

Tunbridge Wells Monarchs 2 Kings Alleyns IV 2

In a thoroughly competitive 70 minutes of end to end hockey which both sides had chances of winning TW Monarchs edged closer to the Kent Open Div 2 Championship with this 2-2 draw against joint leaders Kings Alleyn.

Kings Alleyn started the brighter as their formation took time to be assimilated by TW, often leaving a man free to run with the ball. One such attack saw Sam Spence sent off for a back of stick foul which otherwise would have left a clear shot at goal. A short corner soon followed and a sweet strike hit the back board to leave TW deservedly one down.

The first half continued in much the same vein with TW playing too deep and running out of outlets. James Burley however was creating chances from skillful play down the right, and a couple of chances flew across the Kings Alleyn goal.

Half time, a chance to regroup and focus on the game in hand. The second half saw TW gain parity, with a high forward Nyren or Elley causing problems. Consistent umpiring saw a Kings Alleyn player sent off for deliberate overhead use of his stick, and TW struck twice while he was off.

The first a sensational dribble and reverse stick shot that crashed into the corner of the goal from Burley, and the second soon after from Nyren's open stick.

Needing a win Kings Alleyn pressed forward, and often had a man free as TW failed to find the right formation. Despite this Taylor and Heritage controlled their areas of the pitch well, while Jenner and Holme made several good tackles.

Short corners were being won, but not being finished by Kings Alleyn. Suddenly Bailey, who had worked prodigiously all game found himself free in the circle but failed to win the Championship there and then by firing wide.

Hale made an outstanding 6 saves from one short corner, and just as it looked like TW would weather the storm an equaliser was scored.

TW were now on the back foot but held out as Malik and Grogan closed down the midfield.

TW's game in hand is this Saturday, home against Folkestone where anything but a defeat would clinch the title.

CHEAM 5 TUNBRIDGE WELLS GRASSHOPPERS 3

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It was a subdued 'Hoppers team who wended their way to the picturesque "village" of Cheam, situated in the County of Surrey.

Our condition was due to having our annual dinner, at The George, in Frant, the night before this match. We wassailed the evening away, good food, good wine, good company and 'our song' performed by the semi unique Steve "the harmonica" Evans.

All thought of the game disappeared amongst the jollity, it was only the cold light of dawn that brought us back to our senses and made us remember our responsibilities.

For those who are interested the menu was as follows:

STARTERS:

- 1) Homemade mackerel pate and mango salsa with crusty bread.
- 2) Crispy duck, red onion, watercress and orange salad served with a citrus dressing.
- 3) Roast vegetable and feta filo parcels with rocket salad and basil pesto.

MAINS:

- 4) Steak and kidney pie in red wine gravy with mash and light pouf pastry lid.
- 5) Herb and Parmesan crusted salmon fillet with crushed new potatoes, roasted cherry tomatoes and pesto cream sauce.

- 6) Baked portabella mushroom topped with caramelised red onion, spinach and goats cheese served with a fresh tomato coulis.
- 7) Chicken roulade filled with spinach and sun blushed tomatoes on a pesto mash served with a mushroom sauce.

PUDDINGS:

- 8) Warm chocolate fudge brownie with vanilla ice cream.
- 9) Raspberry and vanilla cheese cake with a red berry coulis.
- 10) Banoffee pie topped with fresh whipped cream, flaked almonds and chocolate shavings.
- 11) Hot pear tarte tatin with ginger ice cream.
- 12) Cheese and biscuits.

Now, there were many of us there, not just us ' Hoppers but our loved ones too. Although, in some cases, a 'Hopper happened to also be a loved one. Therefore it seems appropriate to list the attendees and what they ate. So here we go, apologies to those who didn't get what they deserved or wanted I just go from my notes.

In no particular order, no preferences or favouritism involved , maybe just alphabetical. Choices are numbered so you will have to refer back for the detail.

Zebedeee: Failed to show.

Bannerman. G. 2, 4, 11.

Bannerman. A. 2,5, 9.

Evans. 2, 5(though he wanted 4) , 10.

