

in touch

the e-zine - from Guildford Hockey Club

2012/13 Season

Issue 18

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This newsletter will also be published on the web-site

Boys U12 Crowned National Champions!!



Their success is rooted in a shared love for the sport and the dedication and hard work of many, many people. The squad would like to thank the Club, made up of volunteers who contribute their time, skills and energy to making Guildford 'a great place to play.'



GHC Grand Ball on Saturday 2nd November

We are holding a GRAND BALL on Saturday 2nd November to bring together past and current members of the Club for a night to catch up with old (or younger) friends and remember good times – and enjoy ourselves!

This will be a fine occasion for around 250 people with excellent food wine music and maybe even song!

The Ball will include:

- ✓ Champagne reception
- ✓ 4 Course meal
- ✓ Half a bottle of wine per person included
- ✓ Live Band
- ✓ Disco
- ✓ Brilliant guest speaker
- ✓ Dancing til late

Tickets will be sold initially as tables of ten at £550- so get a group of friends together...

Further details from [Dave Hall](#), [Ian Jennings](#) and [David Toplas](#).





The Club needs **YOU!**

We are fast approaching the AGM and need to hear from volunteers who can give something back by way of helping to run the Club - to make it better and more fun for everyone, as well as enjoying it!

There are a number of vacancies and no end of roles to suit all ages /experiences and interests. No experience is needed as full support and guidance is available.

Specific roles include:

- marketing and comms
 - social events oversight and organising
 - fund raising projects
 - kit sales
 - secretarial
 - pitches and fixtures
 - league administration
 - umpiring co-ordination
 - hockey events organisation
 - Mens section captain (sad)
 - development team projects
 - schools and broader community liaison
 - clubhouse manager
 - ClubFirst (chartermark standard for club)
- And the list goes on...

And more Senior roles for proven managers!

So think about it - and ponder even if you know someone (perhaps your parents, others that are recently retired or with a less demanding job that would like to find out more.

And if we can't find volunteers then we may have to fund raise to pay someone... And that makes quality hockey at a quality club more expensive...

Please contact [David Toplas](#), [Hamish Ferguson](#) or [Tom Carney](#) via the club website."

Club 300

March's 300 Club Prizes	£70	£46	£23
This month's winners	K Lockett	F Clift	Mrs S Pinks

April's 300 Club Prizes	£71	£48	£24
This month's winners	G Wylie	J Shaw	J Asdell

FIXTURES

All of the Guildford Hockey Club fixtures are available through the following links:

MEN

Team	Role	Name/E-mail	Telephone	League	Link to results, tables and fixtures
1st XI	Manager	Tony Hall	01483 768832	National West Conference	1st XI
	Coach	Ian Jennings	07802 886000		
2nd XI	Captain	Tim Darke		London League Div 1	2nd XI
3rd XI	Captain	Tom Pollard		London League Div 2	3rd XI
Shadows	Captain	Steve Morris	07788 784143	South League Surrey Div 3	Shadows XI
4th XI	Captain	Robert Leonard	07796 400450	Surrey Open Div 1	4th XI
Pilgrims	Captain	Mark Lenel		Wessex Masters Div 1	Men's Vets
Gondoliers	Captain	Andy Roberts	01483 271206	Wessex SuperVets	Men's SuperVets



www.englishockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=67

LADIES

Team	Captain/Email	Link to results, tables and fixtures
1st XI	Kate Hutchins	http://www.guildfordhockey.co.uk/ladies1.html
2nd XI	Tracey Henderson	http://www.guildfordhockey.co.uk/ladies2.html
3rd XI	Karen Faulkner	http://www.guildfordhockey.co.uk/ladies3.html
4th XI	Beth Fantastic	http://www.guildfordhockey.co.uk/ladies4.html
Fireflies	Clare Edgington	http://www.guildfordhockey.co.uk/fireflies.html

... also see The Surrey Hockey Association Ladies League www.surreyladieshockeyleague.co.uk

The latest 1st XI League Tables can also be reached via <http://www.southleague.org.uk>

MATCH REPORTS

Don't forget to send any match reports from the weekend to andymatfield@gmail.com by Tuesday evening.

Men's Section

No reports.

Ladies' Section

Ladies Season Summary

It was a mixed season for the ladies section this year. All teams worked hard and in true Guildford style gave it their all!

