

### Tunbridge Wells Mens I 7 Blackheath II 1

Wells continued their pursuit of promotion with another goal-fest. Scoring within minutes of the start Wells continued to press forward. Sam Clark-Knowles and Paddy Fyson scored a brace each and David Hemsley, the midfield maestro grabbed himself a hat-trick.

### Tunbridge Wells Mens III 5 Wellcome I 2

Following 2 wins on the bounce TWHC mens 3rd XI hosted Wellcome 1st XI looking to reverse the result against them away from home (lost 2-4).

Starting well TWHC were soon into their stride putting the Wellcome defence under pressure resulting with Duncan Fiskin putting Wells ahead. Playing a long ball game to Fiskin seemed to be the best route for Wells and they put some great balls through from their defence and deep midfield with Hynes running off Fiskin to cause havoc in the Wellcome D. The result was Hynes scoring to make it 2 nil at half time.

Despite the lead, skipper Page warned of the potential for complacency and Wells came out in the second half to score twice in quick succession (through Smith and Fiskin) to make it 4-0. Then the complacency set in. Wellcome got their tails up and a bad 10 minutes for Wells ensued resulting in Wellcome scoring twice and there was a feeling that not only Arsenal were going to grab a draw from the jaws of victory. With 5 minutes to go Wells played some of their best hockey with Page, Fiskin and Hynes linking up again to score their 5th.

Next up for Wells is a local derby with Sutton Valance.

### Tunbridge Wells Mens IV 7 Herne Bay IV 1

The Monarchs completed their 7th successive victory against a surprisingly poor Herne Bay. Dominating play from the start, and creating chances all day through their enterprising play down the right, it soon became a matter of how many goals TW would score and also Jack Mauduit. In the end the first 5 went to Mauduit, with Nyren and Bailey adding two late goals.

Andy Elley continued his fine form at right wing consistently beating his man. Sam Spence at right back also played his best game to date providing overlaps and sound passing.

TW Monarchs remain top equal in their league with a game in hand

### Tunbridge Wells Monarchs 7 Vs Herne Bay 1

Tunbridge Wells Monarchs travelled to a windswept Herne Bay. From the start took control of the game with Saeed Malik advancing up to left to pass across to Jack Mauduit in scored the opener with a clean strike. Mauduit added two further goals before half time. At the break, the talk was not a concede a goal and allow Herne Bay back into the game.

However on the resumption, Bay were able to get one back. Undeterred, Wells put themselves back in shape and began their total hockey - quick passing which has now become a signature of their games. Midas touch - Mauduit continued to score taking his tally to 5 goals. Late goals from Nyren - acute angle and Bailey - power shot - sealed the fine victory. An impressive game for Wells with the home side commenting after the game that they had never seen a side pass so well.

*If you read no other!!!*

### TW GRASSHOPPERS 3 PURLEY 0

A lovely day in early February, as we drove to the Nevill I remarked to my friend that we had never seen such beauty in the countryside since we had last driven to a hockey match together.

There was no response from said friend, I had assumed that he had relapsed into his normal comatose condition, but then realised that I had forgotten to collect him! And so I retraced my steps, if that is what you do in a motor vehicle, and arrived at his door only to be told by the House of Commons Speakers wife, dressed only in a thin sheet, (or was it a thin sheep?) that he had pulled a fetlock and could not come out to play. And so back into the vehicle with only the rather gorgeous sat. nav. lady to chat to. Having convinced her that I did not want to go to Honey Pot Lane, in Chelmsford, although the allure of Martin waiting was hard to resist, I arrived at the Nevill, our spiritual home, only to find the car park full. What to do? Go home and walk in? Go to Honey Pot Lane and seek guidance from Chelmsford? Or just torch the car

and claim on the insurance? This seemed the most logical solution and that is what I did. Still waiting for the insurers to pay, and it's been almost a day.

Oh , the game.A lovely day in early February( give me a break Grounday Hog Day has only just passed- incidentally I have a great recipe for baked ground hog with junipers and celeriac).

Purley showed up with only 8 Players, and 3 Woodbines. I guess they thought that that would make a pack, but we were playing hockey and not rugby.

And so we kindly gave them our 3 oldest players( or Silk Cuts) to bolster their young team, Robinson( soisante neuf as he is known), Fitz( croissante neuf) and our Master of Fun( although that is open to debate).

The donning of the Purley pink kit sent an almost electric thrill through the three of them, we could see them stiffen from the task in hand.

As always the game started and Purley had all the pressure. The attempts at attack by Grasshoppers were suffed out by the Purley defence, it seemed like men against boys, in a purley( Purley anag.) way, and then , following a short corner when a misguided shot from Grasshoppers , fell to Ivory on the left, his misguided shot was attended to by Morson who rammed it home.

Purley were not purley( anag) there to make up the numbers and pressed the home teams goal, but their forwards could just not convert and Crawford in the Grasshoppers goal had little to do, the way he likes it.

We turned round at 1-0, and more pressure came from Uyrpel( anag) but to no avail, from a short corner Revell rammed the ball home 2-0.

