



Thornleigh Sports & Recreation Club Inc.

SOCCKER DIVISION

Blue & Gold Newsletter

8-9 August 2009



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

Presentation Day 2009

OAKLEIGH OVAL

Sunday 13th September

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.

Mini Presentation (Under 6, 7 & 8)

10.30am – 11.30am

A BBQ lunch will be served after the Mini Presentation for the mini and junior players and their families.

Junior Presentation (Under 9 - 16 Girls & Boys)

at 12.30pm

We look forward to seeing you all there.

RESULTS

GHFA Competition – 8 August 2009

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

NWSWS Competition – 9 August 2009

Grade/Div	Opposition	For	Against
U14/1	North Epping Rangers	1	0
U14/2	Gladesville Ravens	1	1
U15/2	North Epping Rangers	1	2
U17/1	Roselea	2	2
U18/1	West Pennant Hills	1	1
AA/4	Normanhurst	2	0
AA/10	Normanhurst	0	1
O/35	BYE		



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

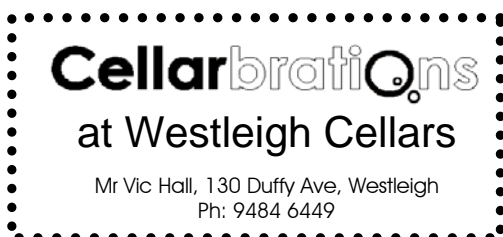
Pennant Hills Bowling Club
52 Yarrara Rd, Pennant Hills



SILVER SPONSORS



BRONZE SPONSORS



UNDER 6 ORANGE

The game started enthusiastically and in good spirit. The fast pace and attacking approach was rewarded by a brilliant three pass combination starting with FLETCHER passing from the sideline to BEN and then finally a good pass onto JAAN for a superb goal and great team effort.

In between the next goal being scored there was some great kicks by JOSH. JAMIE continued with his flair, attacking the opposition's defence by his driving kicks up the field. ETHAN was rewarded with a thrilling goal from his determined approach and some great backing up from his Thornleigh team mates.

FLETCHER involved himself in the game passing some more great crosses to his team mates. BEN continued with his excellent defensive play clearing many balls into Thornleigh's half. JAAN also demonstrated his good kicking from the kick-off with his long clearing kicks.

ETHAN continued showing his commitment by almost scoring his second goal. There was also some well executed passes involving JAAN, BEN, JAMIE and FLETCHER clearing the ball well into our half.

Ben scored the final goal after anticipating an opportunity by backing up and guiding the ball into the open goal.

Congratulations to JAAN for receiving the Player of the Week Award. Well done to all for the team BBQ effort.

UNDER 6 RED

THORNLEIGH 1 vs REDFIELD LIONS 2

Today's game took us to Redfield College and the best pitch the team had played on all season. It was end-to-end and side-to-side full of grass! Would the standard of play meet those of the soft, green ground beneath their feet? Early play saw Redfield (RF) dominate and we found it hard to break into their half. A goal soon resulted for RF but it seemed to be what was needed to kick Thornleigh into action. Defence suddenly turned into attack and it was JACK BIDWELL, who I would have bet my house on scoring, that lined up a few golden opportunities to score but was only to see his efforts go either wide of the mark or cleared off the line by the RF defence. In a game that had a lot of powerful kicking resulting in frequent "air missiles" we were glad when ZACHARY DUNLOP got his head in the way of one such missile which deflected a certain goal bound shot by RF. ZAC maybe wasn't as glad but he took it in his stride and carried on with the main aim of the game...to have fun! I'm not sure if ANDREW HILL was missing the wet and muddy fields which we have played on so often this season but he did his best to slide tackle, slide kick, slide pass, run and slide, jump and slide and just generally slide. This happened with and without the ball but at the end of the day his contribution is always to give 100%. Half-time tactics given by Coach Dunlop seemed opposed when the team offered up their own plans but sanity soon prevailed and they backed-off. A "specialized" defender in the RF team (obviously their tactic) was finally beaten in the second half when JACK BIDWELL launched a well placed shot which put the ball straight between his legs and it ended up in the back of the RF net. More defending and attacking from HARRISON HOWARD was making for a thrilling game. Adding to the thrill was ALISTAIR WESTON'S attempt at having a go at what you've seen others perform the week before. As demonstrated when,

facing his own goal, he over-ran the ball, raised his right foot above it and raked it back in the opposite direction to which he was running with his boot studs. Bravo AL! His not an old dog so I can safely say that he is going to learn a lot more new tricks. A lapse of concentration in defence resulted in a second RF goal and had Thornleigh now battling against time to find an equalizer. The left boot toe-poke of AXIE TADZIK began to be utilized more for kick-ins to get the ball forward towards the RF goal. This was met with success despite the odd stumbling and loss of balance in the lush grass on approach to kicking the ball. JESSICA DARGAN was doing her best to seal a late equalizer in the dying minutes of the game. I would have bet my second house on her scoring when she managed to break free with the goal in her sites but unfortunately her shot went wide. The final whistle blew to signal, in the player's minds, I-o-I-y time. Once the frenzy of lolly time was over we headed home leaving the greenness behind us and knowing that the team had played probably their best game all season. This week's Best and Fairest award was presented to AXIE TADZIK. Well done AXIE!