The ladies 1's fought hard this season however were sadly relegated on the last match of the season. It was a tough and tense match, the girls gave everything but unfortunately Havant pulled through and won 2-1.

The ladies 2's finished a safe 4th and had a good consistent season. New coach Kirsty settled in well, the team loved her and are looking forward to next season already!

The ladies 3's had a tough season however managed to avoid relegation by a number of points, well done girls!

The ladies 4's finished mid table and again had a good season.

The fireflies had a hard season which was mainly due to low numbers.

Colts' Section

Sunday 7 April

Under 10s in Mixed Tournament in Havant

Seventeen Under 10 boys and girls travelled to participate in Havant's annual mixed tournament. A good time was had by all and we learned just how much stamina under 10s have as they merrily played their way through 12 matches each, many of which were back-to-back.

Both teams won some and lost some, but we didn't bother looking too closely at the points table – left that to the all-boys teams who had a season's head-start on our mixed boys and girls collaborations that were set up for the day.

All girls and boys worked well together and as each match went, the children impressed us with how quickly they learned to play together as teams, not having played in today's combination before.



A fabulous day out, also to have so many parent coaches attending and helping which meant for seventeen children we had 6 coaches (who did seem to be saying the same things to them!!).

Thanks to Sean, Maggs, James R, Charlie A, Will E, and Barney L.

Sunday 24th March

England Hockey National In2Hockey Club Championships Surrey Heats

Sunday 24 March 2013 at Surbiton Hockey Club

The 'business end' of the season has arrived and Guildford entered three teams into the club county championships held at Surbiton. Originally planned to take place in Croydon, frozen pitches there meant that a quick re-arrange on the part of Surrey Hockey Association had the girls and boys playing their Cup matches at Surbiton with the Plate matches postponed until mid-April.



GHC three Cup teams' first challenge was to warm-up, literally – and yes, those white spots are snow flurries

Guildford Hockey Club U12 Boys – A Team takes Gold

The Guildford 'A' team approached the Surrey County Championships determined to defend their title that they had won last year. The team for the tournament was Alex (goalkeeper), Raphael, Ollie, Harry, Freddie, Max, Isaac and Elliot.

Group stage

Game 1: Guildford A 4 – 0 Richmond A

The boys needed a positive start to the tournament and with the wind chill bringing temperatures down to as low as -7 the boys quickly got their passing game going and launched attack after attack at the Richmond goal. After a couple of minutes Freddy opened the scoring, followed shortly afterwards by a second goal when Isaac scored with a fine shot from a penalty corner. Elliot made it 3-0 after an excellent run and pass by Isaac and the good performance was finished with a flourish when Harry hit a lovely reverse stick shot into the top of the net.



Freddy opening up the scoring

Game 2: Guildford A 5-0 Surbiton B



The boys' confidence was now high and they were playing fast and skilful hockey. They quickly took the lead in this game after a lovely passing move involving Isaac and Elliot that was finished off at the back post by Raphael. Freddy then set up Elliot for 2-0 before Elliot scored again shortly afterwards. Isaac then scored a fine goal after dribbling past several defenders before Max and Raphael set him up again to complete the scoring at 5-0.

Elliot about to score one of his many goals



Max setting up Isaac



Raph finishing off at the back post



Isaac dribbling past the defenders to score a fine goal



Ollie having a superb day

Game 3: Guildford A 8-0 Wimbledon A

In a one-sided affair the Guildford boys simply overwhelmed their opponents with skilful play and devastating finishing. Freddy started the scoring off, Max soon made it 2-0, Max then scored another after a great run and pass by Harry before he completed his hat trick after a move involving Ollie and Elliot. Isaac's shot hit the post and was knocked over the line by Raphael for 5-0 before further goals by Max, Harry and Elliot completed the scoring at 8-0.



Harry on a great run and pass



Coach Mike talking tactics

Game 4: Guildford A 2-0 Guildford C

It is entirely to the credit of the C team that they presented the toughest challenge yet to the A team and made them work extremely hard for their win. They battled well, tackled ferociously and were difficult to break down. The A team boys kept their patience and realised that they could only break through by playing the ball out wide and attacking down the wings. The deadlock was broken when Freddy scored a very good goal with a reverse stick shot and then Elliot scored a second after a good run by Isaac.



