to them and had the bulk of possession in the first half. Our defenders were marking up well and fending off any attack to the side line. MADDY BROWN looked after the right hand side beautifully, JO THOMSON – who is uncomfortable in defence – played equally brilliantly on the left, RACHEL TOMPKINS took charge as stopper with ARI O'NEILL behind as sweeper and FIONA SPARKES in goals. When COURTNEY BLANCH turned up

(from Meadowbank – oops...) she took over as stopper to keep RACHEL fresh for her own match after ours.

You have to hand it to STEPH THOMSON. She was sore all over after State cross country and two netball matches but put in a blinder in the mids, controlling the play with ANNALESE in mid-field attack, CLAIRE BUSHROD on the left and VANESSA KRASTEVEV on the right.

The match was evenly poised when MADDY BROWN directed a throw to ANNALESE in mid-field who crossed a beauty to our sole striker LUCY JONES to score with a solid right footer. The girls now knew they were capable of pulling this match off and played committed football till the half time whistle.

The plan was coming together like a jigsaw and MC Denyer switched the players around at half-time to lock up the game. He instructed the girls to maintain possession as that would win them the match and out they went controlling the whole of the second half. At full time, the Kenthurst coach complimented the team on its massive improvement through the season – and that says it all.

Apart from their competitiveness, the really pleasing thing about this team is their enjoyment of the game and of each other's company – they're a happy bunch and truly a great team.

Roselea has been in a class of its own for many years but to be honest the gap is closing. Next week's match against the premiers will be a thriller and you never know what might happen...

Look out Roselea, THUNDER is coming!!!

UNDER 17/3

THORNLEIGH 4 vs CARLINGFORD REDBACKS 0

Redbacks kept Thornleigh defence busy in the first half with few striking opportunities being realised.

Late in the first half, three sticking shots for Thornleigh missed the mark, but changed the momentum of the game.

Several more striking shots saw Thornleigh in control of the remainder of the first half. Half time – nil all.

Early second half saw a great overhead save by LUKE; followed by one on the ground. More striking shots in the second half and AARON tried for a header hat trick!

A goal! LEROY supported by the team pushed one through. More striking shots continued; HARRY, WILL, KEL, LEROY.

LEROY took a direct free kick into goals, perfectly placed; goal 2.

Defence continued to play well with MATTHEW holding the line.

LUKE demonstrated another high flying save sending the ball over the goals.

JACKSON scored a clean goal from centre midfield; 3 – nil.

ALEX had a good hit from centre just clearing the goals; "oooooh" went the crowd.

HARRY quickly followed, another scoring shot, "aaaaahhh" went the crowd.

A flying pass by HARRY to LEROY saw LEROY push through another goal. Goal !!!!4 – nil.

ALL AGE/7

THORNLEIGH 1 vs PACIFIC HILLS DURAL 0

Premiers. That's fun to say isn't? Premiers. Hello, we are the premiers. After a long, tough season we finally emerged victorious on top of the AA7 heap. At the halfway point it did not look possible but a poor run from the then leaders and a continuance of our good form we overhauled Hills Hawks with about a third of the season remaining and managed to stay on top until the end. While it was not a classic match to clinch the season with, it was a gutsy and determined effort that epitomised our season. The match started well enough PAT CHAPMAN putting TIM MORISON through into acres of space to easily guide home the first after five minutes. The hope was that this would open the floodgates. Throughout the game we continued to pressure but were thwarted by some truly excellent goal-keeping and our old nemesis, the cross bar. Needless to say there was much relief at the final whistle. We had finally done it... just. The premierships was ours. It felt good after not having had one for a couple of years. There were some outstanding performances on the park this day, ANDY BOUGHTON and JAMES RODGER once again. MURRAY GRAVES and MARK KENNEDY once again. DAVID POWER, BENTON JOHNSON, BRAD RUSTON were all special in the finest, Bruce McAvaney says of the word. Now the big thing is to keep the wins going and take out the Grand Final. This has eluded us over past seasons. This year must be different. It won't be easy, like any other year, but this is the year we must really make it count.

ALL AGE/10 WOMEN

THORNLEIGH 1 vs WEST PENNANT HILLS 0

This game was the first match of 3 for the pennants finals. We unfortunately with illness and players away only had enough to field 11 players, so no subs. We started the match basically for the first 10 minutes in our half with attempts in goal. Then WEST PENNANT HILLS come back with some attempts of their own. The game was enjoyable as both teams took the game as a bit of fun but we both wanted to score and obviously win the match. All players took hard tackles and hard knocks, we had FRANCES, JOANNE, JIN, KAREN and ANGELA either on the floor from tackles or the ball hit into their face or body. At the end of the first half it was still nil all. The second half we went on a little more tired but still trying to score goals, attempts come from AMANDA, ANG, JIN, ALICIA, but finally towards the end of the match a corner from AMANDA who passed the ball to KAREN and then KAREN volleyed the ball to ANGELA who hit the ball over the goals head. This was ANGELA's first ever goal, it was fantastic. We all celebrated for ANGELA. KAREN also had a close call to score for us again before the final whilst, hitting the ball towards the goal, if the goalie didn't scramble to get the ball and KAREN was a little faster we may have walked with a 2 goals. It was a great game as everyone stood up and worked well together and really got under the ball to take first touch from goal kicks etc. Next week we play NORMANHURST.

