

## R5 Match Reports

### SUHC MPL v PHSK

#### Powerhouse St Kilda Match Report

#### Close but no cigar.... Again!



Photo courtesy of Anne-Marie Cupples

The United boys travelled to Albert Park to take on 2014 minor premieres Powerhouse St Kilda on what is undoubtedly one of the worst Hockey pitches in Victoria.

The match started at a cracking pace with St Kilda earning an early corner but not converting and then United had an encouraging period of play for 10 minutes and controlled the play through Sean Laidlaw, Mark Scully, Matt L'Huillier and new import Nico Dumont who has come across from Belgium where he has played for their national team. Powerhouse probably had the best of the rest of the second half and went into half time with a lead despite United having 5 penalty corners late in the half.

The second half was even more exciting with cards flying, goals disallowed, strokes given and not given and some brilliant hockey to top it all off. Southern started using their overlap (extra defender running through the field to create numbers) very well and Rens Vernij got some serious traction down the right hand side and caused the high quality Powerhouse team a lot of issues. However Powerhouse with their Australian Junior forwards and midfielders and international players were also looking dangerous on the break. Southern scored their first goal and made it 2-1 through some very nice play up the right hand side utilising the overlap and eventually finding Todd Mchardy who in turn, found debutant Liam Eddington in the circle in a good spot who calmly found captain Scully and he made no mistake from 8 yards out. Powerhouse sneaked another goal in to go Ahead 3-1 before Eddington managed to grab a goal (as well as an assist) on debut when he got on the end of a brilliant pass from L'Huillier and give United a chance going into the last 7 minutes.

Unfortunately (again) they couldn't quite find enough to get any points from the match. It doesn't get any easier for United who will play a full strength Greensborough next Saturday at Farm Road. Greensborough will have 2 Kookaburras and another 3 guys that have played for Australia A.

The boys have to think that with a little bit of luck and a couple of minor tweaks they are on the verge of winning a few games in a row and give the competition a real shake. The competition is that close this year that even though Southern are currently in 10<sup>th</sup> they can still push for a finals berth.

Goal Scorers: Mark Scully, Liam Eddington

Assists: Liam Eddington, Matt L'Huillier

Top players: Rens Vernij, Matt L'Huillier, Sean Laidlaw, Mark Scully, Joey Kenny, Ed Arnold.

### **MPL Reserves v PHSK**

The SUHC PLR Team travelled to Albert Park to play Powerhouse St Kilda on Saturday. The team was looking to make some positive steps forward after the last couple of rounds. The game started well with the team combining well to from the back to create numerous attacking opportunities through well timed passes. SUHC was awarded a stroke midway through the half, but unfortunately from the two attempts provided by the umpire were unable to convert both. Powerhouse managed to sneak a goal in through the tight defence, putting them in front. SUHC continued to build strong passages of attacking play through the midfield and were rewarded with a goal to bring the scores to even. A strong push by the team saw the ball hit the goal post twice, denying the SUHC team the outright win and full points. The game ended a 1-all draw with the points split. It was a much improved performance across the ground for the team.

### **MPA v TEM**

On the back of its first win for the season, Southern's Pennant A side rolled into the State Hockey Centre confident it could take down the T.E.M side sitting above them on the ladder. With the media talking the game up as "bigger than the A-League Grand Final," it was no surprise to see almost 10 people sat in the grandstands – and what a lucky 10 they were, having been given the chance to witness some top-notch hockey on the finest playing surface in the land.

After a rousing pre-game speech from coach Jonathan Boyd, the team hit the field full of confidence. Early on, however, it appeared the Hockey Centre's sprinklers had dampened our enthusiasm for the contest, because T.E.M had most of the play, creating a number of good chances that kept keeper Simon Hall on his toes. Cue a sideline spray to rival the State Hockey Centre sprinklers from coach Boyd, with Jack "Tiny" Marquardt copping the brunt for a questionable attempt at throwing a 360 back stick no-look pass that never looked like hitting the target.

Once the game rolled through its early stages, Southern started to gain the ascendancy, with the first goal coming courtesy of a flick from Jono Stewart. With that goal came confidence, and with confidence came total control of the game. Southern's passing stayed sharp, and TEM were powerless to stop a second goal finding its way into the net before half time.

The second half followed on a similar course, with Chris Silvers coolly slotting a sharp chance to make it three-nil. With the injured Hayden Jones channelling his inner Moneyball on the whiteboard, TEM's structural changes were quickly combatted, and they never really looked like taking the game.

When the final whistle blew, the score was 3-1.

The most remarkable aspect of the game was, undoubtedly, the fact Steve Flack managed to avoid a card, although Scott Collie was forced to contribute to the fines jar for his green in the second half.

### **MPC v Doncaster**

This week the Pennant C team went down 4-3 to Doncaster in a hard fought match at Farm Rd. A twilight match, we enjoyed our most pleasant warm-up of the season, with fair temperatures and the sun out. The first 15 minutes were strongly contested, with our boys a bit quick to give away possession but making some chances in the forward half. Our defensive pressure unfortunately dropped and despite some great tackles from Liam Hendricks and Michael Butcher and saves from Tom Harris, Doncaster were able to put in 3 goals in the first half.

Sam Mcloughney put away a great field goal with a Tommahawk from a pass by Lachie Edwards. Doncaster lead 3-1 to end the half.

The boys then highlighted their resilience by coming out strongly in the second half, with a renewed focus on maintaining possession and structure. Josh Sweeney and Sam Mcloughney teamed up well on the left, and Tim Dobson helped move the ball well. Thanks also to Bill Campbell for playing with us and backing up with PA.

Lachie Edwards had a couple of great runs in the forward line, and was rewarded when he outmanoeuvred his man in the D and sent a hard push into the bottom corner. The team won a number of corners through the half, improving on our tactic of winning corners when in poor shooting positions. One was successfully converted thanks to a great push out from Jesse Mulder and a zinging drag flick that Lachie sent between the goalie and postman.

Unfortunately Doncaster managed to score a 4th goal in the second half, so despite our valiant effort they managed to hang on. The boys are improving and gelling together as a team, and hopefully putting 3 goals past a strong opposition will inspire us for next week!

Written by Tom Martin

### **MPE v Kew**

Pennant E played an experienced Kew outfit and whilst there was plenty of youthful skill displayed, basic errors and a general lack of intensity saw Kew win 5-1. Will need to apply more common sense and lift the drive to get and keep the ball.

Mike's best: Chris Abaniel, Stretch and Aaron