Squadmates in action against each other



Ben and Harry

Game 5: Guildford A 3 – 0 Oxted A

Oxted were always likely to present the boys with their toughest challenge in the group stage. However, the defence of Ollie and Raphael not only remained firm but distributed the ball well and set up several attacks. The performance of the defence had been such that Alex actually made his first save of the tournament in this game. After Freddy had hit the post, the first goal was scored when Isaac dribbled the ball around the Oxted defence before finishing well. Isaac and Elliot then combined to set up Max, who had a great game in this match, at the far post for 2-0 and Isaac finished the scoring off for an impressive 3-0 win that put the team through to the semi-finals.



Alex wasn't busy until Game 5 but was always alert; when action did come he rose to the occasion and did his part to keep a clean sheet



Semi Final: Guildford A 1 – 0 Guildford B

The strength of the U12 boys' squad was evidenced by the fact that both the A and B teams had performed brilliantly and both had got through to the semi-final stage. Unfortunately, fate decreed that they now faced each other. Both teams, urged on by their respective coaches Mike and Gary, played good hockey and put maximum effort into their performances.

The game could really have gone either way and was won by the slenderest margin by the A team when Isaac took the ball into the D from a short corner injection from Raphael and sent the ball to Elliot for a finish at the far post. The 'B' team had their chances and gave everything they had for their coach and deserve much praise for their performance. They subsequently finished in an excellent third place in the tournament after a terrific win against Oxted in the 3rd/4th place match. The A team was now through to the final where they faced the Surbiton A.





Heart-breaking that both teams couldn't win



Gary's boys went on to take bronze

Surrey County Championship Final: Guildford A 1 – 0 Surbiton A

The boys had lost the final of December's Teddington Xmas Invitational to Surbiton and were desperate to get their revenge. The boys started the game well and played the better hockey, created all the chances and deservedly won due to a powerful shot from Isaac after yet another accurate input from a short corner by Raphael. Surbiton were unable to seriously threaten the Guildford defence due to determined defending by the entire team with Ollie, Raphael and Max particularly having good games and the boys were actually unlucky not to score more goals. One was enough however and the boys were crowned county champions. They now go forward to play at the Southern Counties Championship on the 28th April.



Summary

All the many hours spent in training and playing games at locations too many to remember (and it seemed nearly always in appalling weather!) had paid off. Every single one of the boys had stepped up and performed. Isaac had an excellent tournament dominating the midfield and strong in the attack scoring 6 goals. Elliot made his mark in the D with 6 goals as well. Max, Harry and Freddy not only provided many of the scoring opportunities by playing skilful, quick-passing hockey but, importantly contributed several goals, with 5, 2 and 3 respectively. Raphael chipped in with two goals of his own adding up to a whopping 24 goals scored in the tournament.

Tournaments are not won without a good defence and the boys at the back worked hard throughout the day with superb results; the communication between the defenders and goalkeeper continues to improve. Remarkably, the team did not concede a goal in the entire tournament and Ollie had a particularly good tournament working alongside the ever reliable Raphael to shut out the opposition. In the rare moments the defence was breached Alex was solid and dependable (there will, undoubtedly, be busier times ahead for him in the next few months).

Crucially though, the boys worked well together as a team, they had all fought back to defend when needed and entirely deserve their achievement. The success of the boys is also a reflection of the hard work of all the coaches whose support for the players throughout the season has been so important. They deserve to be recognised for getting a squad of boys to gel so well together and to perform as they did in this tournament. A huge thank you as well to Melinda whose organisational skills and sheer hard work made sure that the day went so smoothly. Finally, thanks to the squad's parents and supporters who braved the cold. I'm sure the hyperthermia and frostbite were all worth it to see the boys do so well!?

More photos and scores below...