Athey. M. 1, 7, 9.

Athey. P. 3, 6, 9.

Holloway. 2, 5, 8.

Morson. R. 2, 4, 11.

Morson. A. 3, 7, 11.

The Reverend Ell. 1, 4, 10.

Mrs. Rev. Ell. 3, 5, 9.

Pelmore. A. Missed Starter, 5, 10.

Pelmore . P. Also a late starter, 5, 11.

Stebbing. C. 1, 4, 8.

Stebbing. M. 1, 5, 11.

Cackett. A. 1, 7, 11.

Cackett. S. 2, 6, 11.

Ghostley. N. 2, 4, 11.

Ghostley(or his main squeeze) J. 2, 4, 10.

Burton. 2, 4, 9.

Poulton. 1, 4, 10.

Fitzwater. R. 2, 4, 9.

Fitzwater. S. 2, 5, 11.

Ivory. 2, 5, 11.

Crawford. 2, 7, 11.

Mills. 1, 4, 8.

Lancaster. 2, 4, 10.

Helmsley. R. 1, 4,9.

Helmsley. S. 1, 5, 9.

Hastings. 2, 4, 8.

If any more detail required it is available.

Isn't the spring a wonderful time of the year? Driving through the burgeoning countryside, the daffodils waving their golden heads, the cherry blossom on the shores, the smell of regenerating life. This is what we

saw. Being a Grasshopper is a wonderful thing, as in the autumn we see decay and rot and now we see the coursing of new sap and vigour.

And so we arrived in charming Cheam as William Cobbett called it, making the usual jokes about playing at Nonsuch school " Wish I had gone there, I would have been on holiday all the time".

They were a rather younger team than ourselves, also large and slightly physical.

Did I mention the previous nights dinner? Anyway a slow start for us and we found ourselves at 2-0 down after about 20 minutes, but held out until half time with no further damage.

Then a resurgence, goals from Ivory and Ghostley made it 2-2, the defence and midfield held them back, but the another goal from Cheam, plus another from a short corner and another from open play while we were still arguing the toss(not the original toss, we had got over that) about a P flick we should have had.

But then a trade mark 2 inch tap in from Ivory made the final score 5-3.

Mention must be made of our goalie, Crawford, some great saves, the defence Revell, Stebbing, Fitzwater, Athey, midfield Holmes, Burton, Poulton, our goal scorers, Ivory(2) and Ghostley and second half sub Cackett returning after a serious fetlock injury.

Back to their club house for some hot chili and rice, boat race and home.

What a day, what a life how lucky we are to be Grasshoppers!!

Other Mens results: 1s won 2-1, 2s lost 2-1, 3s lost 8-5, O40s lost 5-4 aet in Kent Vets cup

Tunbridge Wells Ladies V 4 Meopham II 1

This was a rare friendly for the 5s. Meopham were short of players, but Sarai Howkins, captain of the 4s, offered to swap sides and played a good game.

Wells had put out a strong team and attacked from the outset. There should have been a hatful of goals, but poor finishing combined with excellent play from the Meopham defence and goalie, kept the score down. Wells had pace down both wings and they were fed a succession of balls by mids Tess McClelland and Tracey Boorman. Sarah McClelland opened the scoring and Becky Law grabbed two, one from an excellent run and shot.

After half-time the goalies swapped teams. Harriet Montgomery, having previously played only on the pitch for the Ladies, was making her senior goalie debut. For those hoping to notch up some end of season goals, this was going to be frustrating. At the start of the second half Law hit a great shot which appeared to be darting into the far right corner. However Montgomery flung out her left foot to deflect it out. This was to prove no fluke as Wells poured forward. Boorman had several excellent shots saved as she tried to show the forwards how to do it! Meanwhile, Meopham managed a breakaway to get on the score sheet as backs Krishna Shah and Daisy Loveland became auxillary mids.

Only once did Montgomery get beaten. Sarah Mc Clelland provided a super early cross from the right and it was hammered straight in by Denise Holme

Other Ladies results: 1s lost 4-0, 3s lost 1-0