

Wanderers win at Woodley

Chairgirls overcome table-toppers.



Katie Hudson

The Chairgirls opened their league campaign away from home to top of the table Woodley United who had won both their opening games of the season, and came away with an impressive 3-0 victory.

During the opening 20 minutes of the game, Wycombe dominated possession but came up against a stubborn and direct team who were determined to maintain their 100% start to the league campaign.

Wycombe carved out several goal scoring chances through some tidy build up play influenced by the midfield trio of Hoesli-Atkins, Pinker and Riley-Phillips. Mobbs, Roberts and Jackson all had early chances to open their league accounts in the opening exchanges, just missing the mark.

Hoesli-Atkins came closest in the first 30 minutes of the game when she saw her well struck volley heading into the top corner only to be denied at the death by an outstanding save from the Woodley keeper. Woodley continued to hit longer passes up to the dangerous Page-Smith but all attempts were quickly neutralised by the alert back four of Newberry, O'Connor, Lynch and skipper, in the absence of Charlotte Bagshaw, Katie Hudson. Young Amy Whale had only routine work to do in the Wycombe goal and looked assured throughout with her handling and distribution.

Around the half hour mark, the game took an unfortunate turn for Woodley whilst defending a corner. The ball found its way to the far post of the Woodley goal where Hudson rose to meet the ball, her header missing the target. As she turned to retreat to her own half, a Woodley player kicked out at her catching the back of her leg. The referee had no option but to dismiss the offending player.

To rub salt into the wound, Wycombe upped the tempo and got their reward when the impressive Lindsay Pinker jinked her way passed four players and finished in the bottom left of the Woodley goal with aplomb.

Half-time saw Wycombe go in 1-0 to the good.

The second half saw Woodley roll up their sleeves and continue to make life difficult for their visitors, denying space aggressively and trying to turn the back four with some longer range passes hoping for a mistake to be made that they could pounce on.

But not today. The Chairgirls stood firm and responded in fine style when an excellent pass from Pinker was expertly controlled and finished by Mobbs on 47 minutes. Wycombe continued to build play through the thirds and demonstrate patience to create openings whilst all the while resisting any pressure from Woodley. On 62 minutes, another excellent passage of play saw the ball find the feet of Mobbs who turned and her astute pass played in Jackson who made no mistake from just inside the penalty area.

At 3-0 up and 20 minutes to go, Wycombe rang the changes and brought fresh legs into the game with Povey replacing Newberry with Mobbs dropping back into the back four and Povey playing in her familiar role as a striker. Amy Leach replaced Sam Jackson in an unfamiliar role as striker whilst Charlotte Parrett entered the fray in place of Sian Riley-Phillips.

The changes were almost seamless with Wycombe continuing their dominance in possession limiting their hosts to the odd foray into the defensive third which continued to be comfortably dealt with. Povey was disappointed to see her well taken finish fall victim to a dubious off-side flag but the Chairgirls ran the clock down in relative comfort for the last 10 minutes.

Overall, a comfortable win away to table topping Woodley and a good start for the Chairgirls league season. It was good to see how well the new arrivals this season gelled with the players retained from last season and will be giving manager Ward and his coaching team some selection headaches over the coming weeks as this squad are taking shape and were without 2 strong players in skipper Bagshaw (away) and striking addition Caz Bisson who is currently injured.

Team: Whale; Newberry (Povey 67m), Lynch, Hudson (Capt); O'Connor; Hoesli-Atkins; Pinker; Riley-Phillips (Parrett 70m); Jackson (Leach 70m); Mobbs; Roberts.

Subs (Unused): Batkin; Dean.

Next week sees the Chairgirls return home to face visitors Newbury at 2pm. Please note that the game can only be watched from outside the perimeter fence around the ground and all spectators should register their attendance using the site QR codes that are displayed around the perimeter.