

## Tunbridge Wells Ladies I 2 Folkestone I 2

It's turning out to be a season of draws for Tunbridge Wells Ladies' first team after sharing the points again on Saturday. They travelled to Folkestone to play them for a second time and having won the first home leg, Wells were quietly confident that they could make it two wins out of two.

And they started well with a strong team and a positive attitude.

Charlie Bowman, playing once more in the middle of the park, was for the second week running voted player of the match, scoring both goals for Wells - one from a short corner and one a very well taken open-play goal.

And Wells were in control of the game for almost all of the game, not playing in top gear but certainly putting on a good enough performance to deservedly be 2 nil up.

However, a lack of concentration in the last 10 minutes led to Folkestone getting themselves back into the game with two good goals.

And a last-ditch short corner strike from Jen Hunt couldn't win the game for Wells when the keeper, knowing little about it, saved with her head.

A very disappointed Tunbridge Wells will rue the missed chance of all three points but go into tomorrow's game at home determined to come out on top.

## Tunbridge Wells Ladies VI 3 Dartford III 1

Tunbridge Wells sixth eleven in their inaugural season faced Dartford at home. Wells dominated from the beginning and were caught unawares going a goal down against the run of play deep into the first half. However, Wells responded confidently and equalised with a well struck short corner from Olivia Harbig in her first senior game for the club.

Wells built on their performance in the second half but found the Dartford defence difficult to break down. Success came from a second short corner from Harbig and a well struck shot from Ellie Sands who has notched up 5 goals for the club so far this season. Lily Loveland another new recruit to the club, Chloe Jones and Niahm Blackburn also put in solid performances. A well earned victory.

## Tunbridge Wells Grasshoppers 1 Tunbridge Wells Vets 2 2

It was a blustery, humid Saturday afternoon when some of the Grasshoppers took to the hallowed turf, at the Nevill, to pit themselves against their brother Tunbridge Wells team, Vets 2.

I say some of the Grasshoppers took to the pitch as Cackett and Bannerman were still in the changing room wondering where the rest of the team was!

The game started slowly, Vets 2 obviously wary of the ignominy of defeat at the hands of a team on average 10 years older.

However first blood was to Vets 2 when Crosbie's cross scored a very lucky goal off Hastings' foot (at least it was not Jenkins' ear, so no war broke out). Their celebrations had to be broken up by the umpire. To add to our woes a second goal, a crisp cleanly struck shot, no foot this time. 2-0 to Vets 2, and had they placed other well constructed chances on target it might have been more.

Then to add to our misery a perfectly legal goal, to us, chalked off for some minor infringement, a foot again, how come it helps the opposition and not us? Apparently Noel Page has an optician's appointment this week (sponsored by us Grasshoppers) to reduce the focal distance of his spectacles.

And so to the second half where Barker started to show his pace and control, leaving defenders trailing in his wake. If only he had got on the end of a couple of crosses.

Then a brilliant goal from Ghosley deflecting a cross past Digweed, 2-1, and the same approach nearly worked twice more, but Digweed reacted well to make saves.

The defence, marshalled by Athey, easily kept out all the Vets 2s could throw at us in the second half. So, first half to them, second to us but we lost, nobly and with dignity - and outlasted them in the bar and the curry house afterwards.

### Tunbridge Wells Mens Vets 2 2 TW Grasshoppers 1

In the week that the Dorset coastline yielded a massive Pliosour, the Nevill saw its own Jurassic encounter with the Vets 2s visiting the Grasshoppers.

Roll-ins, hand-stops and "turning" were all things of the past though as these veteran Saurarses adapted to the latest rule changes better than Club members a 1/3<sup>rd</sup> their age.

On a beautiful day, with the pitch just taking a stud, and although fielding only 10 men, the Vets 2s were soon swaggering past the Hoppers on *their surface* and were 0-2 up after 12 minutes. Indeed they squandered many more chances in the same period.

However, the Hopper captain soon plugged the gap with a canny substitution - giving the Vets an 11th man in the shape of Hugh Dyson-Laurie. For, despite Hugh having a solid game throughout, the extra man seemed to unhinge the Vets balance. The unhinged became bracketed in their own half, with fewer and fewer forays past a solid Hopper defence – but which, in turn, could not get the ball to their lightning (sic) attackers. The game became mired in midfield.

Familiarity breeds contempt it is said, but here were 2 teams steeped in mutual respect – none of the imprecations to “watch number 134” or “Martin you burke, I said your man is Number 96; mine is 69”; no it was, “Get Landolt before he gets his retribution in first”. “I’ve got Harrison covered” and “Give it to Knight” (to which all Hoppers seemed to subscribe).

The air seemed as thin as the Himalayas – or at least the vast gulps of breath taken at half time would seem to suggest.

The Vets 2s have a proud reputation of winning ways against the Hoppers, but the 2<sup>nd</sup> half was but new born when the Hoppers scored. 1-2. They then had to sustain a period of real pressure as the Vets piled forward. A series of penalty corners remained unconverted though and the Hoppers saw the game out despite some umpiring changes that are bound to feature in some distant episode of “You’ve been framed”.

Unkind voices in the clubhouse after the match were heard to say that they had feared for the health of one poor chap whose febrile sweaty appearance they assumed augured ill – they should get out more; such is the rude health of your Wells Vet

### Tunbridge Wells Boys U18 4 Tulse Hill 3

On an atrociously rainy morning for any outdoor sport other than swimming, both teams managed to play some very good hockey. The conditions challenged technical skills and tactical judgement - and the ability to sustain better levels of concentration is where TW won the game.

They did not have it all their own way as first a 1-0 lead was pulled back and then a 2-1 advantage. TW working hard for each goal, with sensible build ups which probed the defence, switching the lines of attack into a well handled opposition defence.

The equalising goals were annoying as both came from temporary if costly lapses of focus - typically soon after the lead was taken: first by an excellent reverse bullet from Mitch Hawksbee and then an instinctive off drive from Paddy Fyson!

No respite from the weather at half time and going in at 2-2, gave little time to regroup, but it clearly worked; even though the solid Gareth Coombes could not come out for the 2nd half after a massive knee knock, Fyson became a real controlling force in midfield, and dealt with the opposition challenge with some swagger. He was repaid with another goal shortly into the half and yet another superb assist from Chris Pelmore gave Ben Lang just reward for great skills on the left.

The game became played out too narrowly, with Ben Fowler on the right and Ben Brandt up front starved to make much impression – which was a pity as they threatened when with the ball.

4-2 up, with 20 minutes to go, but down to 10 men on the pitch should have led the team to conserve possession and territory, but their collective exuberance over extended them on more than the one occasion that the opposition managed to score in that time. 4-3. Brandon Begg in goal kept the lead, as well as some timely tackles from Pelmore, Sam Hart and Tom Holme in a half that saw the team not just down to 10 on the field, but suffering with injuries to Chris Pelham and Hawsbee who both soldiered on.

A good result in very challenging conditions.