William v Surbiton A



Will about to beat the Spencer keeper



B team in action v Spencer in a close win – a disallowed goal from a ball that cracked in two from the cold as it went in the goal meant the team had to work hard to get one back



Back: Ollie, Max, Freddy and Alex; Front: Harry, Elliot, Isaac, Raphael



Bronze and Gold and Smiles



Back: Oliver, Michael, Quinn, Henry; Front: Jack, Will, William, Dominic

Cup Pool 1

A v Richmond	4	0
A v Surbiton B	5	0
A v Wimbledon	8	0
A v Guildford C	2	0
A v Oxted	3	0

22 0

Cup Pool 2

B v Epsom	3	0
B v Surbiton A	0	1
B v Spencer	2	1
B v Woking	2	0

7 2

Cup Pool 1

C v Oxted	1	2
C v Wimbledon	3	0
C v Richmond	2	1
C v Guildford A	0	2
C v Surbiton B	2	2

8 7

Semi-final and final

A v B	1	0
A v Surbiton A	1	0

2 0

Semi-final and bronze medal match

B v A	0	1
B v Oxted	1	0

1 1

A goals for & against	24	0
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B goals for & against	8	3
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C goals for & against	8	7
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GHC Results Table

Thanks to Gary S for the match report and to Melinda for the photos and results. And of course, many, many thanks to coaches Gary, Mike, James and Will for coaching and supporting the boys so well.

Girls Under 16's 8 - 0 Wimbledon U16

Sunday saw the Guildford girls play their last league game of the season. Pleasingly, we had the largest squad of the year for a match with several of the girls that will be coming up next season joining the team for the game. It was bitterly cold and we were playing late in the afternoon, but the enthusiasm to go out with a success reigned supreme.

The recently developed warm up routine ensured that we came out fighting and we had all the play during the first few minutes and soon took the lead. We were passing the ball well and the whole team were able to move forward with ease. It was not long, before we had scored again. Everyone were able to work hard for short periods and it was a real luxury to be able to have a steady flow of subs allowing the game to run at a pace that we dictated. The younger girls enjoyed themselves and made major contributions to the team with both Alex and Robyn both scoring. The pressure continued through the first half which ended with us having a 6-0 advantage.

Wimbledon frustrated us during the second half and it was soon clear that Helena's demand (who should have been writing this report!!!!) to double the score in the second half was not going to be fulfilled and only two further goals were scored. That said we did manage to convert a short corner, something that has been illusive this season. We took the foot of the gas which showed, but we did keep a clean sheet. Those finding the net were; Robyn, Polly(2), Tali, Alex, Hazel(2) and Jess.

The season finished with us coming third in the league. It was unfortunate, as the two teams above us we could have beaten if we had had greater availability of players for those games. However, we have scored the most goals in the league!!

Everyone is looking forward to next season and most of the girls will be still in the squad, with some a lot of new blood coming up from the under 14's. There is a lot of enthusiasm for next season and many of the girls will be training over the next couple of months ahead of their tour to Barcelona.

Sunday 17th March 2013

Mercian Home Counties Colts Under 14 Development League A.

Woking Boys U14D 6 - 0 Guildford U12 Boys Mavericks

Today's Team: Alex, Eddie, Ollie S, Ollie G, Ben, Harry, Max, Finn, Dom, Elliot and Will

On yet another day of pouring rain the Maverick team took the field against Woking. The boys' opponents were equal top of the table on goal difference with Teddington and understandably fielded a strong team. The Mavericks on the other hand put out a bare 11 players with no substitutes.

The Mavericks started slowly against a determined and much physically stronger team. Our goalkeeper was called upon to make a save within the first thirty seconds of the match and shortly afterwards the boys were 1-0 down from a short corner.

The 'ball-speed' of the input from Woking's short corners were something that our boys were not accustomed to and therefore they had difficulties in closing down and preventing shots at goal. The first third of the game was one sided with several more goals conceded without the Mavericks being able to unduly test the Woking goalkeeper. At 4-0 down it looked as though the Mavericks were in for a trouncing.

However, a stern team talk by James led to the boys coming out for the second period with renewed optimism and determination. They began to pass the ball around and grow in confidence. There were then stages of the game in which the Mavericks looked the better team and began to put Woking under pressure. Their skilful passing moves led to a series of short corners and several shots went narrowly wide. They could just not manage to find the net. They were then caught out by their opponent's ability to hit the ball out of the Woking defence straight to their attacker on the edge of the Mavericks area and Guildford conceded two further goals.

So the game ended in defeat but the boys were unfortunate not to at least score a couple, they could certainly not be faulted for their effort and they battled away to the final whistle. Although 6-0 may on the face of it look as though Guildford were soundly beaten, the reality was that this was a much improved performance compared to the Teddington game a few weeks earlier. For much of the game the boys posed a real threat to the Woking goal.