UNDER 6 WHITE A

THORNLEIGH WHITE A vs THORNLEIGH GREEN A

The unavoidable Thunders verses Thunders match – White verses Green – infused a little initial confusion, but it certainly didn't last for long.

Both teams took off like a ram jets as the sound of the whistle pieced the air. The Greens attacked with impressive force and technique but their first sure goal was thwarted by the defence wall known as DAVID.

Back and forth, over and over, both teams' efforts were awarded only miss after near miss. JACK sent a strike from another suburb that breezed past the post. JAMES attacked full force, but met his match shoulder to shoulder and was denied his objective. But a moment later JAMES literally took the paint off the outside edge of the goal post – such was the suspense.

It was all the Whites could do just to defend - and wow did they defend. JASMINE chested and whacked the ball back the way it came and EUAN dug holes through the Greens advances. LIAM thumped the ball away from the danger zone every chance he got. DAVID transformed into virtual goalie, and HUGH raced back to save the day like a blue and gold blur. Then a brilliant dual defence move by JACK and JAMES – that succeeded – saw JAMES come away with a bleeding nose. A blink later and he was back on the field with fire in his eyes.

As though suddenly realising they were 3 goals down the Whites went on the major offensive. HUGH found the ball at his feet just meters from the goal, and as soon as a gap appeared he fired it home! Then JACK fired a goal kick attempt that travelled $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of the field. Suddenly JAMES launched a blistering run through the Greens to set HUGH up for cannon ball goal. Looking for a trifecta, HUGH fired a shot through DAVID'S legs, but it just missed.

It was a fantastic action packed game. The Greens had the upper hand this time around, but boy did the Whites make them work hard for their victory.

Final score: White Thunders 3 and Green Thunders 5.

U7 GREEN

THORNLEIGH 9 vs GLENHAVEN 0

The boys were in fine form and all of them contributed to the score with some great goals and attacking play.

TOM started the scoring frenzy in the opening seconds of the game after a feisty tackle and a quick shot at goal. This was soon followed with a superb goal from LACHLAN, and an impressive goal from BEN who has been under the weather for a while, but showed great determination throughout the game.

JACOB did not disappoint, and was always in the thick of the action scoring 3 fine goals. EDWARD was keen as always to show off his fancy footwork and was as determined as ever, scoring 2 fantastic goals. The 2nd half saw Glenhaven put up a brave fight, narrowly missing an awesome shot at goal with the ball hitting the goal post! MASON worked hard throughout the game, and was unlucky at a couple of shots at goal, but was finally rewarded in the dying seconds of the game with a point to add to the scoreboard.

It was an enjoyable game to watch, and great to see the smiles on the boys faces!

Player of the Match: LACHLAN

UNDER 7 RED A

THORNLEIGH A vs PENNANT HILLS

Another exciting start to the last (sort of) game of the season. Our team made its customary slow beginning, and at half time we were still at 0-0. This was despite seemingly dozens of close calls and near misses, with TIMON especially taking a leading role in getting the play going forward. HARRY made a welcome return to the side after a break and looked dangerous on several occasions close to goal. After half time, things opened up and ASHLEY opened the scoring with a belter from long range. Unfortunately, with everyone pressed forward putting pressure on the defence, the ball popped loose upfield and in perfect position for their forward, and we were headed for a draw again at 1-1. Hats off to MARK who saved the team from being more down, as well as contributing in attack. There was more rhythm to the way we played later in the game with some excellent and deliberate passing. ELLY seemed to hit her target whenever she had a chance at a kick, and MITCHELL showed good use of the ball, both in passing and running it himself. Goals late in the half eased the pressure and gave the team yet another win for what has been a successful season for them.

UNDER 7 RED B

THORNLEIGH B vs NORMANHURST

What a glorious day at Kenthurst (for once) – with Spring in the air, our boys had a spring in their step. As part of a deliberate strategy, our boys absorbed some early punishment in the first half, but ultimately, Normanhurst were run off their feet, even though they were bigger than our boys, and had 3 more players! Maybe Normanhurst were intimidated by Thornleigh's version of the Haka (which involved a bit of hip wiggling and tongue poking). The fast bowler of the soccer world, aka

MICHAEL stretched his legs just as far as they would go, and then some, to deliver us two sensational goals, not to mention some fantastic teamwork with MYLES. MYLES also scored a goal as well as executing some smooth passes with CHARBEL. CHARBEL and WILL did some fantastic strong kicking with WILL executing a brilliant stop. CHRISTOPHER applied great pressure to the opposition and was always in the thick of the action. Good hustle and great play by all team members today. We look forward to seeing THOMAS and MAX back in the action for our final game.

Player of the Week: MYLES CAVANOUGH



UNDER 8 GREEN

THORNLEIGH 0 vs ALL SAINTS HUNTERS HILL B 2

The team knew this was going to be the tough one, as our first significant loss of the season was to this competitor 8 / 1. Our team were also down two key players, VERONICA JOHNS and CASSANDRA HILL however we were lucky to get JAMES RICKWARD (thanks James) in as a sub. IRIS YUAN took the goalie position in the first half and immediately faced pressure, saving possible goals however it did not last long, as OLIVIA FLACK helped out magnificently. Before long, ADELAIDE GIFFNEY and MASON OATES took control of the ball and placed it at the opposition goal, where they were joined by JAMIE PAYNE and JAYDEN TAOUK relentlessly looking for goals, however in the first half neither team scored. The team was praised by the coach for their efforts and went into the second half with vigour. All of the team were had a crack at the opposition goal in the second half, however with some very close calls it was not to be. A tough game which ended well for the competitors score line; however an excellent result for U8 Green who showed their fans just how much they have improved over this season. Player of the day trophy went to OLIVIA FLACK for her fantastic work in defence.