ALL AGE/ 18

THORNLEIGH 4 vs WEST RYDE EAGLES 0

This was an outstanding win by our team to finish the Premiership, we were up against the team running second and a win by us would see us leap frog the Eagles and finish the season in 2nd spot.

We knew from our last encounter that West Ryde are a very physical side that try and push the limits of fair play with us and the referee and we were prepared for a battle. We started the game playing to our strengths which is our speed around the park and pushing balls into the middle from the flanks however it did not take too long before the Eagles started to play the man and not the ball and to try and intimidate the referee.

We were guilty in the first half of playing too much ball in the air and the Eagles who are very good at contesting the high ball used this advantage to pressure our goal mouth and nearly scored when our keeper PETER was hit as he was catching the ball and it spilled out for an Eagles player to try and score but a brilliant kick of the line by LIAM saved the day.

We soon struck back when ROLY put through a nice ball for PAUL to hit a scorching left foot to leave the Eagles keeper diving at thin air. We continued to cop a battering until half time and we came in for well-earned rest.

We spoke about keeping the ball on the ground and not giving away any high balls as it was almost our undoing and also the need to not speak to West Ryde at all but to let them get frustrated with our lack of response to their constant taunting and intimidation tactics and to let the referee handle the Eagles players.

These tactics started to work almost immediately as we attacked the opposition down the flanks and saw another ROLY assist as he chipped the last defender for MARC to charge onto and belt past the keeper. The West Ryde players went ballistic at the referee and linesman as they believed that our player was offside but neither would agree and the goal stood. The Eagles were very unsettled by this goal and started to attack the man which the referee duly penalised. We continued to mount the pressure when an incident in the box saw us awarded a penalty which PAUL hit sweetly only to see the keeper dive and push it away for PAUL to step up and bang it in.

The game was turning ugly and the referee had his hands full controlling the Eagles players but a constant stream of penalties kept them on the back foot. Our final goal came from a CHRIS throw in which saw the ball land sweetly for ANDY to push it past the keeper.

We finished the game strongly and came off the field satisfied that we had stood up to the opposition and handed them a devastating loss. We play them again next week in the first round robin semi final and we hope that we can reproduce the same form and result.

Our team today was PETER in goals, in defence we had LIAM, DHESH, TOM, MATT and CHRIS while the mid field were TERRY, JORDAN, DAVE, PAUL, and ANDY and up front we had ROLY and MARC.

Well done boys we finished the season in 2nd place and if we continue to play with the same skill and commitment we may go onto the Championship final.

OVER 35/2

THORNLEIGH 0 vs NORTH RYDE 6

Today's match went perfectly to plan. Always thinking ahead, we put on such a pathetic performance this week that North Ryde are probably convinced that they can assume an easy win in the semi-final against us in a couple of weeks. Their complacency will allow us to snatch a place in the Grand Final. Prior to the start of this game our defenders commented that they had not been penetrated for 2 weeks. It appears that North Ryde applied generous amounts of lubrication to overcome their haemorrhoid problem and they slotted 6 in today.



On a more positive personal note, I am pleased to be able to advise that after claiming credit for all 3 goals from our win by forfeit last week and an own goal this week added to the one goal that I had already scored, I am now just a few goals behind the leading goal scorers. If we can pick up another forfeit or two in the semi-finals, I think that I have a real chance of picking up the coveted golden boot award.

Talking about awards, I am also willing to go out on a bit of a limb and forecast that the Over 35/2's will clean up at this year's trophy awards. I am predicting that we will the following awards:

Team of the Year – After finishing at the bottom of the competition last year, our place comfortably in the top four this year has shown character that would have made a blind double amputee that had just conquered Mount Everest proud.

Coach of the Year – This will not be awarded for any great tactical or leadership qualities but rather for our coach's ability to field 11 players each week that look vaguely like the photos on our ID cards. It is quite amazing what a difference a false beard, a false moustache, a pillow up the front of the shirt and a pair of rolled up socks down the front of the shorts can make.

Manager of the Year – This will be awarded not only for his accurate and insightful match reports but also for his incredible good looks and terrific modesty.

A newly created sexiest team award. - This will be awarded by a surprising close margin over the 18/1 Girls' team. Ultimately the difference will be our youthful complexions and our sense of style.

PA to Mr X