

First Grade Match Report:
Glebe Vs Briars
Saturday 13th of June 2009
Cintra Park, Burwood 3:30pm
Result: 0-0

They say a draw is like kissing your sister, but today's result for Glebe was nowhere near that enjoyable.

The side went out and played hard for 70 minutes but came away with very little to show for it. Zero goals, few meaningful shots and only one measly competition point, which sees Glebe slip even further away from the top 4. The side did however secure the Wark-Trevaran Cup for Glebe, which was some consolation. Second Grade won well (5-1) earlier in the day and the women fought back admirably for a draw of their own (2-2), so First Grade only needed to draw to claim the cup outright.

Encounters against Briars are usually pretty rough and ready, and this game was to be no different. Glebe knew the importance of the match, both in terms of the Wark-Trevaran Cup, as well as to their season, and the preparation and was undertaken accordingly. When push came to shove Glebe gave no quarter in any section of the field, which was an improvement on previous weeks when our forward line has lacked the necessary starch.

Ravaged with injuries to Peter Wark (hamstring/back), Matthew Wark (Shoulder) and Ian Paterson (Foot) the side was fielding some fresh young faces this week. Ross Bougoukas returned from the Under 18 Australian Championships where NSW finished second to Queensland – congratulations Ross. Scott Cleary came in at inside left and Scott Howard at fullback. Not quite as fresh faced was Adam Howard, a first grade veteran returning to the starting side this week after an extended vacation in the northern hemisphere. It was as though he had never left - predictably enough Adam slipped straight back into gear and added quality and composure in equally generous measures to the Glebe defensive unit.

The new fullback combination stood up well under pressure, as the score line will attest. The Howard Brothers combined to repel all that Briars could throw at them and controlled the pace of the game and Glebe's possession of the ball with purposeful passing around the back. As well as decisive passing through the lines when able.

The match was somewhat of an arm wrestle, with Glebe looking good in the opening moments before being forced to defend their third for the next ten minutes as they could not secure or maintain much possession. Briars had difficulty penetrating though as the Glebe marking and positional play was up to the task.

When able to attack Glebe generally fell down through some sloppy passing and trapping, as well as some sub-optimal options. On occasion however a few passes were strung together and Glebe did cut up Briars down both sidelines. Unfortunately this did not result in much by way of circle penetrations or goals.

Glebe had four short corners, but was not able to get a shot on goal due to some structural flaws.

Both sides created some half chances in front of the net, but Glebe's defence scrambled well, and it would appear Briars did likewise, as Glebe could not jag that elusive match winner.

In the past four outings Glebe has scored four goals and conceded 7, for an average score line of 1-1.75. These games have included NWS and Moorebank, the current competition leaders. At this point in time the side seems to resemble a toothless Pit Bull Terrier: very difficult to get around, but essentially harmless.

Players Player: Scott Howard took a bit step up off the bench into the starting side this week and performed admirably. As always he relished the rough stuff but in this game it was the improved quality and decisiveness of his passing game which impressed the most. He just pipped his brother Adam for the points, who was making his first start in the top grade this year after a holiday lay-off.

Next week the side make the annual trip to Sutherland for the much vaunted rematch against a Shire team who are in third place. In what was Glebe's first game of the year Sutherland soundly beat Glebe in the last encounter, so the side is looking for vengeance. Presently Glebe are able to make any number of excuses, but come Saturday afternoon, only one question is pertinent: Can they make the grade?

Regards,

Patrick Wark (with apologies to Mary, Gabrielle and Elizabeth).

3rd Grade:

ROUND 2 - GLEBE VS BRIARS

Saturday 13th of June 2009

GLEBE WON 4-1

After going five rounds without a loss, Glebe 3rd grade returned to Cintra with its opening round 3-1 drubbing at the hands of rivals Burwood Briars still firmly embedded in the memory. Glebe entered the game with the Wark-Trevanaar Cup already again in Glebe's keeping after a decision was made not to include Men's 3rd grade in the overall result. No matter, Glebe's excellent win in 2nd grade secured the cup for the second year running. Glebe 3rds had a plan to put pressure on the Briars backs and halves and then to break quickly in attack with fast passing and angled runs from our speedy strikers. This worked a treat and Glebe went to half-time three goals the wiser after a double from Scotty Bortfield and a well-deserved goal to Oliver Holysmokes.

At half-time, Glebe Captain Paulie Jowett emphasised the need that Glebe come out hard in the second half and to weather the inevitable Briars onslaught and this was the time frame when they got us in the first round. It was Even Stevens for a while in the 2nd half until Glebe allowed Briars a goal starting from one of the Glebe strikers being dispossessed and the Glebe defence not covering in time. However, soon after Glebe responded again to put the game beyond doubt at 4-1 when Chris Holmes blasted a short corner drag flick at goal which copped a wicked deflection from the runner out, hitting the underside of the cross bar and going in the goal.

Briars then didn't help their own cause by having their captain sent off for 10 minutes for back chat and then the team being marched 10 metres on a number of other occasions for persistent back chat and dissent. It seems that Glebe has come quite a way in recent times as we would normally be on the receiving end of these types of calls but we managed to be relatively better behaved. I guess we were winning and that always seems to help the cause. Impressive today were Braydon Mead, Will Noller and Scott Bortfield while Alex Sheard for the 4th or 5th time this season was undeniable and well deserved man of the match. Next week's return bout against Sutho at Sutho on Sunday will be an absolute corker of a game and hopefully we will be back to full strength and able to give Sutho another touch up. It doesn't happen very often, so it would be great to take the opportunity again if it arises.

