

Inter County London Region Under 14 (Born 1996 or later) (mixed) Tournament

Competing Teams

Sussex, Surrey, Kent.

Format

Each team played the other twice. Matches consisted of two 6 minutes halves of actual playing time.

Sussex Squad

Fran Collings (MSM)
Matilda Coke (MSM)
Edmund Coke (MSM)
Callum Craven (WSC)
Joe Hazeldine (WSC)
Daniel Jefferys (MSM)
Daniel Low (Brighton)
Sammi McClure (Hailsham)
Lara Partridge (CSC)
Hannah Patchett (CSC)
Michael Turner (CSC)
Chris Wiles (Brighton)



Coach: Ewan Partridge assisted by Norman Griffin and Simon Jefferys (Stato).

Similarly to the U16s this is a young squad containing not many full age players. Absences left the team without several strong players and without a specialist keeper. In the event Sammi McClure and for the most part Matilda Coke filled this awkward position admirably with enthusiasm and a deal of capability.

Developing a specialist keeper in this age group over the coming year should be considered a selection and coaching priority.

Prior to the tournament the team had very limited opportunity to get together, at best at one or two St Bede's sessions and no opportunity to play as a team.

Conversely it should be a source of some optimism that we are able to draw players from five clubs capable of representing the county.

Matches:

Surrey 7 : Kent 1 (H/T : 5/0)

Sussex 2 : Surrey 8 (H/T : 3/1)

Because of the limited preparation we decided to adopt a pressing tactic in this game and use our biggest lad – Michael Turner – at the back as the holding player, using his long throw. This worked for 4 to 5 minutes of the 1st half, but the lack of preparation and cohesion began to show, allowing Surrey to take a decent lead early in the 2nd half as our attacks petered out into being their breaks. We used the latter part of the match to experiment with substitution options in various positions whilst Surrey kept in their better players for longer.

Scorers: Michael Turner & Daniel Low.

Majors: Daniel Jefferys

Sussex 4 : Kent 5 (H/T : 1/1)

We started this match in a similar format to the previous one, and began to look like a team. As the match progressed we put ourselves under pressure from the simple defensive and handling errors that result from lack of cohesion and confidence, and Kent sneaked it on the back of this.

Scorers: Fran Collings / Chris Wiles x 2 / Michael Turner.

Majors: Joe Hazeldine & Michael Turner.

Kent 0 : Surrey 5 (H/T : 0/3)

Sussex 1 : Surrey 5 (H/T : 0/ 4)

The score in this match tells not the full story. From the start we looked more like a team, we put Surrey under sustained pressure early on, and they looked a lot less sure of themselves as a result. We were now creating as many chances as them, but we were hitting bars and posts, plus a saved penalty. Had these gone in Surrey would have been fortunate to have won 5-4. But we did look like a team, our swimming and passing going forward tightened up and we posed multiple threats to the opposition in the form of Chris Wiles, Daniel Low, Joe Hazeldine, Michael Turner, Sammi McClure and Fran Collings.

Scorer: Chris Wiles.

Sussex 4 : Kent 2 (H/ T : 2/2)

We got our reward for hard work and steady team improvement in this last match as the result shows. Our defence tightened further, with excellent battling from Fran, Daniel and Sammi, we dominated the game with confident passing, whilst still missing a number of chances.

Scorers: Chris Wiles x 2 / Joe Hazledine / Daniel Jefferys

Majors: Michael Turner.

Conclusions:

Champions Surrey

2nd Sussex

3rd Kent

Had we been able to prepare as a team for this event, added a specialist keeper and another big lad to play up front, we could have overcome Surrey to win this event. As the coach it was pleasing to see the players take in what I was putting across, they improved individually and as we tweaked the line up. I was impressed with all the players effort rates and with the team spirit of those not in the water.

There were encouraging performances from Michael Turner, Daniel Low and Chris Wiles that suggest they will be important components of next year's U16s. The year 1997 players should look forward to being essential components of next year's U14 team. Developing a specialist keeper or keepers must be a priority

Ewan Partridge 8/12/09.