UNDER 9/3

THORNLEIGH 1 vs REDFIELD 2

As a result of finishing 4th at the end of the home and away season, the Thunder found themselves up against the competition heavy weights who had only lost one game all season. Coach Chapman had formulated a game plan for the team to adhere to and that's exactly what they did.

The first half saw Thunder apply heaps of pressure to the Redfield defence with strong attacking raids from JOSHUA WATKINS, TIM REYNOLDS, ROWAN WOOD and CYRENA BOURIS. The forwards played well for both halves and just prior to half time their efforts were rewarded when the reliable right boot of JOSHUA WATKINS eluded the Redfield goalie and levelled the scores at 1 – 1 (much to the delight of the vocal Thornleigh crowd).

The second half saw some exciting passages of play from both teams as the arm wrestle continued. Our defenders were superb with TOM SELLIN, ZANE GORGE, DANIEL SUNNUCKS and JOSEPH MATTA keeping the Redfield players honest. Both LACHLAN HARRIS and DYLAN DONOVAN were also playing out of their skins and ensuring the well drilled opposition were kept in line. Special mention must also go LEWIS HABKOUK and CODY JERVIS (our two goal keepers) who both made some fantastic saves and played inspired games.

Unfortunately an own goal from a Redfield corner was the only goal of the second half and the score ended up 1 – 2. The team should be very proud of their performance and we are looking forward to taking on the Redbacks next week.

Man of the match was awarded to ZANE GEORGE, CODY JERVIS picked up the teamwork award and JOSH WATKINS scored the Goal of the Week.

GO THUNDER

THORNLEIGH 6 vs PENNANT HILLS 2 1 August 09

After one of the sharpest training runs of the season, Coach Chapman had the team primed for the local derby against Pennant Hills at the picturesque James Henty. It was a must win game for the 9/3s - a win over Pennant Hills would guarantee a spot in the semi-finals and they were ready for the challenge.

Straight from the whistle Thunder went on the attack and spent a majority of the first half in the opposition's territory, ensuring that the Pennant Hills keeper would have to work hard for his match fees.

Every time that the ball crossed into our half, our determined backline consisting of LACHLAN HARRIS, TOM SELLIN, ZANE GEORGE and CODY JERVIS delivered the ball back to the midfielders who continually fed our forwards. JOSH WATKINS (4 goals), TIM REYNOLDS and ROWAN WOOD used the weight of possession to their advantage and by half time, Thunder were leading 4-1.

The second half saw Thunder play with the same spirit as the first with DYLAN DONOVAN (1 goal), DANIEL SUNNUCKS and LEWIS HABKOUK all playing strong games. The team saved their best game of the season and all the players should be congratulated on their performances over the year.

Player of the Week and Goal of the Week was awarded to DYLAN DONOVAN and JOSH WATKINS won the Teamwork Award.

The semi finals await us – Go Thunder.

UNDER 10/3

THORNLEIGH 0 vs REDBACKS 0

This was the season's first semi final and our boys who finished 4th, played the minor premiers the "Carlingford Redbacks" What a game holding them to a zero score with a gutsy performance by the team. We went in with defensive plan and that we did very well but as it turned out we put up plenty of attack as well, offering some great opportunities. The back defensive line was BEN KNIGHT, JOSHUA NATOLI, NATHAN POLLOCK and HARRISON DAVEY these guys knew what was needed for this game and did it well, with some classic on the run defending tackles making a very exciting game. Also playing a mainly defensive plan was TOM KENNEDY, REUBAN SPARGO and WILLEM OATES this crew chimed in perfectly with the backs and also made plenty of play pushing through the mid field and onto the mid fielders and forwards. Up front working tirelessly was TOM McDOWALL, VEERAN MUDALIAR, LACHLAN DUNLOP and HARLEY FERRIS these boys were up against some very tough defence but still managed to threaten the keeper on a few occasions very unlucky not to score. The mid fielders YASHAR ELLIIN, RORY MADDEN and ALEX COHEN GIBSON stepped it up a notch, having to match up with some of the fastest opponents in the competition, but always chasing them down and spoiling their play. HARRISON DARGAN in goals made some great saves 1 classic with only minutes to go but coming up with the goods every time. Man of the match went to NATH POLLOCK for a good defensive display in the back line. Well done boys lets keep it up for the last 2 games to finish up a great season.

UNDER 11/5

THORNLEIGH 1 vs RYDE SAINTS UNITED 0

Dear All, the under 11/5's played a great game on the weekend. We came 8th in the comp and played the 5th placed side Ryde Saints United



at Morrison #4. It was a tough affair with our first half goalie ADAM WALKER effectively taking a full head blow from the ball and saving a sure goal. Backs MATTHEW ALLEN, ZOE SELLIN, NICHOLAS YUAN, MICHELLE COOPER and JACK STEVENS foiled every attempt and began the creative play towards their goal passing to our non-stopping running midfield THOMAS CAIRNS, TESS GIBBONS, NICHOLAS BASSETT and HARRISON FLACK. I've witnessed our team this year slowly develop from the kick & chase game to the control, look & pass game. The team is beginning to now understand that first to the ball, control the possession is a much more enjoyable game to play. MICHEAL ADAMOU stepped up to the penalty spot to score our goal for the game and sent the mums & dads on the sideline in to wild scenes of delirium. MILES WOOD had a sensational game bustling through and passing to CARLIE MCALISTER - the fastest kid on the block (sorry let me correct this - in Westleigh). ALEXANDER HORSPPOOL demonstrated his passing ability and with JASPER INDER in goal for the second half, all was safe.

