

Glebe Third Grade v Macquarie University Second Grade Team (PL3 Competition)

Saturday 30 March 2019 at Pennant Hills Turf, Pitch Two, 1400 hours.

Result: Glebe 3 defeated Macquarie University 1. Goal scorers: Michael Wark, Aaron Oman, Chris Farrugia. Penalty Corners awarded: Glebe 5, and Macquarie University 3.

Glebe Personnel: Nick Vera (Goalkeeper), Michael Wark, James Martin, Chris Farrugia, Sam Bagley, Adam Campano (captain), Andrew Cheong, Zac Farlow, Isaac St Clair-Burns, Suresh Raja, Matthew West, Paul Jowett, Tony Wark and Aaron Oman. Unavailable: Aaron Nilan, Pat Wark, Dominic Kavanagh.

It was a beautiful day for hockey with a breeze, sunshine and a few clouds to cover the sun. Four of the team, all of whom had won a first grade premiership (s) were coming back to play after a break of a few years because of work, family, or injury breaks. Before the game I was dubious as to how the returnees' bodies would stand-up to the vigour of competition hockey.

The team's goalkeeper, sixteen year old Nick Vera, has had very little goalkeeping experience in the past, being a field player for almost all his junior hockey career I am told. I am pleased to report that Nick had a solid game in goals.

This start of the 2019 season sees the introduction of a changed format for hockey in the Sydney competition. Instead of the traditional two halves, each being 35 minutes, the game is now of four quarters, each 17½ minutes. Quarter time and three-quarter time are both marked by a two minute break in play with half time being a 5 minute break. The teams change ends at the conclusion of the half time period.

The team got off to a good start scoring in the third minute. Glebe broke quickly down the right side from inside its own half. Aaron Oman passed to centre-forward Tony Wark, who as the goalkeeper advanced, passed quickly to Michael Wark in the left wing position, and Michael tomahawked the ball into the backboard. This was the perfect start the team wished for.

Glebe continued to press and was awarded a penalty corner for a University foot inside the circle. An Aaron Oman hit from the top of the circle beat the goalkeeper, making the score 2-0 Glebe after 10 minutes. University struck back a few minutes later with a well worked goal, which started from its own 25 metre line. At the quarter time break the score was Glebe 2 - University 1.

University were stringing passes together and probing for chinks in the Glebe defence. It was a high standard Third Grade game. Glebe marshalled well, read the game well and gave the University forwards very little room. A couple of the University forwards were speedy and if they had been given a metre or two of space, they would have created dangerous attacking opportunities for University.

Zac Farlow went off with a leg injury in the second quarter, and took no further part in the game. I hope you are back soon Zac.

Midway through the third quarter Glebe was awarded a penalty corner for a foot infringement. Michael Wark pushed the ball towards the goalkeeper's left, but the keeper made a good save. The ball rebounded to Aaron Oman who had a shot for goal, which was also saved, and the ball bobbed towards corner pusher-outer Chris Farrugia who swept home his shot, Glebe 3, University 1.

University were good on the quick break and had a few good goal scoring opportunities from the five metre spot, albeit under pressure from the Glebe defence. Several University shots went just wide of the goal. It was a free flowing game with Glebe having several quick breaks from its own defensive circle that looked very promising, only to breakdown with the final pass going astray. I got the impression that both teams were more than capable of scoring more goals.

The fourth quarter was hard fought, and to my surprise the physical fitness of the senior Glebe team enabled them to maintain the tempo of the game. University tried hard to get back into the game, but found it hard to break down a well-organized Glebe defence, led by captain Adam Campano. The communication between the Glebe defensive players was excellent. No free rides were given to the University forwards.

For the last ten minutes of the final quarter, with the score Glebe 3, University 1, Glebe played the game in an intelligent fashion, appropriate to the circumstances of the score. It kept the ball out wide, tried to play the game in the University half, and put ten men behind the ball. University found it impossible to find a counter to the Glebe smothering tactics.

It was a close game, with University always in the match, and missing several excellent scoring opportunities, but I thought the Glebe team deserved its victory.

I have the impression that this Third Grade team has a lot of experienced players, good depth of talent, and if its senior players do not have too many injuries during the season, it will figure prominently in the finals series at the business end of the season.

Congratulations Third Grade on your first-up win.

Harry Wark

Club Historian & Life Member