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Secretary: Hagop Tchamkertenian
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AROUND THE GROUNDS

Congratulations:

AAF (1) and AAG and 14A Girls teams – Grand Final winners for 2014

AAD and 12B Girls – Runners Up

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Match Reports:

8 Fox v Bexley North

Saturday 16th August

The Foxes came together early on Saturday, with the parents on ground set up and canteen from 7am. Game time came around quick and we kicked off at 11:15. With Finlay away down the snow, the Foxes were pumped about putting on a good show this week.

Bexley passed well and put pressure on the Foxes for most of the first half, defence was the key with strong tackles by Hunter and Owen who, along with Nick as goal keeper, kept the score nil all at the break.

From the whistle in the second half the game really started to open up, Lucy made numerous breaks and was unlucky not to score. Mitchell ran his heart out and was all over the park in attack and defence. Grace was busy in the middle and Anthony kicked long to keep the ball down our end for most of the half. The highlight of the second half was Alexia as keeper, not letting in any goals through sheer determination.

This was the Foxes match of the year, ending in a nil all draw demonstrating how they have matured as a team playing smart and having fun. With one last match left, the Foxes will be keen to celebrate an enjoyable season this year under the guidance of Coach Harry. Thanks again Hammer for the pics this week.



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13 B v Connells Point

Lost 1 - 2

Final

Goal Scorer: Mark Martinovic

POTM: Harris Kostanti

Playing at Carss Bush Park with the picturesque setting of Kogarah Bay in the background, having access to a perfect flat football pitch with good grass coverage and with the forecast rain staying away, the conditions were ideal for the final which pitted the team against the runners up Connells Point.

The team arrived as requested an hour before the scheduled kick-off to warm-up, receive their game instructions and familiarise themselves with the ground and prevailing conditions. With just one win away from a consecutive Grand Final appearance, the team posed for photos before taking the field in a 4-4-2 formation that saw Will start in goals, behind a defensive structure comprising of Harris, Jonah, Evander and Raff. The four person midfield was made up of Mitchell, Harry, Mitchell T and Alex, while the attacking pair for the game featured James and Mark. A strong in versatile interchange bench included Peter, MJ, Stephen and Issac.



Taking the game to the opposition from the kick-off, Lugarno pressed forward and with the opening attack secured a corner kick. Sustained pressure resulted in more attacking football by the team and a dangerous cross delivered from the right flank struck the arm of the Connells Point defender in the 8th minute and without hesitation the referee pointed to the penalty spot. The team and supporters were excited at the decision and given the sustained Lugarno attack it was a just reward for the attacking play in the

opening phase of the game.

Unfortunately the penalty kick failed to be converted and as the ball harmlessly missed the target the heads of the Lugarno players dropped. While instructions were quickly delivered from the sidelines to remain positive, the body language of the players worried coach Hagop and he started using his interchange options.

When the football gods don't smile on the team there is not much you can do and the penalty miss proved to be a crucial momentum shifter in the game as Connells Point regrouped and thanked the All Mighty for saving them from what looked a certain goal.

Within six minutes of the penalty miss, some uncharacteristically hesitant defending and a string of subsequent defensive errors gifted Connells Point their opening goal. Within 5 minutes a similar goal was conceded in similar circumstances giving the opposition a crucial 2-0 lead. With 10 minutes to half-time a more attacking team formation was deployed leaving only 3 persons in defence. Despite the weakening of the defence, Lugarno actually coped much better and finished the first half strongly.

Half-time discussion concentrated on the need to launch more direct attacks and to play a more compressed structure. Getting more shots on target and early was also emphasised. Tactical changes saw Raffi placed in goals and the attacking orientation was maintained for the second half.

Within three minutes of the second half two good goal scoring chances fell Mitchell T's way. The first one hit the goal posts with the Connells Point goal keeper well beaten, while the second chance would have been a goal if it was struck with more power and accuracy. Instead of equalising within the first five minutes of the second half, Lugarno was still searching for the elusive opening goal, it must be said the football gods were not smiling on the team for this game!