Best wishes to JEMMA STUART recovering from an earlier injury. I'm looking forward to our team BBQ Ruddock Park this Sat 12.30. Cheers.

UNDER 12/3

THORNLEIGH 2 vs ALL SAINTS HUNTERS HILL 2

This was one of our best games of the season against the fifth placed All Saints. Every player tried their best throughout and the team never gave up, showing tremendous spirit. This great team spirit was rewarded with a very well deserved 2-2 draw, with the Thunder having been 0-2 about 10 minutes into the second half. Having lost 1-3 to the same team the week before, this was an excellent result.

All Saints came out determined to attack and Thornleigh had to absorb a lot of early pressure. But we handled the pressure well, with the defensive line of ANDREW HADDAD, BEN MANANCE, MAX KENNEDY, TAMYKA WILLIAMS and RYAN MALLETT playing with a lot of determination and composure, not giving the All Saints' attack much room to play. In addition, our midfield was working very hard and coming back as necessary to help the defence, with NATALIE BARKER, JASON CLARKE, MARK RICHARDS, CALLUM TOOHEY and NATHAN BIRRELL all putting in really big efforts in both attack and defence. In goals, Ben Jones only had to make a couple of saves, but when called on was able to do so. It looked like we had withstood the onslaught, and SLADE BLANCH and DANIEL FOWLER were making inroads up front, but 5 minutes before half time All Saints' pressure was rewarded with a goal.

The second half was the reverse of the first, with the Thunder coming out fired up and mounting many attacks on All Saints' goal. BEN JONES came onto the field in the second half and was soon linking up well with SLADE and DANIEL up front and with our hard running midfielder. Our specialist sweeper BEN SEPAROVICH had another sound game after coming on, clearing many attacks together with his fellow defenders. Thornleigh were also passing the ball much better in attack. But football can be a cruel game – after solid Thornleigh pressure went unrewarded, All Saints scored on virtually their first attack of the second half, with a well taken second goal.

But it is to the Thunder players' credit that they refused to let their heads drop and continued to attack. More pressure was finally rewarded when SLADE BLANCH, who ran and chased all day, intercepted a goal kick, passed to NATALIE who passed it to BEN JONES to poke the ball in. 1-2 and game on! While All Saints were threatening on the break, with second half goalie MARK RICHARDS making a couple of good saves, we continued to apply most of the pressure and made the pressure pay with a well taken second goal from BEN J.

While BEN J got both goals and was deservedly cheered by his team mates at the end, this really was a whole-of-team effort by the Blue & Golf, who came off the field looking and feeling like winners!



UNDER 13/2

THORNLEIGH 0 vs REDFIELD LIONS 1

The Thunder Twos simply did not deserve to lose this game. They were the dominant team and had enough chances to put the game away but just could not find the back of the net. The goal conceded was a penalty which probably was fair enough had the player fouled not been offside in the first place. Its not just Magic that happens!!! Everyone played really well today. Standouts were TOM D and MAX at the back (as always) and the whole midfield of WILL, IZAACK and ADIE. The WALL (aka JULIAN) also played wonderfully. Coach BOB was heard to say at one stage "Nothing gets past the Wall.....but if they do they should pray for their life". Pretty right too. BLAKE was in everything taking a beaut dive in the box that only needed a pike for a maximum 10, and splattering one of the Lion's defenders requiring that players early exit. TOM L ran hard and hit a great volley off an IZAACK cross that only missed by a bees proboscis. At the end when we were chasing the game more players pushed forward and we had more shots than on opening day of the duck hunting season; IZAACK, ADIE, TOM L, HOLLY all had a lash and BLAKE was on the poach for goalie errors. We just could not get that damn round thing in the net. Next week is Penno. We have had a couple of great games against them and are more than capable of beating them. Let's finish the season with a big effort and a stirring win.

UNDER 14/4

THORNLEIGH 3 vs EASTWOOD ST ANDREWS 2

No sooner had the whistle blown for the start of the match when the team was on the attack and making the first attempt at goal. However, it was less than a minute later, with a beautiful pass from the back by SAMUEL CLARKE up the wing to SAMUEL LANE who then had an equally fantastic chip into to the centre to JACK ANGEL who scored the first goal... yes the thunder is still there! Our defence was good and solid for most of the game with some excellent and consistent intelligent defensive play by SAMUEL CLARKE, some great blocks at the boot of DALE EDWARDS, some startling running by CALLUM MOSES and a very good stint as sweeper by DARREN JOOSTEN. Not forgetting our well tuned goalie JOSHUA COOPER who has definitely matured in that roll over the season. In the midfield we saw the usual 110% commitment that we have come to expect of JIN LIM while SAMUEL LANE also had a great game in setting up the passes and forward play. TOM HIGGINS also provided some good solid work in the midfield with ALEX PUN doing some fancy footwork at times to try and worm his way out from under a pack of attacking opposition's players. It was 20 minutes into the 1st half when we saw JACOB KOWALSKI dribble the ball across from the right, past every opposition player in his way, and, with the goalie out of position, set his foot to the ball and scored – bringing the half time score to 2 nil. It was soon in the second half that JACK ANGEL scored the 3rd goal which also seemed to put a complacent mood in the team - which was evident when the opposition, in the dying embers of the game, managed to score 2 goals. There were several additional attempts at goal by Thornleigh, but it must be admitted the opposition goalie was fairly good at reading the ball and stopping it. There was one heart stopping moment when the ball was passed to OLIVER JUDSON who did a great job of stopping the ball absolutely dead, and with literally only the

