



Footy Department Report

CONFIDENTIAL: From the desk of *The Insider*

Round 5 Under 11 White

Wow. Just wow!

On Sunday 15th May Surrey Park Panthers U11s White, celebrating Parker 'DA' Fox's 50th game, travelled to Kew on a cold, gloomy morning. With grading complete Kew sat atop the ladder, with undefeated Brunswick promoted to Black Division. This promised to be another tough contest. We needed a win after getting so close last week, and with Parker's inspiring words ringing in their ears the team ran through DA's banner & got ready to rumble.

Q1 gave us no hint of what was to come, and there weren't many highlights to write about. We tried hard but struggled to create chances, while the Ranga Rover torched us around the ground. When Angus 'Chuckles' Watt turned and kicked it 30m in the wrong direction there was a strong suspicion that we hadn't really woken up yet. Kate 'Biff' Tanner toiled valiantly in the Ruck, laying some strong tackles around the ground, and Tommy 'Macca' MacDonald showed a glimpse of things to come with a strong mark in the centre square that went forward for 'Mr Smooth' Zac Mulholland to snaffle our first goal. Kew Rovers took a quarter time lead of 5 points, with 2-0 (12) to our 1-1 (7).

In Q2 Ali 'Fitzy' Fitzgerald moved into the Ruck and gave us drive through the middle of the ground, while Ethan 'Buckets' O'Neill went to CHF and took some strong marks, almost kicking our 2nd goal a couple of minutes in. Nathan 'Knuckles' Ridd and 'Pepsi' Max Dryden were strong at the contest across half back, but the long ball over the back caught us out again for a couple of Kew goals. Our highlight was Hannah 'Sweetie' McLaren chasing a ball across half forward, knocking it out in front and using her pace to beat two opponents, then kicking it over her shoulder to 'Fitzy' who found Joe 'Tich' Tutty with a pin-point pass 25m from goal. Unfortunately 'Tich's' perfect drop punt was stopped right on the line, but 'Mr Smooth' snaffled the crumb like a good rover should, turned left, turned right, and snapped it back over his shoulder for a poster. We weren't taking our chances, and Kew looked like going in with a

healthy lead until 'Killer' Caen Minett laid a great bump that allowed Tichto run onto a long bomb and goal from the square. At 4-1 (25) to 2-5 (17) there were a few worried faces in the changeroom. The Supercoach was exasperated. Could he turn it around by shuffling the magnets?

In Q3 we turned it on. It was as simple as that. We were a sleeping giant, sprung to life. Hamish 'The Hammer' Sutherland went into the Ruck and Jack 'Tackle' McLaren into the Centre, with the mosquito fleet of 'Mad' Max Inglis and 'Tich' Tutty on the ball. Almost immediately 'The Hammer' pumped one forward for 'Chuckles' Watt to gather the pill under extreme pressure and wear a high tackle. I swear I could see his knees trembling, but 'Chuckles' kicked straight and true from 20m and we were back in the game. A minute later and we were in front, as 'The Hammer' laid a big tackle, won the ball and slammed it through for a sausage roll. 'Macca' McDonald pounced on a misdirected Kew kick and got it over to 'Tich' Tutty who found 'Tackle' McLaren in the pocket. 'Tackle's' long kick fell to the back where 'Mad' Max goaled and we were officially ON FIRE! At the other end of the ground 'DA' Fox, Ryan 'The Rock' Campbell, 'Buckets' O'Neill, and 'Knuckles' Riddbuilt the wall the coach had asked for. It was carved from stone andKewwere throwing marshmallows at it. Just when I thought I'd seen it all, Tommy 'Chooka' Shevlin created another chance with a desperate chase & tackle across half forward and up onto the wing, finally reaching a stalemate against 4 opponents. From the ball-up we ran forward again, where another long kick from 'Tackle' McLaren fell to Jamie 'The Jet' Ridd who snapped truly. We went to the last break with a healthy lead; 6-8 (44) to 4-1 (25).

In Q4 we knew they'd come at us hard, but we weren't prepared to give up another match-winning lead. We were going to play some 'Bash & Crash' style footy. The Supercoachput our tackling and clearance machines into the middle – 'Jumpin' Joshy Ward and Brandon 'Crash' Soussajoin'd 'Tackle' McLaren and 'The Hammer' for the bounce, and it was on! We were straight into attack with 'Crash' Soussa winning the first possession. 'Mad' Max's free kick from half forward was marked by 'Tackle' McLaren who moved it quickly back to 'Crash' Soussa, who was tackled high. 'Crash' calmly slotted the goal and we knew we had sealed the win, but we weren't finished yet. Kew's best player tried to turn the match, but 'Chooka' Shevlinstuck with the Ranga Rover all over the park

and simply wouldn't let him get the ball, laying some ferocious tackles. 'Curly' Southwood stood tall across half back with some strong marking and tackling, and 'Macca' MacDonald kept on presenting up into the middle of the ground from his forward flank. A quick kick forward saw 'Crash' Soussa pounce to kick his 2nd, and then a quick clearance by 'Jumpin' Joshy finished with Jamie 'The Jet' Ridd for our 3rd goal of the quarter and a comprehensive victory. Kew Rovers were held scoreless in the 2nd half while we slammed on 7-3 for a final score of 9-8 (62) to 4-1 (25).

The Supercoach's award went to Tommy 'Macca' McDonald for a fantastic four-quarter effort of relentless attack on the ball. Well done 'Macca'! 'Mad' Max Inglis was awarded the Kew Rovers' canteen voucher for his hard-running never-say-die efforts, even after taking a couple of big hits. Has anyone ever enjoyed a muddy hot dog more than Maxy did?

Key learnings from this game:

- We've got a chance to make this a really special season. Kew were the top team, and when we clicked we made them look 2nd rate.
- Long kicks to the advantage of our small forwards are GOLD!
- Desperate efforts and fierce tackling is what we will be looking for from everyone every week.

Great win guys. Let's have more of the same this week.