One key difference between the two teams was the ability of the Woking forwards to hit the ball powerfully and accurately at our goal whereas the Maverick boys shots tended to lack the same power or direction and our efforts on the goal tended to be directly at the keepers feet rather than lifted past him or struck into the corners of the goal. This difference was due to the relative age and size of the players and our boys will undoubtedly improve on this as they get older.

Many thanks to James for coaching the team on the day.

Sunday 10 March 2013

England Hockey National In2Hockey Surrey Heats

Under 10 Boys are in the medals...



On a bitterly cold day, Guildford hosted the England Hockey In2Hockey County competition for Surrey, entering two teams in the Cup, and one team in the Plate.

Team A – Jack (GK), Chan, Will S, Benjamin R, Ben B, Oscar, Jake, Billy

At first glance Team A seemed to have an advantageous draw, although no games are easy when expectations are high and there are only 12 minutes to play (one way).

After a tense start in the first game against Surbiton B, we finally converted one of the chances when Ben B crashed a shot into the far corner of the goal (despite the coach's cry of "pass"). A second goal soon followed to secure a comfortable 2-0 win.



Ben, pre 'crash'

The second game saw us beat a weak Richmond side 4-0, with Oscar causing constant problems upfront and grabbing a deserved goal. The highlight though was a flowing move with Chan's BBG allowing him to execute a defence-splitting pass to set up Ben to score, cutting in from the right.



Chan, about to remember his BBG



Oscar causing one of his constant problems up front



Will, staying strong

This set us up nicely for the group decider against Spencer, who had also recorded two victories. An early goal settled the nerves, but we then tensed up allowing Spencer back into the game and a deserved equaliser. Strong defence from Chan, Will and Benj meant we held out for a 1-1 draw and finished top of the group, putting us in semi-final against the Pool A runners up, Reigate.

With the two finalists qualifying for the South tournament, the season hinged on the result of this game. Fortunately we took control from the start, and Jake's tireless running created scoring opportunities throughout. Reigate failed to register a shot on goal and we duly progressed to the final after Billy scored two outstanding goals.



Billy on his way to scoring no doubt

The final was a tense affair, and despite taking an early lead we failed to dominate possession as we had in previous rounds. Their keeper somehow made a point blank save when we had the chance to close out the game 2-0, but instead Surbiton equalised, giving us 5 minutes of extra time with golden goal. The momentum had changed, and we looked tired. Despite an outstanding save from Jack, Surbiton made us pay for losing the ball cheaply in our D, scoring the decider.

Obviously there were a lot of disappointed faces at the end, but the boys should all be proud of the silver medals and they have been rewarded with the chance to represent Guildford at the regionals, at Teddington on 28th April.



England Hockey Surrey County Runners-Up – next stop, South Regional Finals

A few things to work on in the next month...

- Clinical in opposition D – focus on achieving a positive outcome for each D penetration.
- Possession in own D, and taking 15m hits – eliminate risk.
- Recycling the ball using back foot space.



Coach Sean congratulating the boys and consolidating the learning

Team B – Dougie, Freddie, Benedict E, Finn, Louis, Sean (GK), Charlie K, Alex, Charlie P

The B team started with hopes high but knowing that the draw wasn't favourable. We were due to play the A sides from Woking, Surbiton, Wimbledon and Spencer.....

The first game is always the hardest and even more so against the Surbiton A side. The game started at a very fast pace and we were always up against it. Surbiton attacking down both wings and the Guildford defence had to focus. The team worked really hard as a unit and every boy contributed to a 0-0 draw. Particular mention must go to Sean in goal who made 2 or 3 great saves and who was fearless throughout... and then our Centre Forward, Charlie P ...for his tireless work running back to support the midfield. This game was a great start, in particular, as Surbiton were the eventual winners of the tournament.

With hopes still high we were straight on against Wimbledon and it was a shame – this game was far more evenly balanced than the score line would finally reflect with Ben E in Midfield starting to have an influence and the twins Louis and Finn working for the team. Charlie K was showing some good skills on the right working a couple of good crosses. However, in sport, if you don't take your chances someone else will and Wimbledon, attacking down their right, got away a very good shot away that evaded Sean in Goal. The game ended as a 1 Nil Loss (against another A side).

