



Footy Department Report

CONFIDENTIAL: From the desk of *The Insider*

Round 3 Tackers Black May 1st, 2011

On Sunday Surrey Park Panthers U11s White trekked out to Brunswick for our sternest test to date... a clash with an undefeated team sitting atop the table. We knew it wasn't going to be easy! Or did we?

Maybe we were lulled into a false sense of security as we watched Brunswick's U10's get flogged by Camberwell, because we started slowly and the opposition took full advantage early on, attacking strongly and kicking the first couple of goals to give them a healthy lead midway through the first quarter. But as good teams do we worked our way back into the game. Jack 'Tackle' McLaren marshalled the defence across half back, Ethan 'Buckets' O'Neill started knocking it to advantage in the ruck, Hannah 'Sweetie' McLaren got her hands dirty by winning contested possessions in the middle, Parker 'DA' Fox dished out a couple of 'Don't Argues' and pumped the ball forward, where Hamish 'the Hammer' Sutherland stood tall, while 'Mad' Max Inglis and Brandon 'Crash' Soussa demonstrated great teamwork at ground level to create our first goal. We ended the first quarter trailing, but only by a goal and we knew that we could win this match

In the 2nd quarter we started to exert more influence over the game. Kate 'Biff' Tanner worked hard in the ruck, while super-sub Joe 'Tich' Tutty came off the bench with immediate impact. Nathan 'Knuckles' Ridd and Angus 'Chuckles' Watt stuck to their men like glue, just like the coach asked them to, and Brunswick lost all momentum. 'Smooth' Zac Mulholland showed a clean pair of heels running down the wing, and 'The Hammer' almost kicked a miracle goal, slamming it into the top of the post from the deep in the pocket, and we were looking like the better team. Scores were level at the long break.

If the 3rd Quarter is the premiership quarter then give us the flag now! If only it worked that way. We dominated the match. 'The Hammer' Sutherland went into the ruck and wouldn't be denied, while 'Sweetie' McLaren came off the bench to resume her role as the clearance queen and to dish out one of the

best bumps the bench had ever seen. Brunswick couldn't get it past the centre of the ground, with Ryan 'The Rock' Campbell, 'Tackle' McLaren and 'DA' Fox setting up a wall across half back. We just kept pumping it forward, where Ali 'Fitzy' Fitzgerald pounced to kick his first goal in his first game, while 'Jumpin' Josh Ward, 'Crash' Soussa and 'Mad' Max combined again shortly after to give us a healthy 15 point lead at three quarter time. The pressure we applied to Brunswick in our forward half was immense, and it looked like we'd cracked them.

In the last quarter Brunswick rolled the dice. They threw their best players onto the ball and pumped it forward early. Our tackling was fierce, with 'Killer' Caen Minett, Jamie 'The Jet' Ridd and 'Tich' Tutty putting their bodies on the line, trying desperately to stem the flow. Our desperation in the defensive half was something to behold, but for all of our best efforts we simply couldn't clear the ball from the zone and eventually Brunswick scored, and then scored again. Under extreme pressure our structure failed us, and we couldn't find targets coming out of the backline. In one last desperate act we moved the ball up the wing and into our forward line, but as it fell to 'Fitzy' Fitzgerald the bell rang and we were out of time. Brunswick prevailed by a couple of points.

It really was a super team effort, a great game, and a match that we deserved to win. It was only our 2nd game together as a team, and we welcomed a brand new player who had an immediate impact. Bring on the re-match!

Key learning's from this game:

- Don't ever think that an opposition team is going to be easy to beat
- Focus on retaining a team structure; even when under pressure (don't go chasing kicks!)
- Stick close to your man when you're playing in defence

Well done everyone. See you on Sunday.