

Development League Seven a Side Tournament at Taverham, 16 June

Dragon Boys Green

Manager: George Walker

Team: Harry Brown, Sol Blazer, Pedro Goss, Raunaq Rai, Tom Bailey, McCartney Aldous and Ollie Shippam (captain).



First Match versus Norwich City Devils, lost 2-0

We were on the back foot from the start in the first match, with the first goal against us coming at less than a minute after push-back. Norwich City attacked fairly continually and a good shot was saved followed by a near-miss from a short corner. A few short corners later their second goal (a home goal) hit the back of the net.

Second match versus Dragons Boys Reds, lost 2-0

We were still recovering from being soundly beaten in the first match when we had to go straight on to play the Dragons Reds team. We struggled to get ourselves together and were beaten by two excellent Charlie Nunn goals.

Third match versus Norwich City Demons, won 4-1

In this match we finally began to settle down and to do ourselves justice, moving the ball around nicely. We took the lead fairly quickly with an excellent goal by Raunaq which was quickly followed by another one for him which was almost a carbon-copy of the first. After some nice play between Pedro and Ollie, the third goal was confidently put away by Pedro, with the fourth goal scored by Ollie following shortly after. City went on to get a late consolation goal.

Fourth match versus Dereham, won 3-0

This was another comprehensive win for us, the defence confidently dealing with any Dereham attacking play. The first and second goals were scored by Ollie with the final goal coming from Raunaq.

Dragons Red finish 3rd.

Dragon Boys Red

Manager: Dom Samways

Team: Benjamin Nkrumah, Charlie Nunn, Daniel Murphy, David Pinney, Edward Taylor, George Wright, Harry Williamson, Jack Small

Dragons Red finish 2nd, on goal difference by one goal.

Dragons Girls

Green Dragons - manager Ally Windsor-Waite

Team: Tilly Connors Bweckett, Arabella Sabberton, Katie Andrews, Heather Tasker (Captain), Sophie Haenelt, Ella Kassulka, Lilly Sore, Anja Wimmer, Jodie Rump

Red Dragons - manager Bridget Le Good

Team: Mollie Finegan, Carmel WW, Catherine Matthews, Sophie Thurtell, Lara Taylor, Anna Brook, Lucy Morton (Captain), Alice Young, Brooke Simmons





The Dragons Development Girls Red and Green Teams can together feel very proud of the results at the Broadland 7-a-side Tournament on 16 June, with 18 players representing the club.

The teams can be forgiven for being somewhat rusty, with several of the players not having picked up a hockey stick since March. In order to get some reasonable balance into the two sides, some players switched squads and others played in unfamiliar positions after a warm up session on Sunday. It is worth looking closely at the table of results below to see just how comparable the results were.

Red Dragons won the tournament with 13 points, with their nearest rivals City Tigers on 9 points. Two Red Dragons were up on the podium amongst the four players who shared top spot as leading scorers with 3 goals - salute Lucy Morton and Lara Taylor. Lucy as captain then stepped up to receive the shield on behalf of the Dragons for the first time. Dereham and Norwich City having each previously held the trophy for three consecutive years.

Thanks to Ally Windsor-Waite who stepped up to manage Green Dragons (wearing red and white socks), just to differentiate them from the Red Dragons who had green socks and wore the dreaded green bibs. Thanks to Jane Morton, perhaps doing her last co-ordination duties for the dev team, and to Johanne Steward who assisted and who will be getting more involved in the new season.

This was a tournament which rattled on at a fast pace, with the matches of 12 minutes one-way keeping players and coaches on their toes to settle quickly, take their chances, make their subs and any playing adjustments. Dragons can be notoriously slow to get the flames going. Red Dragons know they should have scored far more goals - but well done in particular to the Dereham and Watton goalkeepers who were brave shot-stoppers. Green Dragons created fewer chances, but scored excellent goals. Heather Tasker's winner against Watton was a super effort. Heather was captain for the night and led by example. The Green Dragons were so unlucky to lose to Dereham by a single goal in the last minute, when a draw would surely have boosted their confidence as well as their final placing.

Dereham had already given the Red Dragons a hard time, which some very strong running down the right giving Catherine Matthews plenty to cope with. As a new defender, Catherine needed plenty of support from Carmel Windsor-Waite and after the Reds conceded one goal - when a hard cross was not picked up - this pairing were seldom threatened for the rest of the tournament. The Red goals versus Dereham came from Sophie Thurtell, playing in the unpopular left mid slot, who swept home in style (and in her other matches Sophie was unlucky not to score again, taking up some excellent positions). Brooke Simmons also played left mid and also went close, the near post intervening twice when a goal looked certain. Brooke and Sophie also made solid contributions in tackles and short accurate passes. Brooke and Sophie, Lara and Anna Brook made a very strong midfield full of attacking runs. The winner against Dereham came from Lucy Morton who began to exploit gaps in the middle.

City Tigers held the Reds to a goalless draw, with the Reds nearly engineering their own downfall by failing to take their opportunities. Green Dragons did very well against the Tigers, with Jodie Rump opening the scoring, but the Tigers just managed to wear them down 2-1..

Watton had an excellent shot-stopping goalkeeper and some very young players. Greens beat them 1-0. Reds were held for most of the match but it was Lara Taylor who broke the deadlock. Her second goal was a beauty, luring the goalie into making a dive before calmly lifting the ball over her head.

City Lions were another team who mounted a strong challenge. Anja Wimmer got Greens goal in a 1-1 draw with a thumping shot which is rapidly becoming her trademark. Reds managed keep a clean sheet, and their winner was a most cheeky goal from Alice Young who finished a three-player move with a clean sweep from the right across the goal and in.

Match of the tournament was, of course, Reds v Greens. Reds thought they had the form but were a little apprehensive. Greens were unlucky to meet them at the end of the evening when Reds were starting to make their shots count. Anja Wimmer got the ball into the net with an aggressive drive through the middle, and who knows what the outcome might have been if this shot had not been overruled for a foot on the line? Greens were beginning to form a cohesive unit, with Sophia Haehnel having an outstanding evening with her tenacity and determination getting her to every ball. Katie Andrews is a defender improving with every game and Arabella Sabberton, although rusty, showed her skills. Ella Kassulke, a newcomer to Dragons, will be a welcome addition to the development squad, and Lily Sore is adding versatility to her game and played usefully at left mid.

Both goalkeepers - Mollie Finegan (Reds) and Tilly Connors-Beckett (Greens) are very young. Tilly is learning her craft, and it took the Reds some time to work out that only by driving hard into the corners could they beat her, and ultimately Lucy (2) and Lara did just that. Mollie only goes between the posts on special occasions nowadays, and fortunately was willing to step in because we were a goalie short. She kept four clean sheets, thanks in part to some excellent teamwork with Carmel and Catherine.

Green Dragons finished in 5th place. Their results were:

v Watton W 1-0 (Heather Tasker)

v Dereham L 0-1

v City Tigers L 1-2 (Jodie Rump)

v City Lions D 1-1 (Anja)

v Dragons Red L 0-3

Red Dragons finished in 1st place. Their results were:

v Dereham W 2-1 (Sophie Thurtell, Lucy Morton)

v City Tigers D 0-0

v City Lions W 1-0 (Alice Young)

v Watton W 2-0 (Lara Taylor)

v Dragons Green W 3-0 (Lucy Morton 2, Lara Taylor)