goalie in front of him, he almost scored but for a lack of punch and there not being much option to kick the ball anywhere else but at the goalie. Man of the match went to JACK ANGEL for his (as always) sterling work in the attack. 2nd was SAMUEL CLARKE for the solid work in defence and DARREN JOOSTEN 3rd for the great job as sweeper. On behalf of the team and parents a big thankyou to WAYNE CLARKE who has helped with the coaching in Mick's absence.

UNDER 15/2 GIRLS

THORNLEIGH 1 vs NORTH EPPING RANGERS 2

What a game we had with a bitter sweet outcome. All the girls played hard and had a passion to win. The problem was luck. More specifically, NER had more luck than us. And that is what this game came down to. NER opened the scoring in the 1st minute with a kneed ball that bounced over the head of our keeper. THORNLEIGH fought back and arguably had the edge for the remainder of the game. SAM TREES worked hard at beating their defences on several instances but her shots just would not convert. Despite this her efforts were rewarded by a high score by her peers in Player's Player. Thornleigh looked dangerous but time wasn't on our side. The second half looked pretty much the same. NER only looked dangerous with their crosses across the goal face. NER's second goal came from a half hearted shot at goals that picked up an odd bounce to squeak past our keeper. And finally our goal came from a great run up the middle and shot by EMILIE LOWE that deflected from an NER girl into their net. Despite having NER against the ropes the clock beat us. It is hard to talk about any one girl because they all performed to their best. From the spectator's perspective, this was very rewarding despite the outcome. AZIZA RAZIUDDIN had a solid game in the mid-field winning many challenges, TAYLOR LANGHAM also worked hard as right mid-field covering a lot of ground. ALYCE TOMPKINS showed her speed by out-pacing her opponents on several occasions. ALISSIA ODDI also kept the defence line in check with some robust clearance kicks. Today's Player's Player was awarded to GEORGIA DAVIS – whose skill on the ball just keeps getting better with some eloquent turns whilst an opponent breathes down her neck and off loading a nice pass. Well, only one more game to go girls and an opportunity to play the competition winners. Go for it and enjoy.



Our coaches after a loss. You should see them when we win!

UNDER 17/1 BOYS

THORNLEIGH 1 vs EASTWOOD ST ANDREWS 7

This week we played a team that was undefeated in the competition. St. Andrews are a "class" act, they are able to play; one touch football, create space for themselves, and keep the tempo going for the entire 90 minutes, just "awesome". During the season they have bagged 81 goals and only conceded eight goals. So the boys were up against a formidable combination and can be proud of their achievements. For the first hour the thunder boys were able match it, with their opponents, so after 65 minutes the score line was 2-1, yes, in the last 20 minutes they bagged another six goals. Just when our boys were tiring in the middle of the second half the guys from St Andrews kept applying the pressure until they started to crack. The Thornleigh goal was majestic, our roving wing man and former Normo player (CONNER SANSOM), hit a superbly timed shot from the left sideline, over the keepers head, to hit the crossbar and bounce back into the field of play, with the St Andrews defence in tatters, one of our golden boots (MATTHEW LOWE) ran in from the edge of the 22 yard box to nudge the ball into the goal. So we went to the break with the score 2-1. From there you could see the desperation and determination of our opponents lift, and again our boys matched them till their legs started to tire and Eastwood started to get to get to the ball first. From the sideline we can be proud of their achievements, the scoreline wasn't pretty, but the guys gave it all they had, and as a spectator, manager or coach, you can ask no more of them. Every single player had a great game, with several of the boys needing to be helped off the field after putting their body on the line. GREAT STUFF GUYS, I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT WEEKS GAME.

UNDER 17/1 GIRLS

THORNLEIGH 2 vs ROSELEA (1) 2

Last week, the Girl THUNDERS displayed devastating form to topple the Premiership runners up, Kenthurst, and cement top placing on the Championship ladder. Was it a flash in the pan? A fluke?? A rare alignment of the planets???

Today was the much-anticipated challenge against the Premiers – Roselea having won every match in the premiership except one draw (against Kenthurst), and conceding only 2 goals for a massive +52 goal difference. In the Championship round robin Roselea was definitely the team to beat – but when you're on top there's only one way to go...

From the kick-off you could see this match was tougher than last week's, and after 8 minutes Roselea had slotted home their first goal. Was this the opening of the floodgates?? No! The Girl THUNDERS held them off for the remainder of the evenly matched first half.

This week both MEL D'ARCHY and EVE WILCOX were back from injury and in form from the start. EMILIE LOWE and SAMMY TRENAMAN kindly played up from the 15/2s to supplement our 12-girl squad. Whilst positions were swapped around during the match, our team was generally LUCY JONES and MEL up front, ANNALESE SMITH and STEPH THOMSON in centre mids, CLAIRE BUSHROD, EMILIE, SAMMY, EVE, and VANESSA KRASDEV in outside mids, MADDY BROWN, COURTNEY BLANCH, JO LATHAM and ARI O'NEILL in defence and FIONA SPARKES in goals.

