

## Canterbury Friars 4 TW Grasshoppers 2.

At last Grasshoppers had a game, after 5 lost to snow and ice. The rust showed for the first 10 minutes but then the team settled down to a better shape and by half time were good value for their 2-0 lead, and unlucky (but unworried) not to be leading by 3-0. Mitchell, Burton, Jago and Holmes were setting up moves from midfield, while Hastings and Holloway mopped up behind them. From their first penalty corner Burton hit the ball wide of the post where Jago deflected it into the goal, but had it disallowed for going above the backboard. At the next penalty corner Mitchell received and shot through the full back on the near post. The score went to 2-0 as Mitchell put Ghosley through on the goalkeeper.

Besides other first half opportunities Grasshoppers went close through both Ghosley and Ivory early in the second half, but from there on Canterbury gradually came back into the match, eventually forcing their way through the middle and putting the ball wide of Crawford. Time passed and Canterbury's dominance grew and they drew level as Grasshoppers conceded a second through muddled defence. The momentum was clearly with Canterbury and they scored a third from a penalty corner deflecting the shot between the defenders on the line. There was time for Grasshoppers to pull it back to 3-3, but instead Canterbury scored a fourth in the final minute.

Grasshoppers were left feeling 4-2 was harsh, and to wonder whether they conceded the initiative by playing too deep, or were forced deep by failing to maintain their shape and losing their accuracy when passing – questions soon forgotten in the bar afterwards, but perhaps worth pondering before the return on January 8<sup>th</sup> at the Nevill.