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AROUND THE GROUNDS

Perfect finals weekend for LFC – winning 4 out of 4 Grand Finals!!

Pictures and brief wrap up in this week's newsletter

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Grand Finals update:

13C v Bexley North

Semi-final vs Bexley North Bombers (1) at Ador Avenue Won 1-0

13th August '16

Goal Scorer: Josiah



After a season where the team has often played well but also had some costly lapses, tension was high going into the major semi-final against the minor premiers; the boys have often played like they have trained, but the restricted access to Gannons meant they hadn't been able to train together very much at all in the lead up to this game, so there was some uncertainty about how they would start.

With beautiful, crisp winter weather and the netball traffic from across the road, Lugarno's finals campaign got more complicated when regular goalkeeper Ben injured his foot this week; it meant Peter became goal keeper and Ocky's plans to play a tighter diamond have to be parked. Bailey, Cooper, Jake and Jaden have plenty of experience in defence this season, but with Jordan also unavailable this week, our starting midfield was Logan, Nate, Billy and Andrei with Josiah and Alex up front. Spyridon and Benjamin completed our line-up as our initial subs. Lugarno kicked off with the sun at their backs but the wind a little bit in their faces in a match that Bexley North only needed to draw to earn a week off and go through to the grand final.

The nerves were evident in the first half, with Lugarno not able to control possession as well as they have in other games. Bexley North looked the more dangerous, getting onto a few through balls and into good positions; they hit the crossbar with a shot in the 5th minute and shot wide in the 18th after some good chasing from Lugarno to apply some pressure on the player with the ball. Peter almost lost track of a ball in the box in the 16th minute before it was finally cleared. Lugarno

often seemed to be searching for the long pass, but the Bexley North keeper and defenders proved up to the task, and we were perhaps fortunate to get to the half time break with no goals scored.

With the change of now going into the slight wind, Lugarno started the second half much more assertively, playing in their front half for much of the first several minutes. Bexley North's keeper was doing very well, but when Billy won a ball deep in our half, he was able to lob a pass forward to Josi, who burst through the Bexley North defenders on the half way line and fired a shot as the Bombers goal keeper came forward; although the keeper reacted quickly, his deflection was not enough to stop the ball from rolling into the bottom left corner and put Lugarno up 1-0. From the kick off, Lugarno applied good pressure and Josi got into the right pocket, but his centering ball to Andrei was picked off. Bexley North then attacked down the left, and got the ball into a 3 on 1 in front of goal, but were ruled offside as one of them poked the ball past Peter, so it did not count and the score remained 1-0.

Lugarno then strengthened its defence, with Nate coming back to help as Lugarno absorbed a lot of pressure as Bexley North camped out in our back half for extended periods, at the same time, we looked dangerous on the counter, with Josi getting onto the end of some clearances and getting into good positions, but following up became harder as the midfielders tired. The team persevered and made several important tackles in the final minutes, with Alex and Jaden laying good ones and Nate shielding a slow rolling ball as it went out over the baseline for a goal kick. In stoppage time, Josi was almost through on another counter but was called offside, and when the full time whistle finally went two minutes after time, the relief from all was palpable.

After a very even match, with good respect from both sets of parents of both sides, Lugarno narrowly edged Bexley North go through to the Grand Final and get the extra weeks preparation.

In the meantime, the Bombers had to face Sans Souci, who easily accounted for the other Bexley North side in the minor semi-final, although Sans Souci dominated possession for most of that match, Bexley North were the only side to score and win 1-0 to earn a rematch with Lugarno. It was a sobering reminder, as Lugarno had also controlled possession in plenty of games this season without finishing off their opposition, and sometimes had goals scored against us very much against the run of play. Furthermore, Bexley North did not actually need to win the grand final, if the game was still drawn after extra time, they would be crowned champions because they had finished the regular season as minor premiers.

Grand Final vs Bexley North Bombers (1) at Scarborough Park North Won 1-0

Goal scorer: Logan

With tricky weather about during the week, the team went into this game with not as much preparation as they would have liked. Thankfully the Association's backup plan of a Sunday grand final at Kareela Oval was not required, as Saturday arrived with clear skies and sunshine. A strong contingent of Lugarno parents and supporters arrived well before the scheduled 9:35 am start, with Ocky leading the full squad through a last set of drills and warm ups. Lugarno won the toss and chose to start left to right, but neither the sun nor the wind were particularly significant.