We now had a chance to re-group and plan for next game against Woking A, a game we should have won. We had 2 or 3, 1 on 1's with their keeper and dominated the game, the two Charlie's combining well, but it was not to be... another nil nil draw (against another A side).

Last game was against Reigate A and we needed a Win to progress. The game started at a real pace and Ben E and Charlie P had put us 2 nil up inside 5 minutes. The signs were good... perhaps too good. The second goal sparked Reigate into life and all of a sudden we had to defend for our lives. Our early luck now departed and all of a sudden we were 3 -2 down!!! Tired legs and bodies looked for an equaliser but no luck and the opponents scored again. A 4-2 loss. Great game but no luck (against another A side).

Finishing 4th in our group meant a playoff against Spencer A which ended in nil-nil and a lot of tired boys went home very pleased with themselves after some really well-played hockey against strong sides.

Many, many thanks to all the umpires and organisers who made the day a great success, and to the parents/ friends/ family for their support on such a cold day.

But most of all congratulations to the boys themselves and thank you for all your hard work!!!

Team C – Josh, Archie, Matthew, Ben, Jamie, Will, Barney, Jonathan and Mattie

The team were up for the challenge in the Plate competition and were totally undaunted by the cold and the occasion.

Their first match was against Woking B and despite having the majority of the play the team were very unlucky to lose 1-0 with Woking scoring a breakaway goal against the run of play. The next game against Surbiton was a 0-0 draw, but it was never dull, with shots flying in from our boys, but unfortunately they were denied by a very brave goal keeper.

The final group game also ended in a draw as the team were unable to find the back of the net despite controlling the game and never looking like conceding.

There was an agonising wait to see if we would play again, and the boys had to have a penalty shoot-out with Surbiton to see which team would be in the 5th place play off. Great strokes from Will and Jamie saw us home.

We played TWM in “our final” and in the end we broke our duck when Jamie managed to squeeze the ball over the line. Ben hit two hard shots at goal and almost broke the foot of one defender with one and was denied by the ball hitting another defender’s stick (which hadn’t moved) with another. We had won it 1-0.

Some really good performances from all the team, who all played their part. Well done!

Also, a huge thank you to all parents and siblings who helped out on the day to make GHC’s hosting of this County tournament a well-regarded success by all clubs who participated. THANK YOU!!!

Sunday 3rd March

Under 10 Girls Friendly Tournament

The Under 10 Girls invited Haslemere, Richmond and Woking for a friendly tournament in the run-up to the County Heats the following Sunday.

Up until Christmas the girls played in mixed ability teams and from the start of January were split into three teams based on their level and experience. This was their final warm-up to the county tournament with the A team playing in a more difficult pool than the Bs and Cs.

Pool A

Richmond 1, Guildford 1, Woking 1, Woking 2

Pool B

Haslemere 1, Woking 3, Guildford 2, Guildford 3

The GHC 1 girls took second place in their pool, scoring in every match. In Pool B, the other GHC teams were working hard and putting into practice what they were learning in Friday evening training sessions. The highlight of the day was a fantastic first goal by Team 3 with roaring and well-deserved applause from the parents and supporters.



Something tells me the opponent ended up dispossessed



GHC v GHC



GHC v GHC



Thanks to Maggs and James for coaching!!



Looking forward to the following Sunday's County Heats

U12 Boys South East Mini Hockey 7s Tournament at Wimbledon

Team 1: Lawrence, Callum, Toby, Tom, Eddie, Ollie and Will

The Boys did extremely well winning 2 games and drawing 1:

Game 1 - Epsom

Guildford dominated the game applying lots of pressure on the opposition. Eddie was commanding down the middle and Toby particularly effective down the right. After giving away a goal against the run of play, an own goal and a shot from Toby were enough to win the game 2-1.

Game 2 - Wimbledon

Despite Wimbledon having the advantage of a goalkeeper, Guildford once again completely dominated this game by 2-0 - a nice goal from Callum playing centre forward and a superb long range effort from Toby.

Game 3 - Different Wimbledon

Once again Guildford was the superior side. Wimbledon were under constant pressure and there were some lovely combinations from Toby, Callum and Tom. Unfortunately all the chances went slightly wide and the game ended goalless.