While Connells Point did launch some counter attacking play, the attacks were comfortably handled by a purposely weakened Lugarno defence. The Lugarno team created more goal scoring opportunities including a goal line clearance by the Connells Point goal keeper but the score remained stubbornly 2-0 until three minutes from full time when an exceptional through ball by Mitchell put Mark in the clear. Mark accelerated away from the Connells Point defence and as the goal keeper raced out of his line, Mark got to the ball first to kick it into the goal nets.

With the score now 2-1, a further two minutes of added time provided the team a chance to get the equalising goal. They kept the attacking momentum during the final phase of the game but the football gods did not smile again and the game ended 2-1.

In the end, the team was just one win away from a second consecutive grand final appearance. It had the opportunity to score first via the penalty kick decision and at various stages of the game created some wonderful goal scoring opportunities but in the end it was not meant to be. Well done team for a successful football season and hopefully we can go all the way next season.

Game stats:

	Lugarno FC	Connells Point
Total shots	12	11
Shots on target	6	7
Goals	1	2
Corners	4	2
Possession	50 per cent	50 per cent



14 Girls B v Ramsgate RSL

Drew 1 - 1

Final

Goal Scorer: Sarah Masri

Well here we were, finally after a week and a bit of wet and wild weather ready to play our final against Ramsgate. A place in the Grand Final was on offer with the winner to face Oatley RSL next week for the ultimate prize. We were at Carss Park Bush Park bathed under sunshine and warmth but in racing parlance, the track was indeed 'heavy' following a week of rain. Paul took the girls for a thorough warm up, and ensured that all players were primed for a big match. We had to get a win today, a draw would not be enough considering that Ramsgate were ahead of us on the competition ladder. Sarah was made captain today and proudly led her troops out, ready to play.

From the kick off, it was game-on, both sides knowing exactly what was on offer and what was required to get there. Plenty of hard work, skill and determination. The girls were sorting themselves out with plenty of midfield play for the first few minutes, no side willing to give too much away. Just as the crowd was settling

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into their seats and play was stabilising, Olivia found herself with a bit of space deep in enemy territory, and an opportunity for an unmarked Sarah close to goal. Olivia subsequently delivered a sublime through ball straight to her target, where Sarah as she has done all year, knew exactly what to do; positioned herself perfectly and with a searing right foot kick, found the back of the net with the goalkeeper nowhere in sight. A great captain's goal!! After some good lead up work a half a minute before, Emily also deserves a lot of the credit for that one. Three minutes gone and up 1-0, it was just the start we were looking for. The crowd gave a raucous and rapturous cheer and the girls gained another notch of confidence.

Following the restart, we continued to play attacking football and really ask some questions of the opposition. It was still pretty tight but we didn't give them an inch. Coach Paul continued to give instructions from the sidelines and the girls following them to a tee. We could tell as it was clearly audible from the other side of the field (how's the throat Paul?). Emily and Monique in midfield as usual caused problems for the opposition whether in attack or defence and were playing superbly. It's the little things that count and Monique's mega throw ins, always gain us a lot of ground and put the opposition on the back foot and she executed these really well today. Well done Monique. Tia and Toni ensured that the middle of the park remained tight and worked well together to make sure there was no easy path through. Jessica and Sienna in defence ably supported them by chiming in with some clearing kicks when it mattered most keeping the ball well away from our goal area and ensuring there was no room to move down the flanks. It was beginning to heat up on field so Coach Paul brought Sophie into the game to keep up the pressure giving Sarah a well-earned break. Sophie slotted in perfectly and kept applying the pressure on the opposition, no matter how big or fast they were.



At the back, all the defenders were doing their job well; Ruby, Alyssa, Jessica and Sienna all made sure the attackers had little room to move whilst keeping the ball up field as much as possible. A highlight of the half was all the girls working together to successfully set an offside trap for the opposition and gaining a free kick. Great teamwork girls! Then there was our goalie Sophia, initially a little anxious about having to

keep goal in ankle deep mud, rising above it all and doing a great job as usual with some great saves and excellent positional play. The highlight of her half was saving a scorching shot from well outside the box that went through everyone except her, eliciting gasps from the crowd.