As the second half got going the match looked pretty much locked up, until LUCY JONES broke through to bag the equaliser 15 minutes in. The THUNDERS visibly lifted, knowing that a win was now within their grasp. But 10 minutes later a Roselea penalty took them to a 2-1 lead. Our ladies kept up the pressure though, and cracks finally started to appear in the tiring Roselea defence who are probably not used to working this hard. Ten minutes from full-time a STEPH THOMSON through ball almost scored on its own but was finally pushed in by LUCY from the goal-front scramble. For the rest of the match Roselea was on the back foot. LUCY just missed another shot and STEPH was so fired up, running everything down in the mids and sending shots up the front.

This was really a tough match for our defenders and they did a magnificent job. COURTNEY played out of herself, JO was solid and MADDY had a super second half. EMILIE and SAMMY were terrific in the mids as we have come to expect from them. FIONA got plenty of work in goals but did it superbly. And LUCY ran herself ragged up front, coming off late in the game short of breath.

But at the final whistle our girls were ecstatic to settle for a 2-all draw. It was tough but it was good. And no, the planets didn't align two weeks in a row but the roar of THUNDER is getting louder every week! There's still an outside chance of missing out on the Championship final, but a win against the second Kenthurst team next week will guarantee a crack at it.

Have a good rest, girls. See you at training.

UNDER 17/3

THORNLEIGH 0 vs HILLS HAWKS 1

As the Thunders kick off, the Hawks pressure was building on our defence. The Thunders are then making their way on the field as the WILLOW takes the free kick, the keeper catches it. Thunders are still on the attack. BRENDAN, the birthday boy!, is playing outstanding as he knocks all the little ...(adj)... Hawks out of the way. Thunders aren't talking but suddenly JACKSON, the cityboy, makes a 30 m run down the sideline. Thunders now get the throw in and their midfield is so strong, the strongest I've seen this season. LEROY, JARRYD and KEL with a combination of centre midfields are playing strong! The defence isn't talking which forces Hawks with a corner. CRAIG is giving it to the Thunders hard! Which forces KEL and LEROY to pull off their magic as KEL takes a shot which is so close yet so far. Thunders are then pressured, sprinting 50m down but yet again BRENDAN, the machine, gets the ball and drives it down the field where LEROY has a shot, but just didn't hit the ball quite right. CRAIG is frustrated as Thunders keep on playing with the ball and not making good use. WILLOW and BRENDAN, the tanks of the team, are knocking the ...(adj)... Hawks out of place. Hawks pressure is now enormous. The Hawks, all of a sudden, are coming up with a great play with a pass along the ground and drives into the goals. 1-0 Yet Thunders have got to keep up the pressure. As a Hawks player runs down the sideline a scream from DION "Hit him, Aaron!" which then AARON with a brut big hit knocks the Hawkie on his _ _ _ (behind)! The Hawk player is now injured. Thunders need to talk. MICHAEL DENNETT, the wolverine, lays his claws into the Hawks when our defence is charging down, when all Thunders need to do is talk to make the plays their own. HARRY sprints and then gets a shot, but is knocked over by a Hawkie which makes the Thunders furious. And CRAIG, even more screaming a clear testipop. Thunders have to pull themselves together. Hawks then run down the

line, he steps BRENDAN when even the keepers charges down and gives him a big whack! Pressure from the Hawkies and then half time and the score still stands at 1-0. Kick off second half looking quite ordinary as then LEROY makes a pass along the ground to WILL which he then makes a beautiful cross to KEL with takes an amazing volley which then hits the keep and punches out. Everyone seems to think the referee is on _ _ _ _ _ , as he makes calls against us and mainly BRENDAN maybe from the issue that he's huge! LEROY is given a through ball as he tries to power drive it into the goals. First corner for Thunders and it was a shocker. Thunders are giving it to the Hawks but still no goal. WILL then gets a free kick from 30m out straight in front, but then hooks it to the right. Now KEL and WILL are going really hard out, but it seems to be no one is in the centre to finish it off! HARRY is then ripping on all of them and sets up a play for LEROY which he does a soft kick past the keeper but Hawks defender kicks it on the last cm. After all the plays LEROY gets a pass and lobs it into the top corner of the goals! But all of a sudden the ...(adj)... ref calls offside. This makes the Thunders more furious but more confident to win the match! So many shots on target yet the ref is making calls which may lose Thunders the match. Thunders defence is now outstanding, Hawks have shots but none are on target. Boys need to keep their heads up. All Thunders now keep fighting, but the whistle blows, which leaves the game 1-0 to the Hawks. All is lost, but its one of the greatest efforts I've seen of the Thunders all season.

(adj) = not so complimentary adjective edited.

Thanks to our guest match reporter for a thorough report giving a sidelined player's perspective.