Team 2 (Gary's team): Johnny, Freddie, Henry, Marco, Hamish, Danyaal, Harry (GK)

Team 2 also won two and drew 1 match:

v Guildford Team 1, Draw 0-0

v Wimbledon, Won 2-0

v Epsom, 2-0

As we approached the first PB, spirits on the touch lines were raised by the arrival of the sun on our backs for what seemed like the first time this year, but then slightly dampened to find that matches would be played on quarter pitches. Spirits on the pitch were not marred however and enthusiasm remained throughout the three matches.

Harry kept a clean sheet in goal, helped in part that in matches 1 and 3 play was mostly in the opposition's half, but also as a result of a series of decisive saves during the middle part of the Epsom game. The score lines are also a reflection of the work done at the back by Hamish clearing the lines, and strong slaps from Danyaal to the wingers.

Although cramped for space there was notable play from the wingers with some searing runs from Marco and some elegant stick work and strong passes from Henry leading to numerous attacks on goal. Some dogged tackling from Freddie helped us dominate the midfield, but he will remember the day most for goals in the last 2 matches, each from a clean strong strike from the middle edge of the D. After a number of close misses past both posts and the cross bar, Johnny finally scored with a deflection from a demon pass from Henry in the dying moments of the Don's game and finished the day with a chip over a defender's stick to score from a Marco pass from the left wing.

U12 Boys Mavericks v Richmond

Mercian Home Counties Colts Hockey Under 14 Development A League

Alex, Raphael, Ollie, Quinn, Ben, Harry, Dom, Max, Freddy, Freddie, Finlay, Isaac, Elliot

Guildford U12 Mavericks 9 – 1 Richmond Boys U14 Development Team

The U12 'Mavericks' were entered into the U14 league in order to provide more matches for this year's very large squad and in the process have gained much experience playing 11 a-side hockey against teams who are older and bigger than the Guildford boys. Despite playing against players who were physically stronger, the team has quickly learned to adapt and all have become ever more confident that their own hockey skills, fitness and team work will lead them to be more than a match for their opponents.

This continued development of the players was clearly seen in this match against a Richmond side who were higher in the table than the 'Mavericks' and higher in the sky than our guys, too, with three of them standing about 6'3".

From the very start of the game the Guildford boys passed the ball well, created space and attacked their opponents' defence. Several chances were missed before Elliot scored after good work by Isaac and Freddy. Max had a shot saved by the keeper before Alex made an important save to deny the Richmond attacker in a 1v1 situation. After a fine run by Fin, Elliot scored to make it 2-0. The Mavericks defence protected Alex well with Raphael and Ollie not only breaking up their opponents' attack but then passing the ball intelligently to set up swift Guildford counter-attacks.



Finn getting the ball to Elliot

Freddie L made his Mavericks debut and all those years of careful training by his father (combined of course by a steely glare and a bellow that reminds one of Windsor Davies on parade in 'It Ain't Half Hot Mum'...) meant that Freddie stuck to his attacker like glue, never let his opponent get anywhere near the ball and put in some solid challenges to win the ball when the need arose.

The Mavericks stretched their lead when a great run and lovely pass by Harry set up Elliot to finish well again for his hat trick and this was soon followed by his fourth after some excellent work by Isaac, Dom and Max. Elliot was repeatedly running into the space behind the Richmond defence who (strangely) failed to do anything to combat this strategy and Isaac, Freddy and Max repeatedly showed that they had the ability to thread the ball through to Elliot who finished the move off by finding the net. Richmond pulled one back, but soon Elliot scored his fifth to take the score to 5-1. The best move of the match then was seen when a short corner move between Raphael and Isaac led to the latter finishing off an excellent move.



Short corner practice definitely pays

Isaac then scored his second (despite attempts by Elliot to touch the ball over the line). Isaac scored his hat trick after a lovely move by Max, Freddy and Dom and the game was finished off when a shot by Freddy was deflected into the net by.... yes you guessed it....Elliot. Six goals for Elliot who was lethal in front of goal (perhaps he scored 7 but coach Will in a decision that sparked as much debate as the Russian linesman decision in the 1966 World Cup final decreed that Isaac should be given the 'touch over the line' goal....).