As the half wore on, each player continued to work hard and keep the opposition scoreless. We didn't have many more opportunities to score another goal, a well organised defence proving hard to crack a second time. With the half wearing on it was time for Giovanna to come on and join the fray adding some much needed fresh legs. With only a few minutes of the half remaining it was important not to let a goal in and we just managed that with a few anxious moments and tiring players striving just that little bit more. The ref's whistle blew and the girls went off the field searching for a well-earned drink and an equally well-earned breather. There were many highlights of the half, but what probably would have pleased Coach Paul the most was a consistent effort across the park and each player fulfilling their role in the team.

The message at half time was simple, just another half a game of football to go and if we keep a clean sheet, we'll be back again next week. Happy with the effort from each of the girls, he reminded them of the need to keep the pressure on their players and force them to make the play and possibly draw out the errors.

The second half got underway and we came out attacking as per the first half. All the midfielders had success in bringing the ball forward but our strikers found it hard to penetrate the defence from there. Knowing it was do or die, the opposition defence were making it very hard for us.

Our own defence was doing everything asked of it as well, especially in the middle of park. Ruby having a great start to the half with a couple of good clearing kicks, some incisive running and even a header or two thrown in for good measure. Alyssa wasn't making it easy either with some great passing and chasing down anything heading her way, keeping the pressure on brilliantly. On the edges, Jessica and Sienna proving just as capable with their speed bring out some great covering defence.

They were making us work hard in defence for a lot of this 2nd half. Our midfielders Tia and Toni seeing the need assisted our defenders at every opportunity to help ease the load. Sophia again a standout in goals where within 30 seconds managed another couple of great saves even getting a 'well done goalie' from the opposition crowd. Again, some players were feeling the heat, both physically and metaphorically, and fresh legs were needed. On came Sophie who tried to move the ball up field and had a little success, giving Olivia and Emily up front a bit of room to move on more than one occasion. A few half shots were managed during the opening stanza but what could have been the clincher was proving very elusive for our girls up front.



Again, defenders were repeatedly being asked questions by the opposition when the unfathomable occurred and one of their players latched on to a ball out wide but close to goal, had a bit too much time to work with and managed to fire off a mighty shot at goal. Unfortunately even the efforts of Sophia weren't enough to block the shot and after 45 minutes of play, the score was again even. We need to win, so we had to score again, a draw would not be enough.

With that in mind our girls summoned one last effort and threw everything at the opposition searching for the winner. The clock ticked by and the desperation grew. Our speedsters on the wing Emily and Monique threw everything at the opposition, every one on one was vital and they fought for every loose ball. Olivia and Sophie up front did the same as did Toni and Sarah. Our best opportunity came as the half drew to a close and the opposition tired. We had a few forays into their goal area and a couple of half shots. Our girls knew the clock was ticking and were willing to take every opportunity. Then with about 5 seconds left on the clock, Sarah manages to latch on to a shot and getting it past everything ... but saved only by the woodwork. We all watched in hope but the ball returned back to the field of play with just enough time for the ref to blow his whistle.

It wasn't quite over for us yet though. As it was still 1-1, we were afforded another 5 minutes of time each way to try and eke out a win. When you only have 5 minutes of play for each stanza, it follows that the opposition will flood their defensive line and play out time. We tried our best to find a way through but just couldn't manage it. It's amazing to see how quickly 5 mins each way goes by when you are trying to score a goal. The ref's whistle blew for the last time with the scores locked at 1-1. Close but no cigar!!