UNDER 18/1 LADIES

THORNLEIGH 1 vs WEST PENNANT HILLS 1

What a game!! In what was a very hard, tough, fast and physical game we ended in a 1 all draw - A VERY GUTSY EFFORT. Unfortunately the ref did not see a goal scored by us - she didn't see quite a lot of things actually even though she was wearing glasses!! Them's the breaks. Our goal was scored by FRAN which was a beautiful one over the goalie's head. All our girls dug deep and gave their very best and we unfortunately came off second best. In first half DANICA was tackled very roughly from behind and went down heavily and landed on her head which resulted in her having slight concussion and coming off for rest of the game. In second half poor ALYCE was in a terrible head clash and was out to it for a bit and was carried off and taken to hospital (thankfully she is OK). ALL the girls really put in a terrific effort today and HAYLEY was unlucky not to score with a couple of terrific attempts. CLAIRE put her body on the line with a sensational save which was one on one with their top striker. Lets hope we get a better referee next week and maybe a couple of official linesmen wouldn't go astray either!! Win or draw next week and we will be in the Grand Final. GO GIRLS

THORNLEIGH vs RAVENS 2 August 2009

Mark said it was the best game of the season. He was very proud of his girls today who all played their best and came together as a team to defeat Ravens 4-1 in the first game of the round robin semi finals.

FRAN boosted the team confidence after scoring the first goal early in the first half. Both teams fought hard with "ALYCE

Everywhere" injured early and in the blood bin for 10 minutes. She came back on fire and was everywhere all over the field.

MARIE, STEPH and LARISSA set up a great defence wall that Ravens had trouble penetrating and their frustration was beginning to show. Our team stepped up another gear, with great passing from the mids, DANICA, MEL, ASHLEY, KELLY, LAURA and LAUREN to the forwards resulting in another goal to FRAN and two for HAYLEY, one of which a header over the goalie's head and into the net.

HAYLEY missed a sitter penalty goal right in front of the nets (Mark said I must mention!) and then tried to redeem herself by stealing the ball from the goalie and scoring a goal which was disallowed!

In the 30th minute of the second half, following some narrowly missed corners and after much frustration Ravens finally scored. The girls were determined it wasn't going to happen again with CLAIRE putting her body on the line in the final seconds of the game to deflect the Raven's final chance at goal. Great save.

Final score 4-1.

Special mention goes to our linesman on the day, well done!

ALL AGE/7

THORNLEIGH 1 vs EPPING EASTWOOD 1

We like to do things the hard way. That way when you achieve what you want it feels all the more better. At least, that is what we're telling ourselves after our first semi final ended up a draw. In a match we really should have won against a team that had not looked like a top four contender all season we had possibly one of our least impressive performances of the year. To call it massively disappointing would be a mild understatement. The match ebbed and flowed through out the 90 minutes. We gained the ascendancy after 15 of those said minutes when ANDY BOUGHTON produced a stunning run down the flank to pass the ball on to TIM MORISON who banked the shot in off the far post to give us the lead. Timi-Goal looked odds on to increase our lead just minutes later but his shot was an agonising inch to the wrong side of the post. The play continued on back and forth. Our opponents getting their reward five minutes before the half. We had finally paid the price for our sloppy marking. The second half carried on much like the first. We continued to press but our poor marking and absent at times midfield kept putting us under pressure. Keeper MARK DENNIS produced a fine close-range save to keep us in the game while Timi-Goal had another late chance to seal the deal fall just wide. While we were definitely creating more chances than the other guys we just couldn't get that vital, deciding goal. A draw was not what we went to Tuckwell Park for but we're still in the hunt for that grand final berth. Some said fitness was an issue. If we had kept our shape, and gotten to those 50/50 balls first we would have done much less running around. It was these things and not fitness that was the issue. We looked better in attack but the overall cohesion that we needed to dominate just wasn't there. If you've seen our cohesion please let us know, I've been putting up flyers around the neighbourhood. JAMES RODGER, BENTON JOHNSON and GREG RUSTON were all solid in defence as usual and provided the backbone of the team once again. DAVID POWER proved his abilities once more in defence and attack. BRAD RUSTON and MARK KENNEDY played their guts out, literally for Brad, for little reward while MURRAY GRAVES put in a superb captain's knock putting his body on the line and once again coming out on top. Winded, but better than the other guy. So we're now left with a must win

proposition for the second semi final. Shape, shape, shape is the key. It's got to come from the back with the defence moving up and from there the team can move forward and back as one. Do that and we're golden. Also quick balls on the ground, some tighter marking and challenges to win the ball every time. Basically do everything that we didn't do this weekend and we're on our way to the grand final. I mean, we played like poop and we ground out a draw. Imagine what we can do when we play well! I know it's there. We've seen it before. Let's see it again.

ALL AGE/10 WOMEN

THORNLEIGH 0 vs NORMANHURST 1

We were hoping to keep our pennant hopes alive this match by winning against NORMANHURST but they come out on the field overall faster and with better ball skills than our last 2 games with them. We had many attempts at goals but just missing the critical hits of the ball to the back of the net. JO T had an awesome kick but unfortunately it went just over the goal post, it would of been a great goal. Attempts come almost from everyone in the mids and forwards (AMANDA, ANG, ANGELA, JIN, JOANNE and KAREN). With only 1 sub in the second half we saw JIN taken off the field after falling and injuring her ankle. On the backline LISA, ALICIA and FRANCES held NORMANHURST the best they could but NORMANHURST balls skills and speed took us by surprise 15 minutes in the second half they scored. We kept fighting on but unfortunately it wasn't meant to be. Next week we have many players down, so lets play for the fun of it.