And then at the end Poulton controlled a ricochet from the pads of the Purley( anag) goalie and struck the ball into the goal through the legs of the rather inept Uyperl( anag) right back.

So 3-0 Hoppers, a great win and only slightly marred by the fact that one of our team, who will remain anonymous ( **JULIAN HASTINGS**) received a green card. We should not dwell on this but it must be noted that this is the first card that any Grasshopper has ever received and in fact the first card ever given in a game involving the Grasshoppers.

We must not dwell on this as we can all feel the pain and shame that our anonymous player ( **JULIAN HASTINGS**) must feel. Our thoughts are with his family and loved ones at this time.

The disciplinary committee may be lenient as we understand that a Yurple( anag) player is going to act as Counsel for him on a no fee no win basis.

Tea was taken, and a few beverages and then we all retired to lick our wounds and presumably for **JULIAN** to prepare his defence.

This is the alternate version

### **GRASSHOPPERS 3    PURLEY 0**

Purley had only 8 Purleyers, suffering like Grasshoppers from injuries but more severely, so we kindly gave them our 3 oldest players to bolster their young team, Robinson (soon to enter his eighth decade), Fitzwater (at least two months his junior) and Banterman, our Master of Fun, who all played well showing absolutely no difficulty passing to pink and grey shirts instead of the red and white of Tunbridge Wells.

As always the game started and Purley had all the pressure. The early attempts at attack by Grasshoppers were snuffed out by the Purley defence; it seemed like men against boys - all according to their guest players. As the game settled down and the hockey improved, a misplaced short corner shot from Grasshoppers fell to

Ivory on the left, and his shot was attended to by Morson who rammed it home (after it had beaten the defenders) from possibly several millimetres out - the shot travelling nearly as far as the backboard.

Purley were not purely there to make up the numbers and pressed the home team's goal, but their forwards could just not convert and Crawford in the Grasshoppers goal had little to do; exactly the way he likes it - although he did see fit to inform the umpires at half time that cards are not even used as a threat in our games, let alone actually brandished. Something about a threat to his Holmes.

We turned round at 1-0, and both sides started the second half better than the first – perhaps courtesy of the pearls of wisdom dispensed at half time. Nevertheless Grasshoppers seemed in control, and this was reinforced at a short corner when Revell rammed the ball home: 2-0.

Grasshoppers tenth victory of the season was guaranteed when Poulton controlled a ricochet from the pads of the Purley goalie - who made several excellent saves - and struck the ball into the goal through the legs of the Purley defender on the line.

So 3-0 Hoppers, a great win and only slightly marred by the fact that one of our team received a green card. He must remain anonymous to protect the guilty, but he has a railway terminus named after him on the south coast which can be reached from Tonbridge. We should not dwell on this but it must be noted that this is the first card that any Grasshopper has ever received and in fact the first card ever given in a game involving the Grasshoppers. This enormity was overtaken by a visitor also being carded and missing the final minutes of the match. Whose fault was all this mayhem? The Grasshoppers captain for lending his previously unbrandished umpiring cards? Purley for bringing an umpire who knew the rules? The players for not purely playing hockey, but resorting to axe-wielding tackles, and even professional use of the back of the stick when the attacker otherwise only had the goalkeeper to beat (not that he had previously succeeded in this endeavour at the time)? Or Crawford for his Fabregas-like rant at half time – and will Grasshoppers therefore suffer ridiculous penalties in the games to come – or will a plague be visited upon Hastings?

#### Tunbridge Wells Vets 4 Lewes 13

Programming went into overload at the week-end as Wells Vets attempted to prevent the lights going out. However, like a trying to put your finger in a crack in the dam, the overwhelming pressure burst the flimsy retaining defensive wall allowing the Lewes forwards to flood through at will.

By the time half the waters had dispersed, the lights were burning 7 times brighter in Lewes than in Tunbridge Wells who had failed to locate a single switch. 0 – 7 at this stage represented something of a recovery, since 5 in the opening 10 minutes sealed the result, and enabled a Lewes defence man to swap with a forward and allow some enlightenment into the forward art.

Wells actually tried the same, and in some way, this proved successful, as the second half was only lost 4 – 6, Shearer notching 3 including a Pele'esque dummy on the Lewes keeper.

Wells defensive hammer, Steve Akery, switched to the forward line as described, and adopting a lighter stick due to a belief that the pussies in the forwards didn't need to hit the ball hard, also slipped a goal passed the bemused keeper; Mitchell watching in admiration at the far post. Yellowing archives show that Steve's last Wells goal was scored on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2001. We look forward to his next scoring event in February 2021!

It is envisaged that future games may adopt similar tactics, thereby enabling some of the defensive types who voice the occasional loud opinion to venture over the half way line on a more permanent basis, providing of course that Captain Goodwin keeps a regular check on their blood pressure.

#### Tunbridge Wells Ladies 1 2 Broxbourne 1 1

Wells travelled to higher placed Broxbourne and came away with a win that gives a glimmer of hope that they might yet avoid relegation.