So after 60 minutes and then another 10 of extra time, neither team could be separated, unfortunately however, since Ramsgate finished the season higher on the ladder than us, they go through to the grand final next week against Oatley RSL. It was a very hard fought game where there was no clearly dominant team, they didn't beat us, but unfortunately for us, that's football and that means our season is now over. As the girls shook hands with the opposition and that realisation dawned upon them, the tears started to flow and it showed to all of us that these girls wear their heart on their sleeve and show it proudly every time they play and exactly what it means to them. With the heat off, some of the girls (and the coach!) decided to make the most of the outlying puddles from the week of rain and cool off a bit by treating these as huge slip and slides. Looked like a great way to cool off and a well-deserved reward. But I was just happy to watch.

All of our girls can be well proud of their efforts as we are of theirs, each and every week. It was a great result to come this far and just miss the Grand Final by a whisker. Thanks especially to coach Paul who has taken the girls this far and shown them all what they are capable of and what they can achieve. A great lesson in sport and in life.



18 Girls v Carss Park

Drew 2 - 2

Semi Final

Goal Scorer: Iva Nikolaeva

Semi finals finally, but with the clouds rolling in again we were hoping it was not a repeat of last week's wash out.

This is now the 5th time we have played Carss Park, with 3 wins and a draw, and the girls were ready for a good result.

Ashlee started strong going in with 3 attempts at goals but the CP goalie was always there, Lugarno playing well, forcing the error of CP with a corner, after corner, after corner.

Ashlee taking the first corner with a great strike into the box, Jo connected with the ball but just missing, great try. Ashlee took the 2nd corner with another great strike again but just not able to get the ball into the back of net.

For the first 25 mins of the game, we were in CP's half, trying to score. Iva took the next corner came close, great try Iva again everyone didn't stop. Iva had a great run up the line shoots it straight to the goalie.

Finally we scored in the 40th minute of the first half - set up by Ashlee finding Iva who finishes it off. Well done 1-0.

2nd half

CP scored early in the 2nd half, Lugarno is fired up now full time score 1-1.

Everyone on the team played an extraordinary game:

From our mighty backs – Kristen, Anna, Georgina and Mia;

To our great midfielders – Tiana, Jo, Jade, Selena, Marina and from the U16G Jessica helping out, thank you great job.

And our forwards – Ashlee and Iva

And a big thanks and great job in goals this week Ivana.

The girls had to go into extra time 10 mins each way – CP scored very quickly in the extra time 1-2, Ashlee quickly changed position and put herself into goals. CP trying to slow the game down but Lugarno got more determined to score.

Time is running out the girls stepped up - Kristin kicking down the line found Selena, who passed onto Iva who finally got past the goalie and found the back of the net, 2 all draw. The whistle blew and we are in the Finals!

AAW A v ASOW

Lost 0 - 2

Semi Final

The semi-final clash between ASOW and Lugarno AAW team finally took place on this cloudy Sunday after a wash out last week.

Lugarno were strong in attack to begin, with ASOW rarely breaking through our defence. Both teams fought aggressively to score. Our strong defence held together by Sarah D as sweeper, Caitlin, Jessica D and Sarah W ensured our back line was a wall that could not be crossed.

Eleisha had the first attempt at scoring but unfortunately the ball did not make it to the back of the net.

Whenever the back line was threatened Annika was there in goals to stop the ball getting through.

The mid-field worked hard to keep pushing the ball up to the front, including Karlie, Rakia, Jessica B, Eleisha, Nicole and Andronika, rotating positions to maintain intensity.

Annika stayed alert and saved a few more balls from hitting the back of net before half time.

Maeetal and Lauren unfortunately had more unsuccessful attempts on the opposition's goal with Jessica B and Renee assisting up front and putting pressure on the ASOW defence.

Half time ended without any score. But we started to fatigue into the second half, as 2 weeks of rain had impacted training sessions. About 15 minutes into the second half, ASOW fired a shot from outside the box that could not be saved, therefore putting the score at 1-0.

Both Caitlin and Lauren had promising attempts at scoring in the second half but were unfortunately stopped by their goalie.

The Lugarno team did their best in the 2nd half to equalise but unfortunately ASOW broke through our defence and managed to sneak another goal in to make the score 2-0.

It was difficult for Lugarno to recover from this but fatigued and injured they still held their ground, finishing the game with a 2-0 loss.



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