5th GRADE

Glebe 2 def. Briars 1

Saturday 13th of June 2009

It's been a tough year the Glebe 5th grade men, a full strength squad at the start of the year showed a lot of promise for a comfortable top 4 finish but injuries and withdrawals in the team and indeed in the club has seen the shine of a solid and enthusiastic start to the 2009 been scratched away to leave the squad sitting mid table facing a tough task to challenge for a top 4 position.

After a crushing month of May in which 5th grade slumped to record just 1 win from 5 games the men returned from the long weekend layoff seeming rather jubilant and jovial before the game at Cintra. With Les out for the season and Ken Wark and Craig Bagley unavailable the team's collective leadership group was all missing in action and although Jason McDonald was captain he took it merely for the preliminary tasks of the toss and discussion with the referee's as the team really seemed to gel in of itself as everyone was aware of what we were all capable of.

The talk among the lads was to start re-building our team chemistry on field against the face of changes (highlighted by the fact that Jason stepped in to be the team's 6th alternative centre-half for the year) and keep the talk positive and the hockey simple.

The game started in the worst possible way for the battling 5th graders as Briars struck early down their right side attack channels and snuck a goal in past Jack's near post within the first 10 minutes of the game. The quick and sneaky goal seemed to steel the defence though as the defenders seemed to take it very personal. Sam Bagley playing at fullback in the absence of his father put in his best performance of the season playing with controlled aggression, strong tackling and fantastic vision to find open channels and forwards to clear the ball out of defence.

The Briar's defence kept Jason quiet for most of the first half, marking him out of the game but wing halves Tom Pacey and Chris Farrugia did an excellent job of distributing wide and early ball to the eager forward line who attacked hard and created many chances. The ever reliant Hurrell brothers played an ever present danger as they teamed up at left wing and inside left and really gave the Briars defence a lot of headaches with their speed and stick skills, James twice forcing the Briars keeper to rush out in order to contain his attacks and Tom making a great chance for himself cutting back across the circle free of the defence but his shot on the run was wide of the target.

Halftime talk was very minimal but the team was enthusiastic that the chances were there and that we had applied more pressure than we had received and in the second half we kept creating those chances. James Hurrell went close when he caught the Briars defence napping on a free hit outside the circle, taking it himself he managed to drag inside one defender and launched a low hard hit for the bottom left hand corner that the keeper just got a last second touch on to force the long corner. Less than 5 minutes later the Hurrell brothers were back up to it again as Tom dispossessed the Briars right half just before half way and after drawing the fullback laid the ball down the line for James who managed to drag the ball inside the second fullback and sent the ball cracking into the backboard to bring the scores level at 1 goal a piece.

The Hurrell brothers weren't done there though as ten minutes later James Hurrell produced another cracker to put Glebe in front 2 - 1 in what was an almost identical sequence of events - Tom to James, James drag inside, James goal! From there the game became a grind, Glebe had a few more chances up front and Chris Farrugia nearly made it 3-1 with a brilliant individual effort beating several Briars defenders with smooth stick work but his shot under some last minute pressure but failed to capitalise on the brilliant lead up work and James Hurrell's follow-up was pushed wide of the goal. As the game wound down Briars continued to push hard to find the equaliser but our defence held firm as Sam and Al were very vocal and well disciplined in defence that we didn't concede a single short corner for the entire second half and Jack safely dealt with the only real incursion into the circle as he charged out and managed to clear out both the ball and the Briars player.

A 2-1 win in the end, well earned and well deserved for the effort put forward by all the players across the board. Thanks to the guys who put in such a big effort after backing up from the 6th grade game - Lester, Pete and Max, as well as Right Wing, Schlossy and of course two goal hero James Hurrell.

Jason McDonald.

**GDHC Men's 6TH GRADE
MATCH REPORT - GAME 12**

Glebe 0 defeated by Briars 1

5pm Sunday 14 June 2009

Cintra

Cintra. Excuse my ignorance but what the hell does it mean? Translated from Spanish to English it means curvature. Like the curvature of a hockey field in section or the curvature of the hook of a hockey stick or perhaps like the curvature of the rim of the Walk-Trevarar Cup as you hold it up to the light and sip the sweet beer of victory as it spills down your cheeks. Yes, Glebe retained the cup on a very entertaining Saturday the day previous to our game – congratulations to 2nd grade for a massive win and also to the women for a gutsy draw and another for the 1st grade men.

The 6th grade game the following day was anything but exciting. There were no highlights other than Cintra's unusually high injury tally and their unspectacular goal. It rained for the majority of the game and only stopped at the very end, with a spectacularly bright rain shower.

Now I don't want to end this match report on a negative note so will say only this: normally when you're leaving the field after getting beaten 1-zip there's a dejected feeling in the team. Not this time though – all I could think about when shaking the hands of the victors at the end of the game was - I don't care coz *we won the Cup!*

Adrian McKeown