Starting at a high tempo, Wells forced the opposition back into their half. From a break away, Wells were caught sleeping and a scramble in the circle saw the ball lifted over the keeper for a soft opening score. The visitors took the game straight back to Broxbourne, some lightning fast counter attacks from Turner and Hunt leading to several short corners, the second of which was despatched into the bottom corner by Hunt. Back in the game, Wells confidence was visibly improved and Broxbourne struggled to keep up with the pace and movement of the Wells midfield. Another break from midfield saw Tyburski drive to the circle before finding Turner on the far post for a close range tap in.

The second half saw Wells tire due to a lack of substitutes, while the hosts rotated heavily to try and run Wells into the ground. However, the Wells defence took a tight grip on the game, retaining possession and giving their teammates time to recover before launching a further barrage of counter attacks. While Wells should have scored at least once more to seal the win, it was far more important that the hosts had to wait 30 minutes for their first shot on goal in the second half. Controlling games will be the key to Wells chances of survival and if current form is anything to go by, there's a small chance that the next few weeks could see some very interesting results.

### Tunbridge Wells IV 2 New Beccs III 2

What a scary emotional match!

Playing at 4.30pm away against the tied 2nd place team, Wells 4ths were under a load of pressure before the game even started - not least with 4 of their players having played a game earlier on in the day!

Under the floodlights, Sarai Howkins scored the first goal after a scramble in the goal face with the captain ending up lying prostrate on the floor using her stick to flick the ball in. The goal boosted the team and helped to settle their nerves. Niamh Blackburn came back with the second goal after persevering against backs twice the size of her. Just before half time new becs scored their first goal.

The second half was full of drama with goals saved on the line by the Wells defence who were under constant pressure. Megan Grist (goalie) saved one goal when she was one on one with a forward bearing down on her. By the end of the game exhausted legs were desperately trying to keep the score and the defence played like super humans as they fought off New Beccs. Just before the whistle blew, New Beccs finally broke through and evened the score.

This was a well fought game – the scariest we have ever played. The whole team played out of their socks and I am very proud to be their captain.

### Tunbridge Wells Ladies V 3 Anchorians III 1

Wells played with four juniors new to adult hockey and three other “old hands” junior wise. So the team had a lot of new faces to learn to play with and didn't they do well. Tracey Boorman at centre mid was a steadying influence. She needed encouragement to make her familiar attacks, but she did so to devastating effect. Racing into the circle on the right she cracked the ball past the keeper.

Anchs hit back causing Chris Poth to make several outstanding saves and only a misunderstanding in defence enabled her to be beaten.

The new juniors had taken to adult hockey admirably. Georgie Moore and Verity Game sharing duties on the right wing both made surging forward runs. Ruby Farrant at left mid contended well with her much larger opponent to feed passes to the ever active Uschi Moore.

From the second half push off Wells nearly went into the lead. Boorman ran half the length of the pitch, carving through the defence right into the circle.

Minutes later Wells did indeed take the lead with what might even be described as a short corner routine. Having blasted the previous short to the extent that the defender had to be removed from the fray, Denise Holme controlled the ball, moved it onto Boorman on her right who immediately passed left to Claudia Lynam. She drove the ball into the goal to score on debut. This was the culmination of an excellent start for her at right wing. During the game she had skill on the ball, a good hit and an awareness of where to be.

Anchs appeared flustered by the goal and minutes later Game raced into the circle to claim her debut goal, too.

Before the end Poth was called upon to pluck a lifted shot out of the air with her stick, but generally Krisna Shah, Alex Hadaway and Katy Fraser kept the ball away from the goal.

#### Tunbridge Wells Mixed 1, Slough 5

Tunbridge Wells mixed met Slough mixed at Hawkenbury in the first round of the England Hockey Mixed cup competition. Previous finalists Slough started the game strongly causing the Wells defence some trouble leading to a rash tackle in the Wells D and a penalty corner given. The Slough corner was slick with a drag flick going in at the left post. The Slough team kept up the pressure on the Wells defence with the home side finding it difficult to get any ball retention. 20 minutes in and Slough scored a second and it looked like they might run away with the game. Wells showed great spirit to stay with the pace of the game and started to put some excellent moves together, with five minutes left on the clock until half time Wells started a move from the middle of the park ending up with Murdoch finishing from 5 metres out to make it Slough 2-1 up at half time.

With the Wells side chasing the game in the second half Slough took advantage of the space behind the Wells defence which lead to several penalty corners and a couple of goals against the weight of possession. Through out the Wells team, despite the opposition having experience in higher leagues, Wells applied themselves well with Organ, Downes and Tybursky holding their own and the Clarke-Knowles brothers demonstrating why they are mainstays of the Wells mens's 1st XI. Unfortunately despite some great keeping from Rimmer he could not keep out Slough for their 5 of the game and a place in the second round. Wells go on to a place in the plate competition which offers an opportunity to make the finals weekend as they did a few years ago.