

Match report Faversham Ladies v Hythe Ladies Friendly

Tuesday 24th July

Match result: - Faversham 26 - Hythe 7

Team: - Lucy Mai, Grace, Ellie, Libby, Emily, Ellis, Layla, Cleo

Coaches: - Debbie Helliwell, Grace Walker Game: - 4 x 8-minute quarters

Faversham arrived with 4 international players, 3 Japanese ladies and a Scottish International but this did not deter the Hythe Ladies from pulling together and battling hard for the four quarters. The score line does not reflect the way the Hythe Ladies played, they all played with determination, game awareness and vision.



First Quarter: - the Faversham ladies overwhelmed Hythe in the first minute by scoring 2 goals in quick succession. Hythe ladies dug in and shook off the initial wave of attack and turned it around, with Libby, Ellis and Emily sprinting up the pool in attack and tearing back to support the defence. Layla and Cleo showing true grit and enthusiasm in their first all ladies polo match, the little trepidation shown on the poolside was clearly shaken off on entering the pool. Grace took up an old role and showed her experience in goal. Great passes from Lucy, and Ellie with strength and skillful movement up front, Emily put two goals away with Libby backing her up with her first. The quarter ended Faversham 5 Hythe 3, this was a fantastic start as this was the first time our 8 ladies all played together.

Second Quarter: - With the change of ends Hythe was now attacking from the deep end, Faversham now taking instruction and support from the experienced players scored 8 goals. That does not reflect the way the Hythe Ladies played as they remembered their training, with Ellis, Libby and Emily driving up to 3 or 4 metres from the Faversham goal, Grace (now playing outfield) and Ellie playing holding positions on around 5 to 6 metres passing the balls in using Layla or Cleo to pass to the three ladies up front. Libby kept the quarter alive with her second goal, the persistent pressure payed off. Due to Faversham's

pressure a lot of the shots were saved or just forced wide, this allowed the Faversham ladies to use their sprinters to get most of their goals on the break. Both teams finished that quarter with big smiles, which was a constant throughout regardless of the outcome.

Third Quarter: - Another change of end gave the team another change of goalie, Lucy moved into the holding position and Ellie in goal. This quarter Layla and Cleo took on stronger roles with driving swims by Cleo up the middle and Layla down the wings, Ellis battling hard to gain position picked up and injury part way through. Losing one of the team just spurred the ladies on to battle harder. Grace popped in a long-range shot, Lucy peppered the goal with more than a handful of long range shots, but the goal posts were not forgiving. Still smiling the Ladies battled hard and held Faversham to a 7 - 1 Quarter.

Fourth Quarter: - Final charge. With the positive support and encouragement from team Coach Debbie, the ladies battled on. The lack of match fitness started to show but the whole team still gave 110% effort. Emily and Libby showing their stamina leading the way up and down the pool in attack and defence. Layla and Cleo growing in confidence, game awareness and always smiling mixed it up with the Japanese who always seemed to crowd them out when in possession of ball. Grace and Lucy taking the deep holding role supplied constant support and the odd long-range shot. Emily and Libby managed to end the game with hattrick's both scoring. Seeing that her team mates were tiring Ellis bravely ignored her injury and substituted one of the more tired players. That last great effort held the score Faversham 6 Hythe 2.

Both teams played with great heart, sportsmanship and all enjoyed this first Kent ladies match in long while. The ladies are a credit to their respective clubs and to each other. It was thoroughly great match to watch.