With everyone available, Ben resumed his duties as goal keeper and Peter pushed up into midfield alongside Andrei, while our starting subs were Ben T, Spyridon, Logan and Jordan. Lugarno began very strongly, with Billy and Peter prominent and Jaden making some excellent tackles and runs to send the ball back into attack. After a dominant 8 minutes, Bexley showed how dangerous they could be on the counter when the Bombers striker almost ran onto a through ball, but Ben showed great awareness to come off his line and collect the ball. Lugarno continued to pass well, but the linesmen were very strict and both Nate and Logan were ruled offside a couple of times in some very close calls. Bexley also earned a few corners, but thankfully didn't manage a shot on goal.

In the shadows of half time, Lugarno created the clearest chance to date, when Billy made a great run down the right and put a wonderful ball through to Nate, with the keeper coming out, Nate tried to chip over him but the Bombers custodian showed terrific reflexes and strong hands to jump up and knock the ball up and then grab it on the way down. A few plays later, another good through ball allowed Josi to apply excellent pressure on the Bexley North centre back, whose clearance only just went wide of his own goal. The half-finished with Lugarno having played well but without any reward on the scoreboard.

With the switch of half's and rotations giving players a brief rest, Lugarno continued to press hard, winning ball with good tackles but not quite creating that last shot. Alex was in great position but couldn't quite control the pass, while Peter's long shot was well wide and Nate was again marginally offside. Bexley almost turned the match on its head in the 45th minute, when their striker ran onto a ball with no-one between himself and Ben in goal, but the sideline ref finally made the offside call after what seemed like an eternity. Shortly after, Bexley got a bit more ball and won a free kick from out far but still in a dangerous position, but thankfully failed to convert on the opportunity. Lugarno winning the ball back pressed quickly forward, getting in front of goal where Nate slid a pass onto Logan on the left, who slotted the ball home to put us 1-0 up, sparking celebrations amongst players, parents and spectators alike. From the restart, Billy won the ball off the Bexley North mids and almost made it through on another excellent run.

Bexley didn't give up and gained ground with throw ins up the two sidelines and forced Ben to make a couple of thankfully straightforward saves. Lugarno continued to search for the game sealer, with Peter shooting over the bar on the right and Billy shooting on target but without much power due to Bexley's defensive pressure. In the 53rd minute, Bexley's counter looked threatening, but once again Ben showed good timing and awareness to get forward and collect the ball. Logan almost snuck through again and Jaden made another strong move forward to control and then clear the ball, when the full time whistle went with the score still 1-0 in Lugarno's favour – the team had done it, becoming the U13C champions.



Medal presentations followed, with the trophy presentation and kind words and congratulations. Bexley North were sporting and worthy runners up, but the Lugarno team had played the best football throughout the season, running the ball out from the back more than any other side and showing a commendable unity of purpose and camaraderie. Credit must go to Ocky as coach and the boys as individuals and as a team, and support from the parents has been wonderful throughout the winter. Well done everyone!

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AAF (2) v Carss Park

Saturday, 3:00pm at Kareela No 3

Extra time followed by a penalty shoot-out was required to separate the Lugarno FC AAF(2) team from their Carrs Park opposition, after the game ended in a 0-0 draw after 110 minutes of intense play.

During the penalty shoot-out the Lugarno FC team won 5-4 after a marathon football game.

The boys were exhausted after the final whistle as the team managed to crown a fantastic finals series, winning the premiership from fourth spot.

AAF(2) Captain Peter Georgellis



AAB v Carlton Rovers

Saturday, 7:30pm at St George Stadium

In an intense and quality game that featured end to end play, the AAB side won the grand final 4-2 against a committed Carlton Rovers side.

Locked 1-1 at the half-time break, second half action saw some spectacular goals scored at both ends. In the end the Minor Premiers added the premiership title as well bringing to an end a fantastic football season that saw them remain undefeated during the normal season with 16 wins from 16 games.



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16 Girls A(1) v Connells Point

Sunday, 9:00am at St George Stadium

The Lugarno FC 16GA(1) side ended a perfect weekend for Lugarno FC when they won the premiership, defeating Connells Point 1-0 in the grand final. The result made it four wins out of four for Lugarno FC teams in what turned out to be a super weekend of Grand Finals.

The girls were on top of their opposition for most of the first half and scored a brilliant goal early in the second half before Connells Point started to pile on the pressure as they desperately chased the game.

Determined defence by Lugarno FC kept out the opposition to deliver super coach Bill and super manager Rob their third consecutive grand final win in seven grand final appearances.





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