ALL AGE/ 18

THORNLEIGH 3 vs WEST RYDE EAGLES 1

1st Championship semi final

This was a great win by our team against an Eagles team determined to avenge last week's big loss. We knew that the opposition would be throwing everything at us and would be playing as rough and hard as they could get away with in a bid to unsettle our players. We spoke at training about the tactics that Eagles would employ in this game and we were ready for them. The game started off as a semi final should with both teams tearing into each other and trying to find a weakness in the opposition's defence. The first 20 minutes were fairly even with both teams trying to take their chances when a nice move through the mid field saw a long ball from TERRY for MARC who streaked to the ball and past his marker and running wide pushed the ball, across the park for an unmarked NICK to slot it home. This was a really well worked goal and the boys started to grow in confidence as we continually put the Eagles under pressure.

Not long before half time the Eagles were awarded a free kick and a really nice taken shot slipped past our wall and went into the corner of the net. We came in at half time at one all but very confident that we could run the Eagles off the park in the second half. We talked about the rough house play that the opposition was trying to use to unsettle us but the referee was doing a really good job keeping the lid on both teams' emotions and we would leave the running of the game to him.

We came out and started to run the opposition around the park probing for a weakness and it was not too long before we were

on the score board as we again went wide and DAVE put in a nice cross onto NICK who pushed it onto ROLY who belted it home.

Our defensive team set up the day as they would not let the opposition into any position to score all game and they all had great games.

The Eagles heads were dropping but their venom in tackles was increasing and the referee had his hands full but a few quick penalties against them and the momentum swung back our way. Our final goal was a gem as ROLY skipped through several players and pushed through a long ball for a rampaging KIWI to latch onto and finish off for a fine goal. With the result sealed the Eagles got desperate and started to attack the man and with only a few minutes left on the clock an Eagles player took out MARC with a scything tackle that was no where near the ball and received an instant red card but he had done his job as MARC had to be taken from the field and has a cracked wrist and may not play again this year.

Our team today was defensive team PETE in goals, backs were LIAM, TOM, MATT, DHESH and CHRIS; while in the mid field we had KENNY, ANDY, NICK, TERRY, DAVE and KIWI and up front we had MARC and ROLY.

Well played boys - we are one game closer to a Championship final.

OVER 35/2

THORNLEIGH 1 vs GLADESVILLE SHARKS 0

THORNLEIGH LEGENDS TAKE MAJOR STEP TOWARDS A SPOT IN THIS YEAR'S FINAL

My family asked me on Saturday morning how many games we have left this season. I replied "two" and then after a short pause added "plus the final". The unanimous response from my always supportive family to this latter utterance was laughter. That was on Saturday morning before this week's match!

The Thornleigh Legends (aka Over 35/2's) confounded the experts this week-end by bouncing back from last week's 6-0 loss to upset this year's premiers by clinching a hard fought victory despite a number of our key players missing through injury. A place in this year's final can now be assured by a draw in next week's match against North Ryde.

I encourage all our loyal readers to grab a pen and participate in the week's "Spot the Cliché" competition as this week's inspirational performance demands that this week's report be full of dramatic, grossly over-used football clichés. To encourage your participation, we will be giving away prizes to those people that can spot the most clichés. First prize is a free copy of the 2009 edition of the Over 35 "Men of Thunder" nude calendar. Second prize will be – wait for it - two copies of the 2009 edition of the Over 35 "Men of Thunder" nude calendar. There will be no prizes for those people that can guess what third prize will be! Please address your entries to Thornleigh Legends Cliché Competition, PO Box 1000, Thornleigh, 2120. All entries must include \$34.95 to cover postage and handling in case you are one of the lucky winners.

We always knew that this was going to be a big game for us and our whole season hinged on the result of this game. In fact, this was the game that we had been working towards all

year. Like many such matches, this was a game of two halves – we ran one way in the first half and the other way in the second half. Meanwhile our opponents did the complete opposite. Master coach ROSS GALLAHER showed that he is an old head on, well, an old body but he still has the ability to pull the rights strings at the right time to get the desired result. His decision this week to inject an extra defender was the key to our success as it allowed us to frustrate the dangerous Sharks attack. (As a point of clarity, the extra defender was made possible by sacrificing one of our forwards rather than sneaking twelve players onto the field although this is a strategy that may be worthy of future consideration). All players put in 110% and lifted to the occasion and midway through the first half we were rewarded with a well taken goal by BRENDON ROSE after a great through ball by STEVE THOMPSON. We continued to shut down the Sharks players who got increasingly frustrated with us, each other, the referee, the spectators, the canteen lady and the lady walking her dog on the other side of the Morrison Bay canal. At one stage it seemed that there were twelve referees – one dressed in black and eleven dressed in Sharks outfits. Eventually the real referee decided that there were too many referees and dismissed two of the Sharks players in the latter stages of the game. Eventually the full-time whistle blew and there were hugs all round for the Thornleigh players. Mind you, pre-match, mid-match and post-match hugs are an important part of our teams bonding process. In fact, a recent independent survey of our players showed that 50% of our players say that they play for our team so they can share a few beers after the game whilst the other 50% of our players say that they play for our team so they can share a shower after the game. Anyway, as they say, what happens in the dressing sheds, stays in the dressing sheds.

We urge all our loyal supporters to get to Oakleigh Oval early next week for our final home game of the season against North Ryde at 9.00am. It is sure to be a memorable occasion, if only to witness our team out of bed at such an ungodly time of day.



PA to Mr X