Max, surrounded by 5 opposition giants, winning his challenges

A couple of players stood out in this match. Max seemed particularly determined to win his challenges against physically stronger and taller opponents. He rarely lost out in the physical aspect of his game and, although he received some painful hits, the step up in the physical side of his game was there for all to see. Quinn did not put a foot wrong in the game, held his position well and was not once caught out by 'losing' the player he was marking. Ben, although playing against players who towered over him, was aggressive and determined in his tackles and for such a young player played with real maturity and apparently without any fear.



Fin and Ben dispossessing the opposition and sending the ball forward



To sum up, this was a very good performance by all the team who appeared to actually be physically fitter than their opponents and continued to work hard throughout the game. The sheer volume of competitive matches the boys have played has begun to turn them into a group that is confident in its ability but, importantly, is also prepared to work hard together as a team. As the end of the season approaches all the preparation and 'match practice' is showing its rewards.

Friday 1st March

Guildford U12 Boys play Royal Grammar School U13s

GHC U12A 2 – 4 RGS U13A

Alex, Raphael, Freddy, Isaac, Wills, Will, Max, Harry, Elliot

The boys were feeling confident ahead of this game; a few of the team members local schools had played RGS U12s earlier this week and competed really well. To the surprise of the GHC players many of last year's successful GHC U12 A team turned up wearing RGS kit and the boys realised they were playing what could be themselves in a year's time. Interesting.

Seven of the RGS boys (out of nine) are part of the GHC U14 squad and were noticeably bigger than last season when they were squad-mates as U11s and U12s: Cameron must have grown 30cms, Josh's legs were even longer, Finn's anticipation of the play had improved even further and Harry A looked even more lethal striking the ball. Tom G, Fraser and Benji were also bigger and stronger by what seemed like more than a year's difference. This was going to be a physical, but also a mental test of character.

The game was split into thirds with 15 minutes each segment and with GHC looking a little bit tired off the mark. RGS were pressing and closing down our players resulting with the majority of play in the GHC half. The pressure on the GHC goal was relentless and Raphael and Harry R were working incredibly hard to keep up with the fast passing and movement of RGS's attacking play. As the first third was coming to a close Alex produced a stunning, lunging save with his stick to deny an RGS goal. RGS then soon forced a short corner that rebounded off the GHC goal post; this close call appeared to spark GHC into life. Isaac forced a save from the RGS keeper and Harry R produced a superb pass to Max who forced a short corner. The first segment ended 0-0.



Last season's club teammates, this season's county teammates, this evening's adversaries...interesting

The second third saw GHC start to believe in themselves, Will and Elliot were starting to press relentlessly the RGS defensive players; Isaac, Freddy, Max and Wills were starting to be stronger with the stick when pressing and challenging, Raphael and Harry were looking composed on the ball with Raph reading and anticipating the play really well. Alex as ever was very vocal in goal. Against the run of play RGS managed to score, which then triggered a 5 minute period where GHC lost its shape and RGS capitalised on this working to a 3 goal lead.

It was pleasing to see that GHC quickly put the disappointment of conceding the goals behind them and started to play their best hockey of the match. For the last 7 minutes of this segment GHC pressed, passed and dominated the play against the older and physically stronger boys whose team included four county players (three of whom in the U14 age group). GHC pulled a goal back through some great play from Freddy and Isaac whose shot found Elliot with deflection at the ready to beat the keeper. Shortly afterward Isaac received a short corner injection, weaved into the danger area and crossed for Max to strike the ball into the goal. The second third ended 3-2 to RGS.



You can almost feel the pace of it

The final 3rd started with GHC pressing for an equaliser. Isaac had a strong shot saved by the RGS keeper and Isaac also hit the post from a short corner won by Max. Will and Elliot were pressing and closing the RGS players, Freddy, Wills and Harry were seeing more of the ball and Raph was composed holding our defensive line, the Franz Beckenbauer of GHC. Alex actually had little to do in goal. As the final third neared the end our boys started to tire, RGS managed to score leaving the final whistle at 4-2 and inflicting only the 3rd defeat in all competitions and friendlies this season for the GHC A team in 7-a-side competition.



Will holding his ground

Coach James was happy with the performance – the game was arranged to be a real test and it certainly ended up being just that. Lessons to be learnt: be stronger with the stick in the challenges, be a little more composed when challenged in possession, cycle the ball to the wings, ensure our wide players stay wide and drive.

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